

Title: Three Certainties
Text: Hebrews 9: 24-28
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I am greatly encouraged by you who are faithful to the gospel of Christ. I really believe God has graciously given a new heart of genuine faith and love to many here. I thank God continually for you.

At the same time, I have a great heaviness in my heart, for those who have no interest and pay so little attention to what is being preached.

I wonder sometimes if folks realize that the preacher can actually see everyone sitting before him.

For those who do not see the need in hearing the gospel of God's grace, let me first appeal to you on a basis of just common courtesy.

Have you ever considered that the believers here work very hard for the money to pay the bills so that the gospel can be preached here just for you?

Have you ever considered that some arrive early before each service to get everything set up and stay late to pack it all away so that there is nothing for you to do but come in, open your bibles and hear of the Redeemer that is able to make the difference between your eternal condemnation and eternal life?

Have you ever considered the labor that goes into preparing three, sometimes four, sermons a week for you? It takes each day, all day, often through the night, in prayer and study, to seek a message from God just for you.

Have you ever considered that your name—each one here, youngest to oldest—is being continually spoken before God, begging God, that if it is his will, to have mercy on your soul?

Have you ever considered the sorrow it causes after laboring in the word, arriving only to find that you're not here, or if you are, to see you not even open a bible or pay attention? My comfort and assurance is knowing that "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. (Psalm 121: 1) But the day I cease having this burden for your souls is the day I'll step aside so someone who does can take my place.

Out of consideration for these things one would think at least out of common courtesy everyone would at least open a bible, at least look up the scriptures, at least listen attentively.

But there are reasons much more to your personal advantage to heed this word. So I have a message just for you concerning those more important considerations. I want each of you to turn in your bibles to Hebrews 9.

My subject is: Three Certainties

The first is certain for everyone here if our Lord does not return first. The second is certain for everyone who meets God outside of Christ. But the third is certain for all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9: 27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

We will deal with the context of the passage in a moment. First, let's just look at these three certainties.

Divisions:

1) First, death is certain for all men--**V27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die.** Death is not by accident or chance but by the appointment of God--**V27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die.** If our Lord does not return first, everyone will die. **As it is appointed unto men once to die.**

2) Secondly, judgment is certain--**v27:...but after this the judgment.** Death will not get you off the hook with God—**after this the judgment.** Whether you pay attention or not, whether you heed the word of God or not—sooner or later you will do business with God—**after death the judgment.**

3) But thirdly, all who rest in Christ through faith shall certainly be saved--**v28: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.**

I. FIRST, DEATH IS CERTAIN--V27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die.

Man is to Blame for Death

Man is to blame for death. God is life and life is of God. Death is because of man. Holy beings never die. Death is the result of man's sin.

In the first state in which God created Adam, he had no sin to cause him to die. But God declared to Adam that death would be the result of disobeying God.

Genesis 2:17: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Genesis 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Romans 5:12: 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:...17:...by one man's offence death reigned by one;...v21:...sin hath reigned unto death...

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death...

"It is appointed **unto men**"—to the whole race—once to die. All flesh is conceived from our first father Adam in sin. All are sinners. Therefore, all flesh shall die physically. Every death—believer and unbeliever—demonstrates that in our flesh dwells only sin.

1 Corinthians 15:22: For as in Adam all die,...

The Fear of Death and Judgment

Most fear death. Therefore death is one of the few things that really gets our attention.

Ecclesiastes 7:2 It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.

When someone close to us dies we are forced to acknowledge that we too shall face death very soon. The day our loved ones die comes around every year so, we are forced to think about death on that day each year.

Application: One of the things that moved me toward this subject is that this past week was the anniversary of the death of Scott and Cheryl's brother Curt who died in 2006. He was the uncle of most of our young people here. I have never mentioned this before, but I have been aware that it is on your minds each year around this time. I mention it now because I hope today I might get your attention—you too will die. You may as yet have questions about his death. But one thing is certain—the time of his death was appointed by God. So is yours and so is mine.

Folks use phrases like “untimely death” or “they died before their time” or “she cheated death”—untrue! The time of every person's death is appointed by God. We may be late or early for every other appointment throughout our life but not death. The exact time of our death is appointed by God.

There are no exceptions: not youth or accomplishment, rich and poor, male and female, all shall end in death.

Job 14:1: Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. 2 He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

Today is the day for us to prepare to die.

James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

Application: Above everything else, the fact that you must die—and very soon—ought to wake you up to pay attention. It should be a constant reminder of your sin and therefore a constant reminder of your need of God's mercy.

Ecclesiastes 12:1: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

**II. NOT ONLY IS DEATH CERTAIN BUT ALSO THE JUDGEMENT OF GOD IS CERTAIN--27:
And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:**

Christ is the Advocate

Illustration: If you had an appointment to stand before an earthly judge you would give full attention to your lawyer, your advocate. You be at every meeting.

You will stand before the holy judge of heaven and earth after you die. These church services are meetings to hear from Christ—the only Advocate who will speak for his people in that day.

I am hear to preach to you that Christ Jesus, who alone is able to save you from your sins, will be the very Judge before whom all shall stand in that day.

Acts 10:42: And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

John 5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Hardness of Heart

Yet, the very fact that men harden their hearts only proves their dire need of this gospel and the grace of God to quicken us and make us receive Christ.

Romans 2:5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Condemnation the Issue

The necessary issue with all unbelievers is condemnation. All who do not believe on Christ are under condemnation.

John 3: 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

Illustration: If the doctor diagnosed you with an illness that would surely end in death except you heed his instruction, would you pay attention to him? Would you gladly receive the medicine he prescribed? Would you do everything he told you to do that you might be saved?

The great Physician has declared you are a sinner. Sure to die. Sure to come into judgment. Every believer here will tell you, you do not want to face God in your sins. The psalmist said, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no flesh living be justified."

Yet, sinner, you ignore the truth. You look for reasons to absent yourself from hearing the gospel of Christ, the only one who can save you from your sins. If you do come you don't even bother to listen. Do you read the word of God at home?

Acts 17: 30: And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Your death is certain. After death, your judgment is certain. But listen closely now,

III. FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE ON CHRIST SALVATION IS CERTAIN. Here is the context of our passage.

Hebrews 9: 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many

God the Son is the Representative and Substitute of his People

God the eternal Son became a Man. Christ as a Man was found perfect, fit to take the place of those given him of the Father. So Christ did what God the Father sent him to do, Christ sacrificed himself for his people. He took our sin upon himself—he bare the sin of many. He himself bore the judgment of God due to those he represented.

God is Satisfied with his People by Christ

The fact that God raised Christ from the dead declares that each of the many whom he represented had their sin put away so that they shall not die spiritually. Their judgment is settled so that they shall not be judged a second time for their sins.

Salvation is in a Look

Verse 28 says **“and unto them”**---each one of the many for whom Christ died shall be quickened to life by the Holy Spirit of God.

Verse 28 says **“and unto them that look for him”**—the good news of the gospel is that eternal salvation is in a look. Christ died unto sin once—it is done. He satisfied justice for each one for whom he died—it is done. There is no more offering for sin—it is done. There is no more work to be done by those for whom he finished the work—all is done. Believing Christ is looking to Christ and those who look never stop looking—we live by faith—we live looking for him.

Verse 28 says **“and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”** Our Lord’s assurance, to all who believe on him is because he is our Righteousness. Our Advocate is the One who will be our Judge in that day so that when we die physically we shall be with him immediately and we shall not come into condemnation.

John 11: 25: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Believers are not like you who are fearful of death because you know you will certainly face the judgment of condemnation—it is certain to come to you who pass from this life in your sins.

But by the electing, redeeming, regenerating, preserving grace of our God we are looking for Christ who shall appear in all his glory to usher us into that eternal salvation which he accomplished for us. We shall be changed into His own blessed likeness, to be with Him as the companions of His heart forever.

Sinner, heed this word now why there is time. Look to Christ and you shall be saved. Look away and you shall perish forever.

Believer, look unto him, keep watching. He is own his way! We will be with him as quickly as a vapor vanishes in the sun.

Amen!