

Series: Psalm
Title: Death, Then What?
Text: Psalm 16: 11
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What happens after a believer dies? That is our subject. Our text is found in Psalm 16. This Psalm was penned by David but it is the word of David's Lord, Christ Jesus.

Mr. Spurgeon points out that sometimes the Psalms seem to be the voice of David and sometimes the voice of Christ. And even that fact shows us that Christ and his people are one—what may be said of them may be said of him.

Brethren, we ought to think about that often. It is a very comforting thought to know that we are one with Christ, inseparably one with Christ, all by the grace of God.

One of the verses that reveals this Psalm is about Christ is verse 10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

Every other person who goes to the grave sees corruption but not Christ's body. Christ went to the grave. His body lay in the grave for three days. But Christ saw no corruption.

And because we are one with Christ, what we read in Job is true of us, "though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:" (Job 19: 26)

Then what happened to our Savior? I want to know because whatever happened to Christ is sure to happen to us. What happens after a believer dies?

Psalm 16:11: Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

This is what happens after a believer dies. Believer, do you trust that your salvation is all of God by his grace in Christ? Then you can say these words of yourself.

Psalm 16: 11: Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Proposition: One day God shall raise each believer from the dead to the path of life, where we shall enjoy the fullness of joy in his presence and pleasures forevermore at his right hand.

Divisions: I. **Assurance concerning the path of life**—Thou wilt shew me the path of life; II. **Assurance concerning where that path shall lead**—in thy presence, at thy right hand; III. **Assurance concerning the joy at the end of that path of life**—fullness of joy; pleasures for evermore.

I. ASSURANCE CONCERNING THE PATH OF LIFE—Thou wilt shew me the path of life;

God Will Show

Who will do the showing? God will, "Thou wilt." This is the confidence Christ Jesus had in the faithfulness of God the Father. God the Son knew the faithfulness of his Father because the Son of God is a mirror image of his Father's faithfulness.

Hebrews 1:3: Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power...

So Christ had this confidence, "Thou wilt show me the path of life." Therefore, Christ's last words were, "Father, into THY HANDS I commend my Spirit." (Lu 23: 46) He knew the Father would take him to glory because the Lord Jesus told the thief on the cross, "Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." (Lu 23: 43)

Christ was certain of God the Father's promise to him because Christ finished the work. Christ put an end to the transgression, an end to sin. He brought in everlasting righteousness for each individual child for whom he died. Christ knew the Father was well-pleased.

The Path of Life

What will God show me?—"the path of life." On the 3rd day, the Father reunited our Lord's spirit and his body. The stone over the tomb was rolled back and the Savior came forth.

Let me point out something to you in John 11. Do you remember how Lazarus came forth from the tomb? Christ spoke and raised Lazarus from the dead.

John 11:44: And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Now turn to John 20. Notice the difference in how Christ came forth from the grave.

John 20: 6: Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, 7: And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

When the Holy Spirit entered Christ, Christ calmly took off his grave clothes, took his time folding them up, then folded up the napkin and placed them in separate places. Then he came forth from the grave with none of the grave clothes Lazarus came forth with. Why this difference?

Lazarus was only raised from the dead. He would die again. He pictured a sinner regenerated by God who yet wears lots of graveclothes in our old man of flesh. But Christ conquered death so that not he—nor anyone in him—can ever be held by death.

Acts 2:24: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Hebrews 7:16: Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. [this is why Rom 6: 14 says, "sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.]

Revelation 1:18: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Romans 6: 9: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

The strength of sin is the law and Christ fulfilled the law for his people.

Hebrews 10:12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

He destroyed not only death—but the devil who had the power of death. (Hebrews 2:14-15: And “delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” We cannot die, the law cannot charge us, and Christ shall show us the path of life when we die. This is why it is said,

Hebrews 7:25: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the “uttermost” them that come unto God by him, seeing he “ever liveth” to make intercession for them.

Those disciples stood there and watched as our Savior ascended up into heaven out of sight. Can't you just hear the heavenly host cry out, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in;” (Ps 24: 7)

So my brethren, let's live as one that really is raised from the dead and alive unto God because it is true for you believer.

Romans 6: 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12: Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13: Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Through our whole life our God shall show us the path of life. He will do it just as if you were the only one needing to be led. God our Savior promises to devote his wisdom and strength to you, believer.

When Emma was a baby she would walk along beside me but sometimes she would stray off the path. I would take her by the hand and gently turn her and hold her up while she made her way back to my side. Then I would lead her along.

When the way is dark and you feel like you are about to stumble out of the way, Christ will reach forth and take you by the hand, and lead you, just like a father leads his little child. He will be gentle. He will be patient with you. When you start to turn out of the way, he will say, “This is the way; walk thou in it.”

We want to help those we love. But there will come a day when it's out of our power to be of any help whatsoever. They will close their eyes in death. But there God will be, Christ our Savior, come down to take them by the hand—to show them the path of life.

Christ is the Path of Life

Sinner, do you know what path I am speaking of? You who are in the broad way that leads to destruction—do you have any idea that the path of life is a person? Christ is the Way and he said,

Matthew 7: 13: Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Your wisdom will lead you astray—submit to Christ the Wisdom of God. I remember being a teenager and thinking that old preacher doesn't know what I'm facing. Christ does. Do you realize Christ was a teenager once? He went through puberty. Scriptures say, “He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, yet without sin.” That means he knows exactly the temptations you face and the path you are on and the hardships. Believe on Christ and he will lead you in the right way. I can assure the path through this life gets wider, more dangerous,

more sorrowful. You don't want to tread it alone. At death when you face your greatest adversary—then the Path of life will lead you in the path of life. Enter in at the straight gate now—believe on Christ and follow him.

II. ASSURANCE OF WHERE THIS PATH LEADS—V11: in thy presence, at thy right hand;

We shall one day go into God's presence and behold Christ seated there at God's right hand and we ourselves be given the choicest seat in God's kingdom. God's right hand signifies a place of favor and honor and security. Remember, when the Son of man comes in his glory—"he shall set the sheep on his right hand but the goats on his left." (Mt 25: 34) The right hand signifies security, favor and honor.

Every saint will receive the choicest seat of honor and favor and security. Our Victorious King says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev 3: 21)

Heaven is not like earth, with the sinful desires to have more than others, to be recognized above fellow brethren, there will be no envy and no jealousy.

Revelation 21: 27: And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

So God is not going to put one away in some dark corner of his courts and exalt another before all. Instead, he will put each of his saints in the place of honor—in his presence, at his right hand.

Our Guarantee

Our first, guarantee that we shall be raised into his presence at his right hand is because this is where Christ is and where every elect child of God is in him.

1 Peter 3:22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Ephesians 2: 6: And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

Secondly, our guarantee is because Christ prayed for his people to be with him,

John 17:24: Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Thirdly, our guarantee that he shall show us the path of life and we shall sit there with him is the Lord Jesus promises you and I who believe,

John 14:19: Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

One day every believer shall be raised up with a new body and in our bodies in person we shall go where Christ our forerunner has gone and be in God's presence, at God's right hand. Try to imagine that!

III. ASSURANCE OF JOY AT THE END OF THIS PATH—in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Fullness of Joy and Pleasures

Think about this phrase “FULLNESS of JOY.” On this earth, if you heaped every joy you and I have ever known and put them all together, they would not come to close to “FULLNESS OF JOY.

Mr. Spurgeon: Called this life “the grace life” and the life to come “the glory life.” Believer, don’t you find that there are times when your heart just overflows with joy and pleasure by the Lord’s presence even now? For example:

He shows you in the scriptures that he chose us—by his grace—apart from anything in us. He makes us to behold how great it is that our sin can never separate us from Christ because nothing about us put us in Christ to begin with. And you just find your heart full of joy—that our God chose us by his sovereign, free, electing grace and loves us everlastingly without change.

He shows you how complete Christ accomplished our redemption—that as God said, “My righteous servant justified many.”—you hear God say, “Your sin and iniquities I remember no more.”—you hear God say, “Sin, disobedience to the law, shall never be charged to you because you are no longer under the law, you are under grace. You have fulfilled and established the whole law when Christ did it for you. So the law from now till the day you die is fulfilled for you.” And your heart overflows.

He reminds you that “even when we were dead in sins”—unable to will, unable to deal, unable to strike a bargain, unable to give us life—“even when we were dead HE quickened us together with Christ....By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast.” And our heart just bursts with joy.

If that is the case in this “grace life” where we see through a glass darkly, just imagine what fullness of joy we will have in God’s presence when we enter into the “glory life” and we see him as he is!

In eternity you shall be so full of joy that you could not be more full of joy. You will have reached the summit of joy and pleasures. We will be so full of joy there will be no room left for sorrow of any kind, no room left for a doubt, or a wish, or even a sad memory. The Spirit of just men made perfect are right now enjoying fullness of joy in his presence and pleasures at his right hand.

What is this Joy and These Pleasures?

He tells us what this fullness of joy and these pleasures will be—**IN THY PRESENCE, AT THY RIGHT HAND.** John saw them all “fall down and worship HIM” (Rev 5: 14). The joy and pleasures of heaven will be seeing our triune God in the face of Jesus Christ. We shall see him in every word in scripture, every type, every shadow—I’ll bet we will be amazed how little we see of him in it now. Then we shall see how he worked in every detail of our lives—to protect us, to provide the best for us in every situation when we were totally unaware.

Ephesians 2:7: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Psalm 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

That is something else that will make this joy and these pleasures full. We will be able to see and worship our Redeemer conformed perfectly to his image with the absence of sin. Imagine realizing your salvation perfected; imagine being fully aware that you are “without fault before the throne of God.”; imagine never growing weary of hearing of God and his Christ, never weary of singing praises to him; imagine perfectly delighting for him to have all glory and being able to give him that glory perfectly.

Imagine living in the constant realization of perfect security. We will have no reason to fear death—death will be no more; no reason to fear harm or damage of any kind to your person or your body

Imagine living free from every form of sin and evil. We will have nothing to worry over: no weaknesses; no temptations, no sin which is sorrow, only holiness which is happiness.

Imagine having a body with no trace of sin but perfectly conformed to the image of God: no sore muscles, no wrinkles; no pains of any kind; no puzzles too big for your brain; nothing to leave you scratching your head in ignorance

Imagine having perfect fellowship with your brethren. Some do not think we will know one another in heaven. Moses and Elias were recognizable in the mount of transfiguration. Some say but if some of my loved ones are not there I will be sad. But in glory we will have a perfect delight in God's holy righteousness and justice. There will be no sorrow over those who justly were cast out. In fact, in Revelation they rejoiced. In heaven we will have perfect holy and righteous fellowship with our brethren.

How Long Will This Last?

How long? "For evermore." This glorious fullness of joy and pleasures will be infinite—a fountain with no end.

It is ridiculous when men speak of God loving men today and casting men into hell the next. Our salvation is by:

- "Everlasting God" (Gen 21: 33)
- "Everlasting covenant" (Gen 17: 19)
- Heavenly Canaan will be an "everlasting possession." (Gen 48: 4)
- "Everlasting priesthood" (Nu 25: 13)
- By "everlasting arms" (Deut 33: 27)
- "The mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him," (Ps 103: 17)
- His kingdom is an "everlasting kingdom" (Ps 145: 13)
- Established on an "everlasting foundation" (Pro 10: 25)
- By one whose name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Is 9: 6)
- "Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation:" (Is 45: 17)

A Word of Warning

Let me give a word of warning: if you meet God without faith in Christ, hell will be "everlasting damnation." And the damnation will be separation from this great good God of mine!

Matthew 7: 22: Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23: And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

You cannot enter into this path of life: by your wisdom, by your will or by your works. Cast yourself on the mercy of God. He is able to show you the path of life.

This came to me early this morning just before I left to come here. This was written by Matthew Henry and found after he died. He wrote,

"Would you know where I am? I am at home in my Father's house – in the mansion Jesus prepared for me there. I am where I want to be – where I have longed and often desired to be. I am no longer on a stormy sea – but in a safe and quiet harbor. My working time is done – I am resting! My sowing time is done – I am reaping! My joy is as the joy of harvest!

Would you know how it is with me? I am perfect in holiness: grace is swallowed up in glory!

Would you know what I am doing? I see God; I see Him as He is; not as through a glass darkly, but face to face. The sight is transforming, it makes me like Him! I am in the sweet enjoyment of my blessed Redeemer, whom my soul loved, and for whose sake I was willing to part with all. I am here bathing myself at the spring-head of heavenly pleasures and unutterable joys; and therefore, weep not for me. I am here singing hallelujahs incessantly to Him who sits upon the throne, and rest not day or night from praising Him!

Would you know what company I have? Blessed company – better than the best on earth; here are holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. I am here with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God; with blessed Paul, and Peter, and James, and John, and all the saints. And here I meet with many old acquaintances that I fasted and prayed with, who came here before me.

And, lastly, would you consider how long this is to continue? It is a garland that, never withers; a crown of glory that never fades away; after millions of millions of ages, it will be as fresh as it is now; and, therefore, weep not for me!”

Psalm 16:11: Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

Amen!