

To Die in Christ Is Gain - Tim Conway Interviews Bob Jennings

by Bob Jennings

The ultimate goal of the Christian life is to face death in Christ, in His righteousness, and to be redeemed by Him.

Duration: 14:58

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 25:2, Psalm 90:12, Ecclesiastes 9:10, Romans 6:23, Romans 14:8, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Philippians 1:21, Colossians 3:23, 1 Peter 4:10, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Wholehearted Devotion", "Mortality And Faith"

Description

This sermon reflects on the importance of wholehearted devotion to God, using the example of Amaziah who did what was right but not with all his heart. It delves into a conversation about facing mortality, the brevity of life, and the privilege of serving the Lord. The speaker emphasizes the need to live each day for Christ, make every moment count, and ultimately find consolation in loving and serving the Lord wholeheartedly, especially in the face of death.

Transcript

Amaziah did that which is right in the sight of God, yet not with all his heart. Wow! Lord, don't let me have that on my tombstone. Don't let that be my biography.

I did right in the sight of God, but not with all my heart. Help us. Well Bob, since you found out that you have cancer, I guess I'm wondering, you had told me last night that it was one thing for you to think about what you might do in your life when you were healthy, and you made it sound like, but now being in this situation, maybe it causes you to think different.

And I'm wondering, now that you know you have cancer, is there anything that comes to your mind as far as how things have changed in your thinking? How you view the Lord, or how you view life, or how you view pastoring, or being a husband, or how you view death? You know, since you found out, are there any areas where you really feel like my thinking has really changed a lot, viewing death from this vantage point versus all the rest of my life, how I viewed it? In some ways, no, it hasn't changed. I would say it has heightened and magnified the things that I've always known as a Christian. I think one thing that I've seen more of is just the incredible privilege that the Lord has given us of serving Him in this present age.

The incredible privilege of walking with Him, of enjoying Him, the incredible privilege of serving Him, and being in the battle for truth, being in the arena of faith, the incredible privilege of opening the Scriptures. It's just such a privilege to serve the Lord, the King of Kings, and to gather together with the saints, and to sing the songs of Zion, to sing the songs of God right in the midst of the enemy's camp. It's just such a high privilege, and I think I've seen more of that in my sense I've learned of this cancer.

And also, especially since I became a Christian, I've realized that life is brief, the flesh is frail, and death is certain, but all those things, yeah, they are more real, it's just more reality. And I've been very, very mindful as a Christian that life is brief. You hear older Christians say that, and preachers tell you that always.

And I, from right when I was first converted, you know, I was very mindful that my life is brief, and that we don't have much time, and that it's going to go by so quickly. And the Scripture says it over and over again, comparing our life to a sleep, comparing our life to a runner that passes by, comparing our life to a grass, not rocks but grass, not trees but grass. And so, I'm very aware of that, but now, you know, it's happened.

And I can remember when I was 25, and I was driving a gravel truck, and there was an older Christian riding with me for a while, he was just riding with me to have some fellowship and pass the time, and he was 75. And I remember thinking, now, he's three times my age, I'm one third of him, I'm 25, he's 75, and look at all the time that I've got. And, but also at the same time feeling like, I know it's going to go quickly, I know it is.

And I can remember the very setting, the day, the time, the place, you know, where I was thinking that. And it has gone very fast, and I can remember in my 20s, as a Christian, I would, it's like there was something special for each year. I had the thought, I'm going to try to remember something about every year, and for quite a while I could.

This was the year that such and such happened, this was the year that we went here or there, to this conference or whatever. But then the years, somehow they pile up, they go on, and things get blurry, it all gets muddled together, and you can't remember something from every year. And the children were young, and I just, I can hardly believe how quickly the years went by where the children were in the house with us.

It's just, it's just incredible how it happens, you can't explain it, you cannot explain it, you cannot lay hold of it, you can't stop it, you can't slow it down. And just all of a sudden the children are growing up and they're moving out, and it's all over, and the chapter is closed. And all you can do is make every day count for Christ.

And you know, the Christian, in a way, he's living for eternity, he's living for the big picture, he's living for the big things, and in a way he's the farthest thing from being an existentialist of anybody. But in another way, he's the greatest existentialist. I mean, it's like we live for every moment, we live for every day, we want to make every moment count.

And so all, it's like, all we can do is presently walk with God, day by day, and just be mindful of Him continually. And that's mere Christianity. You know, it's like the Lord says in the New Covenant, I'll write my laws on your mind and put them on your heart.

It's like God is the supreme reality. And the Christian just walks around naturally mindful of God and a communion with Him. And that's the best we can do, that's the most we can do to redeem the time and lay

hold on eternal life.

And when we come to the end, that's what makes our pillow soft, a deathbed pillow soft, is that you realize that in a way you've come infinitely short at your best. You've come infinitely short of perfection or conformity to Christ or anything that way. You've come so short, but in another way, in another way, you know, it's kind of a mystery.

It's like you can come to the end with some real confidence that I have, Lord, I have sought to walk with you. I have loved you and I have tried. I have really, I have really given my life to you.

I have in some real measure lived my life for you, Lord. And that is an incredible consolation when you come to the end of your life. It's just incredibly, an incredible consolation, an incredible sweetness.

And when you come to the end, you know, you just think, it just comes down to this. Do I really love Christ or not? I mean, when you boil everything down, have I loved the Lord or not? Has he been my joy, my glory, my love, my affection, my all in all? And if that is real, if you can really say that while you know it, and your conscience bears witness, and you can say, I've done what I could, like Mary. She did what she could.

The Lord said that. And you know, you can look around and you see people that have been more gifted or gifted in other areas, and they see more fruit in their life, more fruit in their ministry, and so on. But that's what you've got to have.

You've got to be able to say, Lord, I did what I could. Yeah, that's beautiful when you can say that before God. And what a mercy, what a mercy, what a mercy to come to the end of our lives and know that you're not going to die in your sin, that you're not going to die in your sin, that you're going to die in Christ and in his righteousness.

The songwriter says, bold shall I stand in that great day. To know that we're going to die with our sins forgiven, and we can exclaim how blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. How extremely blessed, extremely blessed.

You know, you think of that passage in John chapter 8, where the Lord says three times, I think it's in verse 21, and then twice in verse 24, you will seek me and you'll die in your sins. And if you don't believe in me, you will die in your sins. And then the third time, he says you'll die in your sins.

And if you really have eyes to see, you just tremble at it, at the people all around you know that are dying in their sins. I mean, I know people that died in a car. I know people that died in a house.

They died in a hospital. People that died in a fire. People that died in a creek.

I heard of one fellow that died in a manure pit. And I mean, you just, terrible ways to die. But none of that compares to dying in your sin.

To dying in your sin. It's like, yeah, we die from our sins. The wages of sin is death.

But none of that, but here the Lord is saying a little something different. He's talking about dying in your sin. It's like dying and facing eternity and judgment with this contraband on you.

With this sin on you. You know, the sting of death is sin. It's like this, this, that's what makes it so terrible.

Admittedly, sin caused death. But nevertheless, the thing that makes death so terrible is you've got this sin, this guilt. You're in trouble with God.

And God is going to find this contraband on you. He's going to find this bad record. And that is what's so terrible.

It's like men have got this idea that they're going to beat God. You know, they're going to beat Him. They're going to live their life without God.

They're not going to live their life for God. And they're going to die and get by with it. But they will not.

They will not get by. The Lord Jesus is coming back. He's going to raise the dead.

He's going to call everybody before Him. Every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess.

And truth will come out. And they will be caught in their sins. So, to be able to face death in Christ, in His righteousness, that is everything.

In a way, it's everything. I mean, that's the ultimate. The Lord has given us a high, a holy, a heavenly calling.

He's called us to His kingdom and glory. And that is the end of the salvation of the Lord, His final, full redemption.

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