

# To Die Is Gain?

by David Wilkerson

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*The sermon challenges modern Christians to reevaluate their perspective on death and to trust in the promise of eternal life through resurrection.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:19-21, John 11:25-26, Romans 8:18, 1 Corinthians 15:54-57, 2 Corinthians 4:17-18, Philippians 1:21, Philippians 1:23, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, Hebrews 2:14-15, Revelation 21:4

**Topics:** "Death", "Eternal Life"

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## Description

David Wilkerson emphasizes Paul's perspective on death, stating that for believers, to die is gain as it leads to being with Christ, which is far better than earthly life. He contrasts the early Christians' understanding of death with modern attitudes, highlighting how materialism has made death a taboo subject. Wilkerson argues that many Christians are trapped by their love for worldly possessions, fearing death as a loss rather than seeing it as a passage to eternal glory. He encourages believers to embrace the call to forsake worldly entanglements and to understand that true life is found in Christ, not in material wealth. Ultimately, he reminds us that resurrection, not death, is the ultimate healing and hope for believers.

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## Transcript

Paul said it: "To die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). That kind of talk is absolutely foreign to our modern spiritual vocabularies. We have become such life worshippers, that we have very little desire to depart to be with the Lord.

Paul said, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Philippians 1:23). Yet, for the sake of edifying the converts, he thought it best to "stay in the shell." Or, as he put it, "live in the flesh."

Was Paul morbid? Did he have an unhealthy fixation with death? Did Paul show a lack of respect for the life God had blessed him with? Absolutely not! Paul lived life to the fullest. To him, life was a gift, and he had used it well to fight a good fight. He had overcome the fear of the "sting of death" and could now say, "It's better to die and be with the Lord than to stay in the flesh."

Those who die in the Lord are the winners; we who remain are the losers. Death is not the ultimate healing: resurrection is! Death is the passage, and sometimes that passage can be painful. No matter how much pain and suffering wreak havoc on these bodies, it is not even worthy to be compared with the

unspeakable glory that awaits those who endure the passage.

Any message about death bothers us. We try to ignore even thinking about it. We suspect those who talk about it of being morbid. Occasionally we will talk about what heaven must be like, but most of the time the subject of death is taboo.

How different the first Christians were! Paul spoke much about death. In fact, our resurrection from the dead is referred to in the New Testament as our "blessed hope." But nowadays, death is considered an intruder that cuts us off from the good life we have been accustomed to. We have so cluttered our lives with material things that we are bogged down with life. The world has trapped us with materialism. We can no longer bear the thought of leaving our beautiful homes, our lovely things, our charming sweethearts. We seem to be thinking, "To die now would be too great a loss. I love the Lord, but I need time to enjoy my real estate. I'm married. I've yet to prove my oxen. I need more time."

Have you noticed there is very little talk, nowadays, about heaven or about leaving this old world behind? Instead, we are bombarded with messages on how to use our faith to acquire more things. What a stunted concept of God's eternal purposes! No wonder so many Christians are frightened by the thought of death. The truth is, we are far from understanding Christ's call to forsake the world and all its entanglements. He calls us to come and die, to die without building memorials to ourselves, to die without worrying how we should be remembered. Jesus left no autobiography, no headquarters complex, no university or Bible college. He left nothing to perpetuate his memory, but the bread and the wine.

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