

Yea Though I Walk Through the Valley of the Shadow

by Jack Hyles

The speaker emphasizes the importance of faith and preparation for death, viewing it as a change of habitat rather than a source of fear.

Duration: 35:19

Scripture: Exodus 12:13, Joshua 5:13, Psalm 23:1, Psalm 91:1, John 14:2, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Valley Times"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal story about encountering a young boy in a dark alley. Despite the boy's aggressive behavior, the preacher's heart was filled with compassion and a desire to help him. The preacher then relates this experience to the verse from Psalm 23:4, 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' He emphasizes that death is a universal fear, but through faith in God, we can find comfort and overcome our fears. The preacher also reflects on his own experiences facing death as a paratrooper in World War II and witnessing the deaths of others. He highlights the difference between the lost and the saved, emphasizing that God wants to cleanse and make us His children. The sermon concludes with a mention of Pershing Square in Chicago, where the preacher has seen others preaching to the 'nuts' and encourages the audience to share the message of God's love with others.

Transcript

And I'm going to speak this morning very simply on that one little line, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Now, when was the 23rd Psalm written? Most people, I think, would say that the 23rd Psalm was written by David when he was a lad tending the sheep. I do not think so.

The 23rd Psalm is far too serious a psalm for one to write as a boy. He talks about facing the valley of the shadow of death. I know not any time in David's life, before he was anointed king, before he was anointed as a boy in the field in the house of Jesse, when he faced the shadow of death.

I do not know any time in David's early youth, or David's teenage years, when he could say, Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies. I always think about the little boy that his mom and dad had spanked him. I mean, just wailed the tar out of him.

Mom had done it, and dad had done it, and sent him to his room, and he felt like the whole world was against him, and finally it came time to eat, and they said, Come on down here and set the table, behave yourself, and eat. And so the little boy sat there by himself, mother over here and dad over here, poor little kid, quivering, like that, you know. And finally the dad said, That's a lesson! The little boy could not think of anything to say.

He said, Dear Lord, I thank you that Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies. And so, but David, David had never, in his teenage years, could never say, Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies. I think that David wrote the 23rd Psalm.

I think that David wrote it after or during the rebellion of Absalom, when David had fled the country, and gone to a little place called Mahanaim. And there he had seen two worlds. The word Mahanaim means the place of two camps.

He had seen not only the camp of people on this earth, but God had given David the ability to look to heaven, and God had pulled the curtain back, and David had seen God's army in heaven protecting him. And so David, I think, when he was there, facing, it seemed, death, David said, Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies. But he said, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.

Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. And I called your attention to that one line. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

Nothing makes us flinch like death. Nothing causes all of us to fear like death. Not a one of us would be happy this morning if he found that suddenly today his life were going to be taken.

Twice in my life I faced death. Once I really faced it, and the other time I thought I was facing it. I was a paratrooper in World War II.

I made, I went to training in Fort Benning, Georgia, and made five training jumps. On my fifth jump, it was the last jump I had to make before getting my wings. I jumped out.

The paratroopers, they say, Stand to the door. You put your left foot in the door, and you put your hand like this, just outside the plane. You look forward, and the sergeant says, Ready? Go! And you jump, turning 45 degrees to the left, putting your arm around your reserve parachute, the main parachute's on the back.

You put your arm around the reserve parachute, and you count 1,000, 2,000, 3,000. That's how long it takes to count to three seconds. And one fellow, he didn't make it because they said, Count to 3,000.

He said, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. He never made it. And he pulled the ripcord, you see, after 3,000. But then the parachute opens, and if the main chute does not open or has a malfunction, then there's a reserve chute.

Now, the main chute is open automatically as you leave the plane. But if you count 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, and the main chute is not open, then you pull a ripcord here on the reserve chute that is on your chest. And so I counted 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000.

My chute did not open. Well, you jump from 800 feet. You fall 100 feet a second.

I counted to 7,000 before I finally opened my reserve chute. I was one second from death. Just one second.

Strange thing. You know what I thought about? Something I'd done wrong when I was a kid. I'd stolen a baseball glove when I was a kid.

Stole it. I mean, I stole it. It was his.

It wasn't mine. It was his. It became mine and was no longer his.

And stole it. And I saw that baseball glove, and I thought, I wish I had a chance to go back and take that glove back right now. But I was one second from death.

I thought I was dying. And then there was a time when I was on an airplane flying back from Tokyo, Japan, and the landing gears would not come down. The wheels would not come down over a hair field.

We circled the field for an hour until all the fuel was used up. And I wondered maybe. I wondered if maybe this was it.

Then there was a time in Texas when I was preaching in Austin, Texas. I was catching a plane between Dallas and Austin. And I decided at the last minute, I think I missed the plane.

Anyway, for some reason I didn't get on the plane. And that plane crashed on the way. I was just that far from getting on the plane.

None of us likes to think of death. But I believe this is the one thing that has changed in my life through these years more than any other single thing. Death is no longer bad to me.

I do not worry a great deal about death anymore. Death is only a change of habitat. It's moving from one place to the other.

And there's nothing to me, nothing is as overrated as death. Now, if you're not saved, it is underrated. You have a right to fear.

You have a right to shrink back. You have a right to worry. You have a right to cringe.

You have a right not to want to look at a corpse. You have a right not to want to talk about it and to get your mind on something else if you're not saved. But to those who are saved, death is highly overrated.

I, through these years, have watched people die. And David, in the 23rd Psalm in verse 4, he shows us the way to go. And what a way to go.

David, he thinks it's about to die. He is facing death. He's at the door.

He did not die, but he thought he was. And David is facing death. And he said, And I want to call your attention to five words from that little statement.

The first one is the smallest word in the English language. I. I. He didn't say, He likens death to walking through a mountain pass. And in the Eastern, the Eastern custom in the Eastern lands, when a person on a vacation or a trip would come to a mountain pass, each mountain pass had its own guide.

That guide would come and meet you at the first part of the pass and walk with you through the mountain pass until you got to the other side. Then he would leave you and let you go on your own. And they would say, We walk through the mountain pass.

And David likens death to this. Here's a valley or a mountain pass and a very dangerous place. And we call it death.

And David did not say, He said, What is he saying? Every man's got to go for himself. You can call the preacher when you're sick, but you can't call him to die with you. You can call your wife to your bedside.

You can be afraid at night and call for dad to come home. But you can't when you face death. You've got to face it by yourself.

I mean when the cold, chilling hand of the death angel comes and when the doctor looks at you and feels the pulse and he tries to find a pulse and there's none and he puts that thing around your arm and takes your blood pressure and looks to the family and you're breathing like that and the doctor looks and says, That's it. You've got to go by yourself. You can go places your wife can't go with you.

Preacher can't go with you. Husband can't go with you. Friend can't go with you.

You've got to go by yourself. That's why the most important thing in this world is to get ready to die. The man who's not prepared to die is the biggest fool of all.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Now the second word I call your attention is this, the word walk. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow.

That word walk there implies a steady gait. He didn't run. Nobody wants to run to death.

Doctor, if I said you're going to die today, you wouldn't say praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah.

Now, I think, me and you then, you've got time to confess your sins. It'll be okay. But David said, I walk.

He didn't say I'm dragged. No, he didn't say I'm pulled. David didn't reluctantly go.

He said, I walk step by step. David said, I'm not afraid to die. I don't want to go to heaven yet.

Paul said, I'd rather stay because it's more needful for other people. But David said, I'm not afraid to go. And, by the way, when you make it completely right with God, though you won't enjoy the journey, you will not be afraid to die.

I've been on airplanes time and time again when it looked like we were going to just, the plane catch on fire. I was flying to Detroit, Michigan. And the engine, the number three engine caught on fire, on an electric plane, looked out, and there it was, burning.

And the fellow beside me looked down and saw the firetrucks and the ambulances on the ground waiting for us to land. And the fellow said, what are those things down there? And I said, I think they have us in mind. He said, this is no time to be funny.

I said, I'm not being funny. But I said, brother, you're not saved. You better get with it.

He said, saved from what? I said, saved from hell. And I told the fellow how to be saved. But it didn't bother me a great deal.

You say, you want to die now? No, I don't want to die now. I want to live until I'm 185. Or like Absalom.

I'm an Absalom. I said, Methuselah. I'll never die like Absalom.

He got his hair caught and died. I'll never die like Absalom. Oh, I wish I could.

But no worry about that. But I told the fellow, I'm not afraid to die. I want to live.

Sure, I want to live. A lot of folks need me. If I died today, I worry sometimes.

If I died today, I've got 25, 30 people. I think it seems like I might be the only hope they have now to make it. I'm trying to help them.

I'm trying to work with them. I don't want to die today. But mark it down.

I'm not afraid to die. I'm not afraid. I mean, it's all settled, brother.

It is done. The great transaction is done. I'm my Lord's and He is mine.

I heard Dr. John Rice one day. I fell out to Dr. Rice. And he said, He said, Somebody's going to kill you one of these days if you don't quit preaching like that.

He said, Brother, you're not going to scare me with heaven. Except he said, Brother, you're not going to scare me with heaven. No, you're not.

I mean, the honest, simple truth is, I don't want to go. I want to stay. I've got some things I want to do.

I've got some folks I want to win. I've got a country I want to help save. But brother, I'll tell you one thing.

You're not going to scare me with that. Not at all. I mean, brother, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

I'm prepared. I'm saved. I'm born again.

My name's in heaven. I'm ready to go. If I've got to go, I'll go.

And I'll be glad to go. I walk. I walk.

I walk. I walk. I walk.

I walk. I walk. I walk.

I walk. I walk. In the name of Jesus I bless the Lord.

The man whom I trust is the one who on the cross came there and shook it and stopped there and killed it. Death is dead as far as I'm concerned. No wonder, no wonder the Apostle could say, Oh, death.

Where is thy sting? Death stung Jesus but it will never sting anybody else. Oh Dr. DeHaan, years ago, when he was a little boy, Richard was a little tyke, was out one day, and Richard came to his dad and said, Dad, what does it mean? The Bible says, Oh death, where is thy sting? And one day, a bee came and stung Richard on the hand or something, and he came in, it was burning and burning, and Dr. DeHaan

took the bee and said, That's the last sting that bee will ever sting. And Richard asked him why, and he said, Because, son, he said a bee can only sting one time.

When it puts its stinger in somebody, the stinger is left in that somebody, it'll never sting anybody else. And he said that's what death is like. Here's what Paul meant when he said, Oh, death, where is thy sting? Two thousand years ago, Jesus took the sting out of death.

The death came, and it put its ugly venom and put its ugly fangs in the body of our Lord. And Jesus said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He burned my body, his body, my sins on the tree. The sting of death is gone.

Now, I'm not worried about death anymore, and you don't have to be either. You don't have to cringe. If you get a pain in your heart, whoo, whoo, I wonder what'll happen.

And I wonder what'll happen, too. I wonder if it's going to be my heart. And every time I go to the hospital, I get, on the way home, I get what the person had.

I can go visit, well, unless I visit somebody that's expecting, but I go home to the hospital, and I feel like, if I visit a fellow who had a heart attack, and he says the pain started in my arm, I have pain in my arm all the way home. Do you have that trouble? And if he said it started in my neck, left side of the neck, then my left side of my neck hurts all the way home. I don't want to die, but I'll tell you what, I'm not afraid to.

Oh, listen this morning, you can say with David if you want to, Yea, though I walk to the valley of the shadow of death, I'll fear no evil, my dad's the captain, my dad's the captain. The next word, yea, first is I, second is walk, third is through. Have you ever noticed that? Doc, he didn't say to the valley of the shadow, he said through the valley of the shadow.

David saw through the tunnel and saw out on the other side. He said, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. A lot of people think, where will you come to die? David didn't talk about to die, he was talking about through dying.

He didn't talk about coming to death, he was talking about coming through death. And David said, Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. He said, I see on the other side, David looked up and saw not only the camp on earth, but he saw the camp in heaven.

He saw God's chariots and God's horses and God's armies in heaven, while the dust of the battle in Jerusalem is still raging, and while Absalom is fighting against David's forces and David faces the darkest day in his life, it looks like he himself is going to be killed. And David said, I see something more than this old world, I see the next world. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I'll fear no evil, for they are with me.

Somebody wrote on a track, and I have a copy of it here, and gave the dying words of some people who died without God. Listen to this. Sir Walter Scott, a renowned, a renowned atheist said, Until this moment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell.

Now I know and feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty. Men live without God, but they don't die without God. I've watched them die.

I've held in this arm right here, I've cradled dozens and scores of people who've gone out into eternity without God. I've heard them scream. I can hear the scream of that old man, and he's texted me to say, Oh, the fire, the fire, oh, preacher, the fire, help me.

I recall just a few months ago, I'd gone to his home and said, Are you saved? He had held up a Masonic ring, and he said, I'm saved that way. He said, That's what I'm trusting for heaven. I'll have you in the ring both, or burn in hell one of these days, that's all you're trusting for heaven.

Anybody that tells you joining a Masonic lodge, or joining a Catholic church, or joining a Baptist church, or joining anything other than faith in Jesus Christ is a fake, he's an imposter. And that man, I can hear him now, as he said, Oh, the fire, the fire, the fire. And I watched that Masonic ring glisten in the light of the room, as he trembled with that Masonic ring, and, Oh, the fire, the fire, the fire.

I've watched too many folks die. You come with me to bedsides of people who've died without God, and hear the anguish of their screams, and come with me to hospital rooms, where people die with Jesus Christ, and see the sweet look of heaven on their faces, if no other reason cause you to believe in God, and the Bible, and heaven and hell. You watch the dying die, you watch the saved die, you watch the unsaved die.

If you don't come away a believer, there's something to it, then you're dumber than I think you are. Here you go, I walk through, that's the great difference in the saved and the unsaved. The saved walk through the valley, the unsaved walk into the valley of death.

It was Tyran, the French statesman who said when he died, I am suffering the pangs of the damned. Hobbes, the atheist Hobbes said, I'm taking a fearful leap into the dark. The infidel Adam said, I'm lost, lost, lost, I'm damned, damned forever.

His agony was so great that he tore his hair from his head as he passed away into hell. Edward said, I'm damned to all eternity. Voltaire, that atheist, that heathen, that pagan, Voltaire who dared to wave his finger in the hands of a just God and deny his existence.

Voltaire lived without God, but when he died he said these words, O Lord Jesus, I must die abandoned by God and men. For his condition was so frightful that his infidel associates were afraid to approach his bedside. After Voltaire, the heathen, passed away, his nurse quoted or said these words, for all the wealth of Europe, I would never see another infidel die.

He lived without God, but he lived denying God, but died confessing, but too late. Thomas Paine, that wicked little atheist who went up and down the land denying God. Thomas Paine who perhaps turned more people's faith away from the Bible than any man that ever lived.

When Thomas Paine came to die, he said, stay with me, stay with me for God's sake, I cannot be left alone. And as he passed away, he said, the devils are come, the devils are come, hell and damnation. Of all, only the atheist said, my God, my God, and then he fell back dead.

Mirabal said, give me more opium, that I may not think of eternity. Brown, the atheist said, devils are in the room, ready to drag my soul down to hell. It's no use looking to Jesus now, it's too late.

When the atheist K. was dying, he cried, hell, hell, hell, with a terror which no pen can describe. It was more than his family could endure, and they fled from the house, and he died alone. His own wife, his own

children could not look upon his dying face.

They ran from the house, he died alone as he cried, hell, hell, hell, hell. Sir Francis Newport said, what argument is there now to assist me against the matters of fact? Do I assert there is no hell? Well, I feel one in my own bosom, that there is a God I know, because I continually feel the effects of his wrath, that there is a hell, I am equally certain, having received an earnest of my inheritance already in my breast. You compare that with the saints of God that I have seen die, who sat in these pews.

You have heard me say it again and again, that beloved man whose name is on this pulpit right here, and his pulpit is made in his honor, Leonard Tudor, who in the wee hours of the morning in St. Margaret's Hospital, less than a mile from where I stand now, was about to die. And the nurse came in, the nun came in and said, Mr. Tudor, you better call your priest, you're not going to make the night. Mr. Tudor looked up with a heaven look on his face and said, I am a priest.

Oh, she said, I didn't know you were a holy father. He said, I'm not a holy father, but I'm a priest of God. Now he said, if you want to call my pastor and let him rejoice with me while I go to heaven, that's okay.

But I don't need a priest because I am a priest. Let me tell you something, you big strong men, you say, I don't need God. You will need God when you stand before your Maker and you look God face to face and you give an account for all you've done wicked, and you look face to face with God Almighty.

Then your smirk will crumble and your sneer will be hidden and the mercy you've rejected will be forbidden. And you'll plunge into hell to burn and die forever and ever and ever. You better shake yourself while there's still time.

Yea, though I walked through the valley, through the valley, you heard me tell the first time that I ever saw a person die, I'd never seen death before. I'd never felt the cold hand of death. I'd never felt an arm with no pulse.

One night in a little country parsonage in East Texas, the phone rang, the shrill telephone of a pastor's home. I picked it up and they said, come quick to the Mrs. Wunden's house, she is dying. I was about 21 years of age, never seen anybody die.

I got up and got my darkest suit on, my darkest tie on, got my Bible to go comfort the bereaved in the hour of sorrow. I drove down a dark East Texas highway, Highway 43. I came to a little drive, turned in, there was a gate, remember you used to have to get out of the car and open the gate, open the gate, and drove across a little cattle guard and some of you ignorant folks don't know what a cattle guard is, I haven't got time to teach you science while I preach to you.

And I drove across the cattle guard and drove down in a little valley and up on top of a hill, typical old country home, walked inside, there was a long hallway, with the old hallways down the middle and the back of the hallway, it was open on both ends, back of the hallway was an old well, you had to pump the water out of. I walked in the hallway and there sat a bunch of people in the hallway, said, Reverend she is to the left. I turned left and went for the first time in my young ministerial life to watch somebody die.

I walked in and I was about to say, you know, dust to dust and ashes to ashes or something like that, you know, I thought, I had my Hobbes preacher's manual with me and I'd been reading it all the way to the house. And I walked in, Mrs. Mundon lay dying. She said, come in Reverend, we're just about to sing.

I thought, sing, sing? She heard me sing, she didn't want to go on to heaven. And I thought, sing! She said, yes, just about to sing. And so I, she said, Reverend, let's join hands.

And that old saint of God lifted her head from the bed and we sang together that old song, I'm longing for the coming of the Snow White Angel Band. And after it finished, she clapped her hands a few times and went to be with Jesus. I've seen them die, folks.

I've seen them die. I've seen too many of them die. I know there's something to it.

That old man in Texas who looked up at me and said, keep preaching it, Brother Jack, and put his hands across his breast and went to be with the Savior. I walked in the room. He said, I'm going to go see Elijah and John the Baptist and Moses and Peter and James and all them guys.

Anything you want me to say to them, preacher? And I said, tell them I, and that's all I could think of. And he went on to be with the Lord with a smile on his face. I've seen it too much.

I've seen it too much. I've seen our own people die. Mrs. Frederick used to sit right here every Sunday morning and Sunday night.

And I'd say something funny. She'd go, ah! Like that. Remember? Ah! She'd cackle like she just laid a big dinosaur's egg or something.

And sat right here. And she got cancer. They called me over to Gary, a little rest home in Gary one night.

It was about 3 o'clock in the morning. I wish folks wouldn't die at 3 o'clock in the morning. You've got to get out of bed and ruins a night's sleep.

Why don't you die at a decent hour? But Mrs. Frederick was dying. I went to the little room. Nobody was there.

And when I got in, she went, ah! And out came clots of blood from her cancerous body. And she didn't live but a few minutes after this. And Mrs. Frederick and I had always cut up with each other.

We were good buddies. And I said, Mrs. Frederick, is that blood you're spitting up? She looked at me in her dying hour and she said, ain't tobacco juice, is it? I said, no, it's not. John Wesley used to say, my folks die well.

So do mine. So do mine. An old Eli Kovachik died on his deathbed.

I was holding his head in my arms and on his deathbed. He looked up and said, I dreamed about you last night, preacher. I'd won him to Christ on the same sofa that he died on about two years before he died.

He stayed on the sofa where he died, wouldn't leave the sofa, and died on the same sofa where he'd been saved two years before. And I had his head cradled in my arms. He looked up and he said, Reverend, I dreamed about you last night.

I said, what'd you dream? He said, I dreamed that you were on an airplane flying because you go so much. And he said the plane was going to crash and somebody said, let's have religious services. And you said, okay, let's take an offering first.

He told me a joke while he died. I mean, you don't have to come to death and say, oh my, oh my, am I ready? You can come to death and say, blessed be God, Jesus is waiting for me. Heaven is prepared.

My soul is ready. I'm prepared to meet God. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I'll fear no evil for the heart with me.

Oh, learn to die well. John Wesley said, my folks, die well. Die well.

Learn to die through, not to, through. What's the difference in those who march through the valley and through the valley? The Lord is my shepherd. That's the difference.

That's the difference. You receive the Lord Jesus Christ. You can, heaven can be a, death can be a vestibule to heaven for you.

Oh, I recall that little lady in Henderson, Texas. I took the Bible to her home one day. She was 91.

And I read the 91st Psalm to her. I said, since you're 91, I'll read the 91st Psalm, read the 91st Psalm to her. And as she died, she clapped her hands and said, praise the Lord, isn't that wonderful? And I've seen, I saw a little mother one night look up, her baby had died several years before.

And I saw a little mother look up and say, I see my baby, I see my baby, I see my baby. Dr. John Rice tells how his mother died. And as she died, she looked up and saw her little baby and went to be with Jesus Christ.

Oh, the sting can come out of death if you'll trust the Savior. You don't have to worry. You don't have to fret.

You don't have to stew. You can come and say, I'm going to give my heart to Jesus. I'm going to be saved.

I'm going to walk with God. Let me tell you something. Somebody, old Scotsman said, live or die, what does it matter? If I live, He's with me.

If I die, I'm with Him. It doesn't matter. Fourth word, valley.

Ye, I, walk, through, valley. That's a valley. It's not easy.

There's suffering and there's pain. That's why I'd like to die, you know, in bed some night. You know, just wake up dead the next morning, as the Bible says.

And, uh, there's a valley. I'd like to wake up dead some morning, and I don't want to have cancer and linger. And by the way, one reason I want Jesus to come is because I don't want anybody putting me in a box and closing it.

The fellow could suffocate in one of those boxes, you know that. And I don't like anybody else choosing what tie I wear either, or picking out my suit for me. The very idea of somebody else dressing me, the thought of it is repulsive.

Just bury me in what I've got on when I go. And by the way, don't mess with my hair. I've got it combed so it covers much of my head, and if you comb it, you'll think I'm bald-headed when you look at me like that.

Valley? Sure. Those of us who've walked with God for many years know that valleys are where Jesus is. That's where you see Him in the valley.

Where did Joshua see the unseen captain when he was on a mountaintop? No! When he faced the battle of Jericho. When did Stephen see Jesus at the right hand of God while he was preaching in power? No! When he was stoned to death outside the city of Jerusalem. When did Paul see the third heaven when he was on the mountaintop? No! When he was stoned with an angry mob in Lystra and was caught up to the third heaven.

When did Isaiah see the Lord when he was in an hour of suffering and testing? And he said, I've seen the Lord, mine eyes have seen the Lord of Hosts. The last word, shadow. Shadow.

Yea, though I, that's the first word, I've got to go alone, walk, I'll not run, I'll not be dragged. Through? Not through. Through.

The valley? Valley, but it's open on the other side. The shadow of death, through the valley of the shadow of death. It isn't death.

The Christian doesn't die, it's a shadow of death. Looks like it? Yep. Shaped like it? Uh-huh.

But it's not death, it's the shadow. Don't you recall what our Lord said? He that believeth in me shall never die. Shall never die.

He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. I don't plan to die. I plan to quit breathing.

I like what Dr. Rice says, the fellow's having a funeral service and the family was here and the fellow's body was in the casket. And the preacher said, folks, this is not our brother, he's with Jesus. This is just the shell, the nut is gone.

And that's the way it is. This is just the shell. When you come down and look at my body here at this altar, don't you fret for me, this is just the shell.

The old nut will be in heaven, live in it up. Hudson Tater died. When Hudson Tater died, his sister was at his bedside.

And as he died, she turned and said, it was not death at all. When Daniel Webster died, he asked them to sing, there's a fountain filled with blood drawn from Daniel's veins and sinners plunge beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains. They got down to the last stanza, he sang it with them on his deathbed.

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day, and there may I, though vile as he, wash all my sins away. He took his arms and pushed his big body up and said, Amen, and went on to be with his Savior. When Christmas Evans died, he said to some young men, preach the blood in the basin.

I've seen him die. I've seen the lost die and I've seen the saved die and believe it or not, there's a difference, my brother. There's a difference.

Now, what does God want to do? He wants to come down, cleanse you, make you his child. I thought about this story last night, hadn't thought about it in years. Over here in Chicago, there's a square there called Pershing Square.

Anybody ever been to Pershing Square? That's where all the nuts come and preach. I saw Brother Dr. Evans there preaching a time or two. That's where he goes.

He goes on preaching engagements to Pershing Square and preaches to the other nuts over there. Anybody that's got an earned Ph.D. is bound to be a screwball. I mean, there's got to be something wrong with him.

And so over on Pershing Square, that's where all the nuts gather and preach their heresy. And one day on Pershing Square, there was an infidel atheist standing up and he was saying, There's no God. God, if you're there, come down and strike me dead.

A little crowd of folks had gathered. He said, See, I'm not dead, am I? Hey, God, kill me if you're up there. Kill me, God.

He looked out to his little crowd and said, Yeah, I'm still alive. If any God didn't kill me, come on, God, do it. Come on.

Has anybody got anything to say now? There was a poor Moody student who was out in the crowd. The Moody student said, I'd like to say a word. He stepped up on the little rostrum there made for the freedom of speech.

He said to the man, Sir, I'd like to say a word in answer to your argument why God didn't kill you. As I was walking down here today, said the Moody student, I passed by a dark alley. And out of that alley came a little boy about that high.

He was barefooted. His clothes were ragged. His hair was tousled.

His face was dirty. The little boy looked up at me and doubled his fist up and said, Come on, put him up. Let's have a fight.

I'll knock your block off. Come on, fellow, let's fight. He said, Do you think I wanted to fight him? No, he said, My heart was filled with compassion.

What I wanted to do, I wanted to put some shoes on those bare feet. I wanted to give him a warm bath. I wanted to take him down and buy him some clothes.

I wanted to get him a haircut and comb his hair and make him somebody. He said, Sir, when you doubled your fist up at God a while ago, the reason God didn't strike you dead is He loves you too much. God wants to straighten you up, put some shoes on your feet, clean clothes on you, comb your hair and get you a haircut, and make you His child, take you to heaven when you die.

And that's what God wants to do with you. Then you can say with David, who was facing death, Yea, though I walked through the valley of the shadow of death, I'll fear no evil. My daddy's the captain.

My daddy's the captain, and his hand is bigger than mine. Let us pray.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/18/SID18890.mp3>

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