



## The Book of Hebrews 2:14-15\_Deliverance from the Fear of Death!

January 21, 2024

### **Holy Text: Hebrews 2:14-15**

From the NLT:

**Hebrews 2:14-15 (NLT)** *Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. 15 Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.*

### **Initial Thoughts:**

Almost everyone hates the thought of death. This makes sense. Charles Spurgeon wrote:

It is a very natural thing that man should fear to die, for man was not originally created to die. When Adam and Eve were first placed in the garden of Eden, they were in such a condition that they might have remained there for a myriad years if they had kept their integrity. There was no reason why unfallen man should die; but now that we have sinned, the seeds of corruption are in this flesh of ours, and it is appointed unto men once to die.<sup>1</sup>

Most people fear death. (*Thanatos* in Greek) William Dyer said:

“Beloved, you know death is strong; it is the king of terrors in the terror of kings. It subdues all sorts of people: high and low, rich and poor, old and young, good and bad; the greatest monarchs, kings, and emperors have been thrown down by death. Where did ever that man dwell that was too strong for death? If strength could have resisted it, then Sampson had missed it. Could greatness have overlooked it, Nebuchadnezzar had escaped it. Could beauty have outfaced it, then Absalom had never met it. Could riches have bribed it, Dives had avoided it. But, Alas! None of these were hardy enough for death.”

Thoughts of dying create in humans a state of great anxiety. For many, it is a great, inevitable unknown. We know it is coming....

**Hebrews 9:27 (KJV)** *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

**Ecclesiastes 3:20 (KJV)** *All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.*

...possibly preceded by pain and suffering.

**Acts 14:22 (KJV)** *Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

**1 Peter 4:12-14 (KJV)** *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/fear-of-death/#flipbook/>

*ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

**John 16:33 (KJV)** *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

We fear separation from our loved ones, the pain of our passing, the pain our passing would cause, and the dissolution of the life that we know.

Indeed, the fear of death often causes men to adopt this attitude apart from Christ, "Eat and drink; for to morrow we die." Much of the chaos we see around us can be attributed to the hopelessness of coming death and the desire to "get all we can now."

For those that do not adopt the nihilistic (life is meaningless) ethos (characteristic spirit) of the culture, the trepidation and dread are always there, especially from middle age onward, lurking in the background.

But it does not have to be this way...

**Romans 8:15-17 (KJV)** *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

Glory to God!

**Romans 8:18-21 (KJV)** *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, 21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

Hallelujah!

### **Working through the Passage**

**Hebrews 2:14 (KJV)** *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;*

1. In the previous verse (Heb 2:13), the elect are called the children of Christ. As we said last week, Christ completely identified Himself with humanity in the Incarnation, taking upon Himself our physical weakness.
2. Since His children are flesh and blood, Christ also took on flesh and blood...a human nature...became a Man!

**1 Timothy 2:5-6 (KJV)** *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

3. Christ not only became a Man to carry our weaknesses and so become our perfect High Priest (Hebrews chapters 4-5; much more to come on this LORD willing!), but according to the author, Christ did this in order to die!
4. Praise Him! His sacrificial death would destroy Satan's power of death! Hallelujah! But what does this mean?
  - In the Garden of Eden, Man yielded to the temptation of the Devil.

**Genesis 3:6-7a (KJV)** *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened...*

**Romans 5:12 (KJV)** *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*

- Sin resulted (and results) in death.

**Genesis 3:23-24 (KJV)** *Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. 24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

**James 1:14-15 (KJV)** *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*

- That Satan is the instigator of sin—which resulted in death—is the sense in which he had the “power of death.” Satan cannot simply kill whom He wants; however death is the result of Satan's malevolent work.

**Romans 6:23 (KJV)** *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

- Jesus has overthrown him and his power!

**1 John 3:8 (KJV)** *He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

**Hebrews 2:15 (KJV)** *And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

1. Not only has Christ destroyed the devil and his power, but Christ has delivered us!
2. From what? From both death AND the fear thereof!

**Psalms 55:1-4 (KJV)** *To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David. Give ear to my prayer, O God; and hide not thyself from my supplication. 2 Attend unto*

*me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise; 3 Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. 4 My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.*

3. Not only is death a bondage (an eternity in hell), but the fear of death is described as a bondage (Gk: *douleia*...slavery). Thankfully...

**Romans 8:15 (KJV)** *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

**1 John 4:18 (KJV)** *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

4. Hebrews commentator Richard Phillips writes:

“The fear of death is something mankind still faces today. How much of our busyness, or our frenzy for entertainment, is mainly an attempt to divert our gaze from the shadow death casts across our lives? Death is not merely an event that awaits us, but a power that rules us now, the leaven of futility that permeates all our achievements and denies our souls peace and contentment. This, then, is a clear statement of the problem our Lord Jesus came to solve. It is from this that He saves us – not nearly from unhappiness or dysfunction or failure in life. What we need to be saved from is far greater, the comprehensive reign of death, because of sin – a reign that now holds us in bondage through fear...”

5. Beloved, for the unregenerate, the specter of death looms. The fear of it puts man into a state of bondage. It traps him, mistreats him, beats him and wears him down, and creates doubt, worry, depression, and hopelessness!
6. **Christ had delivered us from such!** He has removed such fear and instead given us joy and rejoicing!

**John 10:10 (KJV)** *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

**Isaiah 61:3 (KJV)** *To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*

**Philippians 4:4-5 (KJV)** *Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. 5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*

### **The Right (Biblical) Attitude concerning Death**

1. Fear God instead of Death!

**Luke 12:4-5 (KJV)** *And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.*

2. Rejoice that Death is defeated!

**1 Corinthians 15:55 (KJV)** *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*

**Romans 14:8 (KJV)** *For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*

3. Know that Death shall be finally destroyed!

**1 Corinthians 15:26 (KJV)** *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

**Revelation 21:4 (KJV)** *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

4. Live with this truth: To Die is Gain!

**Philippians 1:20-21 (KJV)** *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. **21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.***

**2 Corinthians 5:8 (KJV)** *We are confident, I say, and willing **rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.***

5. Value and Steward well this Earthly Life, but Learn to Desire that which is Far Better!

**Philippians 1:22-24 (KJV)** *But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. **23** For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; **which is far better:** **24** Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*

**Philippians 1:23 (NLT)** *I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be **far better for me.***

**John 14:1-3 (KJV)** *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. **2** In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

**Revelation 14:13 (KJV)** *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*

#### **Inner and Outer Changes as a result of these truths:**

1. Be spiritually prepared.
  - Physical dissolution is coming for us all unless the LORD returns first. Repent and believe the Gospel! Make your calling and election sure!
  - Is there anything more important than the eternal state of your soul? Christ frees us from the bondage of death and its fear!

**2 Corinthians 5:10 (KJV)** *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

**Revelation 20:11-15 (KJV)** *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. **12** And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. **13** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. **14** And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. **15** And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

2. Be mentally and emotionally prepared.

- Do not fear sickness or death; fear God! Remember Christ! Remember the Gospel! Live joyfully! Number your days and apply your hearts unto wisdom! (Ps 90:12)
- Remember that you have been granted eternal life!

**John 5:25-29 (KJV)** *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. **26** For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; **27** And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. **28** Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, **29** And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

**John 6:38-40 (KJV)** *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. **39** And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. **40** And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

**John 10:27-30 (KJV)** *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: **28** And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. **29** My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. **30** I and my Father are one.*

3. Be relationally prepared.

- Don't die with regrets. Repent now. Reconcile now if possible. Forgive now.
- Teach your children the narrow road and the path of life: Christ!
- Leave a testimony...a legacy. What will people say about you when you die?

**Psalms 78:5-8 (KJV)** *For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: **6** That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: **7** That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: **8***

*And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.*

4. Be financially prepared (as applicable).

- If you die before the LORD's return, you'll be rejoicing in the His presence, but your family must carry on.
- Have you provided for them? Do they know your will? Will they be fighting over your stuff? Can they afford to bury you? Breadwinners: is your family set to prosper?

**Proverbs 13:22 (KJV)** *A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*

**2 Corinthians 12:14 (KJV)** *Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*

**1 Timothy 5:8 (KJV)** *But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

### **Some encouraging quotes from the Puritans**

"Death is our birthday; we say falsely when we call death the last day. It is, indeed the beginning of an everlasting day, and is there any grievance in that? Death is the funeral of our vices and the resurrection of our graces. Death was the daughter of sin, and then death shall that be fulfilled: "The daughter shall destroy the mother." We shall nevermore be infected with sin, nor troubled with ill natures." -Nicholas Byfield

"Death is a believers ferryman to ferry him over to the land of rest; it opens the portal into heaven. The day of a Christian's death is the birthday of his heavenly life; it is his ascension day to glory; it is his marriage day with Jesus Christ. After his funeral begins his marriage. Well, then, might Solomon say, "Better is the day of a man's death than the date of his birth." -Thomas Watson

"Believers are immediately with God after their dissolution, then it is their duty to long for that dissolution and cast many a longing look toward heaven. So did Paul: "I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better." The advantages of this exchange are unspeakable: you have gold for brass; wine for water; substance for shadow; solid glory for very vanity. Oh! If the dust of this earth were but once blown out of your eyes that you might see the divine glory, how worry you would be to live, how willing to die! - John Flavel

"Did Christ meet death with such a heavy heart? Let the hearts of Christians be the lighter for this when they come to die. The bitterness of death was all squeezed into Christ's cup. He was made to drink up the very dregs of it, so that our death might be the sweeter to us. Alas! There is nothing now left in death that is frightful or troublesome beside the pain of dissolution, that natural evil of it." - John Flavel

### **Closing Prayer**

LORD, you have delivered us from the bondage of the fear of death. Help us to live joyfully, courageously, and intentionally in that mighty deliverance! In Jesus' Name, Amen!