

# Death and Christ's Lordship

by John Murray

---

*The Christian outlook is one of hope and expectation in the resurrection body, not a desire for death itself, and the governing principle of faith and love is to be well pleasing to Christ.*

**Duration:** 43:14

**Scripture:** Genesis 8:22, Luke 2:10, 1 Corinthians 15:54-55, 2 Corinthians 5:7-8, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 1:27, 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

**Topics:** "Lordship Of Christ"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of Christ being formed in each believer, leading to the hope of glory. The preacher highlights the joy that comes from knowing Christ as our Redeemer, Savior, and Lord. The sermon also discusses the concept of believers being pilgrims and strangers on earth, looking forward to an eternal home in heaven. The passage of time is seen as a reminder of the cycles of divine appointment in the history of the world. The preacher concludes by emphasizing the desire to be accepted by God, whether in this life or in the presence of the Lord after death.

---

## Transcript

Praise, honor, glory, and delight belong unto Thee. For Thou alone art to be worshiped. Thou alone art God.

There is none else besides Thee. Enable us, O Lord Jesus, to pour out our souls in humble confession. O Lord, it is a faithful slave and worthy of all except Christ Jesus came into the world to save sin.

Do Thou enable us truly to appreciate His matchless glory as the Redeemer, as the one who was dead but who is alive again and who has the keys of hell and enable us to apprehend in His exaltation as the great High Priest who is passed into Jesus the Son to apprehend Him also as the King of kings and Lord of lords as the one who when He had by Himself purged our sins notwithstanding all our unworthiness our guiltiness our hell-deserving notwithstanding all our wretchedness grant that He may always come between us and the desert that we may have such understanding of Him as the one mediator between God and man that we shall always have to plead His merit, His righteousness His mediatorial lordship and His intercession as the great High Priest of our profession and in this confidence that He

is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him may we have strong faith may we have this faith as the anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast so that when the floods seem to

overwhelm we may not be overcome but that we shall know indeed that we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous who is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only but also for the whole world grant that we may constantly do honor to Him in whom thy supreme good pleasure went that there may be that convergence of judgment by which we shall place out our men to the testimony of God the Father that this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased O Lord, as thou hast brought us to reminding us again that the days of our years shall at least go years and tens do thou give

us grace that we may dwell in the secret place of the Most High and under the shadow of the Almighty and consider all things but love for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus that although oftentimes the experiences of this life and the dispensations of thy covenant providence cause us grief and sorrow yet we may always be more than conquerors through Him that loved us persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord we do beseech thee that in each one of us Christ may perform the hope of glory so that we may rejoice with exceeding great joy that Christ is our Redeemer our Savior, our Lord and that we may live in this life as those who are pilgrims and strangers in

the earth looking to the Lord for we know that if our earthly house of this covenant were dissolved we have a building of God a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens and so on to the end of the ninth verse the end of one year and the beginning of another remind us of the passage of time and the passage of time is a constant reminder to us that the history of this world is characterized by cycles of divine appointments in the book of Genesis there is a very striking intimation of that fact in the promise for in the earth we may not see time and harvest and cold and heat and summer and winter and day and night shall not cease that constant cycle by which the history of this world is characterized is not however to be everlasting the perspective with which the biblical revelation

provides us is not that of a manless cycle in pagan thought there has been that conception that the history of time is a constant cycle that goes on indefinitely but the biblical perspective is what we call linear rather than cyclical and what I mean by that is that world history has a beginning and it has an end it moves from creation to consummate and we are constantly reminded of that feature of life in this world by the transitoriness of life which belongs to each one of us we have been singing in the words of the psalm thou turnest man to destruction and sayest return ye children of man and again the wind passeth over it and it is gone and the place thereof shall know it no more forever thus we are and to thus we must return now what is to be the attitude of Christian faith with

reference to the cycles by which history in this world is characterized and with reference to the transitoriness of individual life in this present in this chapter we are provided with the attitude that is with the perspective which ought to characterize each one of us in our life in this world and very briefly the first feature of the teaching of the apostle in these verses is something that is very significant for us if we have Christian faith and it is very significant in that it is a criterion of Christian it is that which you find in verses 7 and 8 for we walk by faith not by strife we are confident I say and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord of course the Christian outlook is to be faithful to those vocations and appointments which God has

assigned to us in this particular world you remember that the apostle Paul in other epistles very, very severely upbraided those who were a busybody who were idle who were more concerned about other people's business than they were about the vocation to which God had called them and he characterizes that as a disorderliness which is quite, quite incompatible with Christian faith and love and hope if a man

will not provide for his own and especially for those of his own household he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel yes, we have to be faithful to the appointments to the vocations which God has assigned to us in this world we are to use this world and we are not to abuse it and we are not to live in this sort of mystical abstraction from the realities of life in this world

we must be faithful and diligent in that particular sphere in which God has placed us but the point to be emphasized in this connection is that we are not to be so attached to life in this world that we are unready to be called hence if the Lord so markets we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord it is not of faith to be so much afraid of the event of death to be so much, as it were, obsessed with the fear of death that we shall not be willing to be called hence when God's time comes and the reason which the apostle Paul intimates in this particular passage is that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord the apostle in another epistle said that he was in a great betwixt two having a desire to depart and to be

with Christ, which was far better nevertheless, to abide in the flesh he says, is more needful for you and having this confidence I know that I shall abide and continue with you for your furtherance and joy of faith and it is perfectly proper for a believer to desire of the Lord that he might continue in this life in order to fulfill a certain vocation which God has given him many of the people of God have prayed that they might be spared until they might fulfill in the interest of the kingdom of God a certain task upon which they had set their hearts but you see their thinking in such an instance is determined by the interest of the kingdom of God I know that I shall abide, he says for your furtherance and joy of faith nevertheless the apostle in that other passage in Philippians and in

this particular passage in this chapter makes it perfectly clear that he had a desire to depart to be with Christ and he was willing rather to be absent from the body than to be present with the Lord and the reason is this that to be present with the Lord is immensely superior it's an immensely superior form of life and an immensely superior experience to that which can characterize any person in this particular life and it is that burning love which the apostle Paul had to the Saviour which made him utter these words that he was confident rather to be absent from the body than to be present it is well for us to examine ourselves in the light of that particular criterion oh if we are so attached to this world that we cannot contemplate with any equanimity the thundering of the chord that

unites us to life in this world then there is something wrong something radically wrong with our attitude something radically wrong with our perspective and something radically wrong in respect of our relationship to the Lord and Saviour it is worldliness that causes us to be so attached to life in this world that we cannot with any joy and with any equanimity contemplate the thundering of the bond that unites us to life in this world and let that be impressed deeply upon our hearts so that we may be able to determine the extent really of our true spirituality in reference to our Christian faith now the second observation that we can elicit from this particular passage as it bears upon what we may call the perspective of faith is that which we have in verses two through four for in this

we grow we say earnestly desiring to be closed upon with our help which is from heaven if so be that being closed we shall not be found naked for we that are in this tabernacle do groan being burdened not for that we would be unclosed but closed upon that mortality might be swallowed up with life now when the apostle says here not that we would be unclosed but closed upon he is referring of course to the unclosing that takes place in death that is to our divestiture as it were of this tabernacle the tabernacle which can be dissolved and that points us to the particular thought that the apostle has in these verses not that we

would be unclothed that is not that the connection between body and spirit would be thundered and that we would be disembodied spirits of what is he saying just of

this that the preeminent desire on the part of the apostle was that Christ would come the second time so that there would be no necessity for death at all that was the paramount the paramount thought of the apostle and perhaps we are we are not disposed to think in these terms but if you read your New Testament very carefully you'll find that the New Testament is steeped in that expectation in that hope of the Lord appearing in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory and it is that undoubtedly that the apostle has in mind in these three verses that mortality might be swallowed up of life not that we would be unclothed but clothed upon with power and he is thinking you see of Christ coming when the believing dead will be raised but the believing living will not die but be changed and that

shows the extent of which there was in the interest in the hope in the faith of the apostle the appearing of the glory of Christ when he will come the second time without sin unto salvation now what I was trying to express upon you last Sabbath night that is the focal point of Christian hope and expectation there is such a thing as a morbid and utterly un-Christian craving for the event of death itself it is not Christian it is not death itself that constitutes the focal point of Christian hope and it is not Christian to desire death in itself death as death don't forget what we have noted in connection with verse 8 that the apostle was willing to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord because of the reality of that translation into heaven where Christ came and to be

present in his disembodied spirit with the Lord thus this advises us that what is most central in the apostle's expectation and desire is that the Lord himself would come and that there would not be the necessity for unclothing that there wouldn't be the necessity at all for death but that mortality might be swallowed up of life in accordance with that other word of the apostle that we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye when the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed and if you examine these three verses verses 2 through 4 I think you will find that that is unmistakably what the apostle has in mind we that are in his tabernacle do grow be burned not so that we would be unclothed that is, not

that we would experience death but that we would be clothed upon that the heavenly health that the heavenly habitation might be as it were imposed upon us without the necessity of that transition that we know as death as disembodiment may I just underline that that it is not Christian to regard death itself as something that is good death itself is unevil death itself is the wages of sin and it is unenemy it is the last enemy that will be destroyed and therefore it is not something that in itself is to be desired because it is the purpose of God that death itself will be destroyed you know the disembodied state is not the idea in pagan thought that is oftentimes the perception or the perspective that is entertained that the body is as it were a hindrance that it's essentially a clog a

protrude spiritual aspiration that is not the conception of Scripture the grand concept that is presented to us in the Scripture is that death itself will be destroyed that it will be swallowed up in victory that as the last enemy it will be dropped to naught and that it is in the embodied state that the consummation of bliss and the consummation of glory and it is that that is reflected in these verses in which we are concentrating now not that we would be unclothed but clothed upon that mortality might be swallowed up of life now the third feature of this particular passage that it provides us with the true Christian perspective is that which you have in the first verse of this chapter we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God and

house not made with hands eternal in heaven now what the apostle is concentrating there is the event of death the possibility that the earthly house of this tent that he really speaks of it the earthly house of this tent he is thinking of death of the reality of that physical dissolution that takes place in the event of death and what is the faith that he entertains that he contemplates that event it is this that if this earthly house of the tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in heaven now it is true of course that some people have interpreted that as meaning the mansions in heaven which Christ has prepared for his own people for example when he says to his disciples in my father's house are many mansions if it were not so I would

have told you I go to prepare a place for you but that cannot properly be understood as that of which the apostle is speaking here he is thinking of the resurrection and that is what is in view when he says we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in heaven it is the resurrection body what he is contrasting here is the temporary abode which we have in this life he calls it the earthly house of this tent it's a tent dwelling you know that some people live in tents it's very temporary those who travel from one place to another live in the tent and they take down the tent and then they pass on to some other place and he is contrasting you see the idea of dwelling in a tent with dwelling in a permanent abode that's the contrast if our earthly house of this terminal that

is tent were dissolved we have a building that is a stable edifice a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in heaven and how grand is that conception that is at the very center of our Christian hope that if we pass out of this pass from this life if we undergo the event of death what is it that is focal in our expectations it is that there will be a resurrection body that will never die it is soul in weakness always in the first epistle to the Corinthians it is soul in weakness it is raised in power it is soul in natural body it is raised in spiritual body it is soul in corruption it is raised in incorruption for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God that is to say the weakness and infirmity it is a body that will be adapted to the eternal kingdom to the

eternal realm of glory and of bliss and of life everlasting is the expectation the first desire of the apostle Paul first was this that Christ would come and that they would be clothed immediately without experience death with the habitation which is from heaven with this permanent dwelling place but nevertheless he recognized that that may not be the will of God that Christ should come and raise the dead and change the living and so he contemplates the possibility that for himself he would have to pass through the event of death as he actually did but in contemplation of that eventuality of that event he says we have this assurance that we have a building of God and house not made with hands eternal in heaven and that is the other crisis to us the significance that attaches to the human

body in the glory that will be administered in terms of God's redemption it isn't a disembodied spirit that the people of God will enjoy the full glory of God and the full glory of their inheritance no it is in a reconstituted body that will be endowed with God's character and with God's qualities which will be eternal everlasting and no death no change will ever invade that resurrection now the fourth and last lesson that has derived from this particular passage is that which you find in verse 9 wherefore we labour that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him to see the absolute recognition of the absolute power and will of God for his paramount desire was that Christ would come and that they would not that believers would not be unclothed but that mortality would be

swallowed up with life he is entirely willing to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord he has the assured conviction that if he passes through the experience of death nevertheless at the

resurrection he will have a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens but he'll see the resurrection whether present with the Lord that is whether going to be with the Lord now or whether living in this life for a period in accordance with God's sovereign appointment whether present or absent we may be accepted of him and in the original it is we may be well pleasing now that's the governing principle of faith and love and hope to be well pleasing to Christ that is the principle that should govern us and we have to recognize that the will of Christ is paramount for this reason

Christ died and rose again that he might be Lord of our death Lord of the dead and of the living and the recognition of the supremacy of his will and humble resignation to his will and above all obedience to his revealed will is the governing principle of the Christian life and you see how faith, hope, love and obedience are therefore reflected in this in the first epistle you remember Paul says now abideth faith, hope and love these three but the greatest of these and how eloquently this particular passage speaks the exercise of all these graces of these graces which characterize the Christian in this life faith, hope, love you see how love is exhibited in that very expression to depart and to be with Christ which is far better or as it is in this passage willing rather to be absent

from the body and the apostle didn't desire death I said there is no virtue in death I said but nevertheless notwithstanding the evil that death entails notwithstanding its abnormality because of immediate presence with Christ he was willing to be present with the Lord why? just because of him and where is hope? oh it is in that verse that we just thought of we know that if our earthly house of this heaven were dissolved we have a building of God a house not made with hands eternal in heaven and what about faith? in verse 6 therefore we are always confident knowing that whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord for we walk by faith you see how this particular passages and the dwellings of penetration with the exercises which are the pivotal exercises of the Christian life

faith hope love and love enable that whether pleasant or unwell pleasing my friends at the beginning of another year for myself first of all and for myself more needfully than for any of you for myself first of all and then for you may it be that the governing principle that whatever God will for us in his providence may be of all of us that we shall have the constant unshedness of the Lordship of Christ that we shall have the constant consciousness of his presence with us in accordance with his promise so that whatever he may in his sovereign in his sovereign goodwill has in store for us he shall be acceptable in his life and that when he calls us hence or if it is his will that he should come again the second time without sin unto him a joy in his presence because we know him in all

the reality of his redeeming oh may I the absolute supreme Lordship of Christ and the joy and the liberty of total commitment to his true liberty the liberty of unreserved of Christ will make us free we shall be free indeed paradoxical as it is the way of the Christian life in this world is the bond's permit to Christ and it is just as we are the bond's permit our call upon God's name O thou that dwellest to triumph our way we pray that thou wouldst touch us and deliver us from the bondage of the children of God O forbid that we should be the bond slaves of Satan or of iniquity that we may walk in the light that thou art in the light may know the liberty that is in Christ Jesus and stand fast in that liberty so that we shall not be the bond slaves of men but that we shall know that none

other is man that we may call O man father within heaven

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0490.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-murray/death-and-christs-lordship/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**