

Life or Death (Daniel Kauffman's Funeral Message)

by Roman Kauffman

This sermon reminds us of our mortality and the importance of prioritizing our spiritual lives by accepting the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 14:14, Job 14:5, Psalm 89:48, Romans 6:23, Hebrews 9:27, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Judgment Day"

Description

Roman Kauffman preaches about the sobering reality of death and the importance of being prepared for our appointed time to face God's judgment. He emphasizes that just as Daniel had an appointment with God that he could not postpone, we all have a set time to meet our Maker. The sermon delves into the inevitability of death, the certainty of facing judgment, and the need for each individual to reflect on their own appointment with God. Roman Kauffman urges listeners to consider their spiritual life and death, emphasizing the significance of accepting the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ's sacrifice.

Transcript

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through our Lord Jesus Christ. This was not a planned meeting, but God has ways of changing our plans. He has ways that we do not understand at times, but, nevertheless, He makes no mistakes. I'd like to turn to Hebrews chapter 9 verse 27. A very short verse, but I believe most of us are acquainted with it. It says this way: "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Today, lying here before us, is evidence that this scripture is true. Daniel had an appointment with God, and all evidence declares that he kept it. When his appointment was due, there was no putting it off. When the time came when God had scheduled that appointment, there was no cancellation. God had set a time on August 4th, at a certain hour of the evening, when Daniel was to come face to face before his maker. Sobering thoughts. Brothers, Sisters and Friends, these are sobering thoughts. There was no way for Daniel to stall that appointment. The least he could do was bow and submit to it. And that is what every one will do also when your appointed time is here.

Is it possible to avoid this appointment? Psalms 89 verse 48 says: "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?" I think we know the answer. In Job chapter 14, he gives the description of the life of man. He says: "He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. Seeing his days are determined, and the number of

his months." He further says that: "God hath appointed his bonds that he cannot pass." God has appointed how long man will live and how far he will go in life. He will not pass beyond that point. He says that: "For there is hope for a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet, through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant." "There's hope for a tree" Job says. "But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: so man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more." Why is this? Why is this the way it is? Because the scriptures still say: "It is appointed unto man once to die." Everywhere I look, I see evidence that this is true. Everyone who has come here today is proof that we will keep our appointment. We are all here because of Daniel's appointed time, and I believe it is time that each one of us stops and thinks about our own appointment.

I knew Daniel well, as there was a time when they lived in our community, and I talked with him quite a bit. I believe that Daniel knew he had an appointment, but he didn't know when that appointment was due. He didn't have any idea, and neither do we. Each one of us has a certain allotment of days. We have a certain amount of time that is determined by God. As each moment, as each hour, as each day, as each year goes by, that appointed time draws closer. When they illustrate that the angel of death comes upon a person, you see that angel striking him down with a sickle. Perhaps, for some of us, that angel is so far off that maybe we only see it dimly, but as each hour and day and year go by, that angel gets closer.

Some of us are familiar with the cisterns that many of the farms used to have in the days when there were mostly dug wells and in dry weather many of them dried up. They were like a concrete box that they had in back of the barn and when it rained they caught water in the gutters, and they would guide it into this cistern. Then, they would tap the water out of the bottom of it. Often they would be closed, so you couldn't really tell how much water was in it. In a sense, that's each one of our lives. We have a certain amount of water that God has put in to our cistern, and as time goes by, this water drips out. Each day this water gets less. And I'd like to say that when the last drop of water drips out of our cistern, it's gone! There is no more adding to it. When the last drop goes out, that's it! The sobering thing is that we don't know how much water is left! I can't look into my cistern, and neither can you, and Daniel was not given the privilege to look into his. Possibly most of us would think that a healthy, 19-year-old boy would have lots of water left in his cistern. We would naturally think that way, but that's not the way God saw it. Daniel's cistern never did have a lot of water in it. Just enough for 19 years, 8 months and maybe some hours, and then it was all over. When Daniel and his brothers left home on Friday evening, nobody knew that one of them only had a few drops left. One of those boys only had a little bit of water left in his cistern. So, as the vehicle sped south, there were fewer and fewer and fewer drops. Until finally, at the appointed time, and at the given place, there were three things that came together: The car, the tree, the death angel, and the last drop of water was spilled on the ground. 2 Samuel 14 verse 14 says this way: "We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again." The question we have this morning is: "What are you and I going to do about this?"

What are you and I going to do about this appointed time? There are different ways that you and I can relate to this. We can shrug our shoulders and try to brace up and be strong and think to ourselves; "I might as well be brave. I might as well face up to it. I might as well face reality. It's going to come to pass, it's unavoidable. I'll just do what I can and the best I can." That's one way. Or, I can squirm in my seat as I sit here, and try to chase away all thoughts concerning it and think of something more pleasant. Or, we can refuse to let this sober us, and keep a light, indifferent attitude about it all. I'd like to say to such: If life

is a joke, then death is a calamity! Let's get it straight. Life is no joke! But, there is one more thing we can do. We can prepare for it. And that is what I'd like to give some direction for this morning.

I didn't ask Daniel what he would like to have preached at his funeral. He didn't know his cistern was almost empty. And now, his lips are cold and still. But there's one way he still speaks, and that is by the life that he lived. His life, like Abel's in Hebrews chapter 11, continues to speak long after death. Some of the deeper concerns that he had while he was yet living was for those who were dead while they lived. He wanted those who were dead spiritually, yet alive physically, to find the real life in the Spirit.

What is life? What is death? Can anyone tell me what life is? Can you tell me what death is? The first thing we must realize is that there is more than one kind of life, and there's more than one kind of death. There is a physical life and a physical death, and there is a spiritual life and a spiritual death. And, this morning, as we are sitting here, we are relating to one or the other. Where you are in this, I will let you answer to your own conscience.

Let's first look at the physical life. What are we talking about when we talk about physical life and physical death? How shall I describe life? Life is something no one can explain. "Life, oh life, how shall I speak of you? Pulsating, vibrant and breathing. A collection of joy and heartache, contentment and drive, injury and healing, disappointment and hope, work and rest. Oh life! Bodiless you are, but you make the body warm with your blood, all aquiver with your animation, full of wonder with your meaning, and sacred with your spirit. The body filled with your spirit laughs, the body cries, the body runs, it grows, it sweats. The body filled with your meaning thinks, it creates, it purposes and accomplishes. If filled with your spirit, the body worships, it wonders, and knows the meaning of truth. Oh life! Intangible you are, but you make all things true. With you we know the taste of milk, with you we know the touch of brown earth, the smell of mowing hay, the beauty of a sunset and the sound of music. Indefinable you are, but by you we know all meaning. By you, oh life, we know the meaning of honesty, the meaning of values, the meaning of heritage, the meaning of truth, and the meaning of destiny. All our words are little parts of your meaning, little dictionaries of what you are. Oh life! Eternal you are! We cannot tell where you start nor where you end. Oh life, you flow up as a fountain we cannot penetrate and flow down to an ocean we cannot chart. But this we know, oh life, you flow from God to us, and in your living, loving liquid embrace, we bear His image. Bodies of earth we have, but they are breathed full of your sacred breath, oh God. Oh life! Heaven on earth! We move by you, see by you and know truth. Oh life!"

Death. Physical death. What is it? "Death, oh death, how shall we speak of you? Cold and silent and still. A soundless, formless waste. Oh death! You are full of bodies- twisted and crumbled, hewn and torn-up, shot through, worn-out, decayed bodies. Oh death! You lurk where blood ran freely. Spilled blood, dried and caked on the bodies. Oh death! We touch you not, for you have no touch. You are all empty, sightless and feeling-less. We know you not, for we have no words. All meanings and purposes evaporate in your empty, blazing fires. The body shutters when you enter, and lies still when you leave. Oh death! Where did you come from? Where are you? Where do you go? We know not. But this we know, oh death, God commands you and you go always and eternally away from God to that waste abyss of eternity. You cannot abide in God's presence, for God is life."

What a contrast, Dearly Beloved! All of us can identify with physical life, but there's not one person who can identify with physical death, because just as soon as we can identify with it, we cannot come back to tell you about it. This is only a partial description of what physical death and life is all about. As important as it is, yet, it is but of little importance in comparison to the spiritual life and death of our soul!

Physical life, like David said, is for but three score and ten years, but spiritual existence is for all eternity. Brothers and Sisters, which one do you think Daniel would want to have spoken of today? If God would grant him the power of a resurrection and raise him from the dead that he could stand here beside the coffin, what do you think he would talk about? Would he talk about spiritual life? Would he talk about new cars or would he talk about heavenly visions? Would he talk about the nicest farm where he lived or would he talk about those things that are way beyond that? As concerned that he was about the spiritual while he yet lived, I'm convinced he'd be even more concerned were he to come back.

So, this morning, I want to talk about spiritual life and death. I'll tell you, Beloved, I am burdened so mightily with the seriousness of this to the point where I slept very little for the last few nights. I fear that there are many here today that don't know what it is to live a spiritual life. They don't know how the new birth takes place, nor how it is to have Christ live within. The second reason this lies so heavily on my heart is because of memories. Memories of my past are yet so clear. It's as if it was but yesterday. Memories of fear, memories of anxiety and worry. Troubled, sleepless nights. Tears and a searching heart- for years and years. I was taught about the horrors of Hell from my youth, and I believed them. I was conscious of my sins and failures, and this brought fear. The Bible says in 1 John 4:18 that: "Fear hath torment." It tortures a person. I feared death, and I could well identify with Hebrews 2 verse 15 where it talks of people who, all of their lifetime, were subject to bondage through the fear of death. I believe that there is a certain amount of fear toward God that is good, but that fear is more like a respect for God. "Perfect love casteth out fear." So many of us have been deceived by the devil into believing that "God is wrath" instead of "God is love." I believe that terrible, quaking fears can come from a wrong concept of God. We have a concept of God as one who is just standing there waiting for us to make a wrong move so He can rightly punish us, but this is not the God of the Bible. Yes, we need to have a healthy respect for God. We need to realize that He will not sweep sin under the rug. But, He is a God who is not willing that any man perishes! He is a God that so loved the world that He paid the price for our salvation!

He tells us in Ezekiel 33:11: "As I live, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live!" Did you ever stop to think of what that verse means? God is life. God does not just give life, God is not just the source of life, God is the very essence of life. God cannot die. Why? Because He is life itself. All life, whether it is in the blade of grass or in flowers or whether it's in you and I or whether it's in the animals, all life that exists has it's source back to God, for God is life. He cannot die. The only reason that Jesus Christ could die was because He was part human, and even the part that was God, God had to forsake so He could die. God could swear by nothing greater than the fact that He was life, and He said: "As I live." He was swearing. "As I live, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked." What does that tell us? It tells us that God is grieved, that God's heart hurts every time He sees a soul going over the brink into the fires of Hell because He knows that He paid the price for that soul's salvation! It's a waste! "Turn ye, turn ye." He pleads over and over! "Why will ye die, O house of Israel?" God is more concerned about our salvation than we are! We may think we are concerned, but God is more concerned. As we look into this, my prayer is that somehow the Spirit of God would be able to use this to help some struggling soul and set them free.

In Romans 6:23 we find this verse: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." This verse has to do with spiritual life and death. I want you to take note of a very clear contrast that is found in two words: Wages and Gift. They are total opposites. Wages and Gift. Wages is something a person earns. If you could earn a gift, it wouldn't be a gift. A gift is something that is given to you. If you could earn it, it would be wages. In other words: The devil pays Wages to his subjects,

and those wages are spiritual death. But God gives eternal life as a Gift to those who will accept it. It is very clear that eternal life is a gift, salvation is a gift, the spiritual life within one must have to die saved and the oil in the lamps of the five wise virgins in Matthew 25 is a gift. A gift? A GIFT?!? How could a holy God, who hates sin, just give a sinner salvation?!?!? How could He ever do that and still keep His holiness??? Could He just turn His face away from sin? Could He just bury His head in the sand and make-believe that you and I didn't sin? How can a holy God give you and I eternal life as a gift and still maintain His holiness? The answer is found in this same verse: "Through JESUS CHRIST our Lord." What does this mean? This means that eternal life was not free- someone had to pay for it. That is why

1 Corinthians 6:19 and 20 remind us that we are not are own, for we were bought with a price. This morning, if you have repented of your sins and accepted the gift of salvation, you are no longer your own. You have no right to your life! You have given yourself to the Lordship of someone else. God's children can not just waste away their life. They don't belong to themselves. A dear price was paid for their soul.

What price was paid for you and me? The price of eternal life, the price of the life in the Spirit, the price that it cost to give us spiritual life, what is it? Yes, eternal life is a gift, it is free, but only because Jesus bought it from God so that He could give it to us! God had to maintain His holiness, and his justice demanded a high price for sin. It was so high that no mortal man could ever pay it. Only God, in the form of His Son, could pay for it, and God so loved that He gave. "Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt, dafz er feinen eingebornen Sohn gab, auf das alle, die an ihn glauben, nicht verloren werden, fondern das ewige Leben haben." God loved the world so that He gave. "Denn Gott hat feinen Sohn nicht gefandt in die Welt, dafz er die Welt richte, fondern dafz die Welt durch ihn felig werde." As we look at this, we find the price that He paid was high- all the way from Heaven to the cross. Jesus stepped down from His throne in Heaven to be made man. Hebrews 10:5 and 6- "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world he saith; sacrifice and offerings thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared for me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure." When Jesus left the throne of glory and stepped out of Heaven to become one of us, He was saying: "God is no longer satisfied with sacrifices and offerings. A body hast thou prepared for me." "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God."

You and I, we can relate to this because it's all we know. But listen, let's remember, Jesus Christ was not human at that point. He was willing to put on a body. I want you to think about the price He was willing to pay to become man so that He could redeem you and I, and make the way of salvation open and free for us. What was Jesus like? He was God. He was unlimited. There was no limitation on Christ. All things were possible with Him. But He was willing to put on the limitations of man. He put on a body that would get cold. He put on a body that would get hungry. He put on a body that would get tired. He put on all that we relate to in our human body. Jesus Christ was willing to make Himself subject to the limitations of our human form!

What about His poverty-stricken home? Here, Jesus stepped out of Heaven. The cattle upon a thousand hills were His, and not only that, but the thousand hills were His. The earth was His, and the fullness thereof. He created them. He was the sustainer of them. But, all of the sudden, He was willing to not only put on a body, but He was willing to put on a helpless body! Those of you who are parents know how helpless a little baby is. That is what Christ was willing to subject Himself to. For what? So that you and I might have life! We would think that if the Son of God were going to be born on this earth, if God Himself was going to send His son down on this earth, surely He wold find some millionaire or some family that was rich and had all of this world's goods at their fingertips, surely God would purpose such a home to have His son born into. That way, many people would recognize Him. No, that's not the way God thinks.

He made of Himself NO Reputation! He was born in a poverty-stricken home that didn't have so much as a lamb or a goat to bring to the offerings at Jerusalem, but two turtledoves. That's where Christ was born. Why did God go through this? Why did God have His son born in a poverty-stricken family? Because God knew that someday there would be more poverty-stricken families. God knew that someday there would be more people on this earth, and He didn't want anyone to feel inferior to Christ. He wanted to make sure that there could never be anybody who could be raised out of humanity who could say: "Oh yes, Christ had it easy."

Did you ever stop to think of what whisperings Christ bore because of the virgin birth? We talk freely about the virgin birth. We believe in it. Do you think they believed in it? What do you think went on behind His ears? I'm sure that sometimes He must have even heard it. He probably heard snatches of "bastard" and what-have-you as a boy growing up. What do you think the people thought when all of the sudden Mary was pregnant and someone asked her: "Who is the father?" and she said: "The Holy Ghost."? The Holy Ghost? The HOLY GHOST??? Des heilige Geift?? We believe that because the Bible says it, but they didn't have the Bible like we do. What do you think Jesus had to bear as He grew up? Boys laughing at him: "Yeah, yeah, that little bastard- where's his father?" Jesus had to bear the whisperings. Once more, who of us can say that our lineage goes back to the whore Rahab? Oh yes, His great, great, great grandmother was a whore. Why did God drag His name through such lineage? So that never, ever anyone would come up and say that Jesus came from a super race. Jesus could always identify with the poorest, and the downhearted! Jesus came as the lowest of men! Why? So that the lowest of men could identify with Him and find peace and security!

Spiritual life- what is the cost? Think of Nicodemus- a man desperate for life. We know, as we read of his life, that he was one of the seventy of the San Hedron. We would say 'seventy bishops' in the churches of today. Here was a man that had lots of religion. He had lots of truth. But, you know, something was missing in this man! He had a lot of form. He had a lot of practice. He had a lot of things going for him as far as religion was concerned, but that man lacked life and he knew it!

He was hurting within. Why do you think he came to Jesus by night? I believe he listened to Jesus at times during the day, but he was scared. He didn't want to go to Jesus and openly reveal himself. Oh, there might be many sitting here who are too embarrassed to just openly confess: "I have needs!" You're too ashamed. I don't know what Nicodemus' experience was, but there was a reason that he came to Jesus by night. But, maybe he came and knocked on the door of the cottage where Jesus was staying for the night, very timidly.

He just timidly knocked until Jesus stirred. And maybe Jesus came to the door, and he said: "Jesus, could I please speak with you?" And perhaps Jesus came to the door: "What do you want?" And Nicodemus says: "I have needs- and I'm afraid to expose them! I have needs." And we read in John 3 how that Jesus conversed with Nicodemus. He was desperate. He wanted life. He had religion, but Nicodemus wanted reality! Today, there's many here, sitting here, whose heart's cry is silent.

They're afraid to be open about it. But their heart's cry is: "I need reality! I'm sick of religion, I need reality! I'm sick of religion, I need a relationship!" Jesus told Him how to find it. He told him in simple words: "Du mußt von neuem geboren sein." You cannot renovate the old life, you must start all over! Jesus told him: "That which is flesh is flesh and will always be flesh." Forget about trying some renovation job! "Nicodemus, you can't change you life! If a leopard can change his spots, or the Ethiopian can change the color of his skin, then you, who are accustomed to do evil, can do good.

Nicodemus, it's an impossibility- forget it! "Das was icht fleisch geboren wird icht fleisch." Would to God that we would all get to that place. What is born of the flesh is flesh- forget it. You'll never change the flesh. It must die. "Nicodemus: marvel not that ye must be born again." Nicodemus, desperate for life, cried out: "But how can these things be? How can I be born again? Can I enter the second time into my mother's womb?" I don't know what all Jesus and Nicodemus talked about that night.

I know that they talked more than what is recorded here. But Jesus took him back to an Old Testament account in the wilderness that Nicodemus, who was a Bible scholar, was familiar with. "Like as Moses" he began. "Gleich wie Mose in der Wüste eine Schlange erhöht hat, also muß des Menschen Sohn erhöht werden, auf daß alle, die an ihn glauben, nicht verloren werden, sondern das ewige Leben haben." "Like as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, also must the Son of man be lifted up."

Let's go back and take a look at that scene in the wilderness. Most of you are probably familiar with that account. We know that the children of Israel sinned against God, so God sent into their camps fiery serpents that bit the people. When they bit the people, the people died. And the people started repenting. They were sorry for their sins. They couldn't get away from these snakes. Everywhere they went, they got bitten. The snakes were in their tents, the snakes got into their bedding, the snakes bit their children, the snakes bit the old people, the young people. There was no escaping them. All the people started getting bitten by those snakes. Something had to be done. They went to Moses and said: "We have sinned!" And Moses, the mighty intercessor that he was, cried out to God, and God told him what to do. He told him to make a brazen serpent, and put it on a pole, and to tell the children of Israel to look to that serpent, and they would be healed. That was a type of what was to come. Those little snakes represented sin as you and I relate to it, and everyone that was bitten by those snakes died unless they did something. I'd like to tell you, every one of you has been bitten by a snake- and you're going to die the spiritual death unless you do something about it!

I can well imagine what some of the scenes must have been like back in that camp. The people were dying right and left. The Bible doesn't say how many- it just says many died. Moses put up this brazen serpent on a pole and told the people to look at it, and I can well imagine what must have happened because I know humanity. Maybe the younger generation heard first, maybe some older people were bitten, they weren't even able to get out of their tent anymore. Perhaps old grandpa was bitten and he was almost at the point of death, he was just about gone, and his son came in and said: "Grandfather, look! There's a remedy for this! There's a snake on the pole!" And old grandpa turned around: "What are you saying??? What good does a snake do on a pole? Go get some home remedies. Surely Mom has something, somewhere I can put on this snakebite that will take care of it!" Oh, Dearly Beloved, SURELY there's something I can do about this sin that I'm bitten with!

He's dying. His son pleads with him: "Grandpa, Father, please, please allow me to lift you up and take you to the tent's door so you can look." Maybe Grandpa was just unconcerned: "What are you talking about?? Some new thing??? Whoever heard of looking to a snake for the healing of a snakebite?" Perhaps his son managed to take him to the tent door. Perhaps he even lifted his father's chin and said: "Just look!" and the grandfather looked up and he saw the brazen serpent, and a change took place. He was healed on the spot. Oh, can you imagine Grandpa wanting to see other grandpa's healed? Wanting to tell others? Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!

Peter said this way when he was challenged about keeping quiet, right in front of the law: They said: "We're going to persecute you! We're going to whip you! We're going to put you in jail if you speak up!"

Peter says: "How can I but speak of the things which I have seen and heard? Who shall I obey? Shall I obey God or Man???"

But, we look at that whole thing in the camp, and we think: "How foolish! How foolish these people were! Can't they believe?" Listen, How foolish are we? How foolish are WE? We have the same thing. We have been bitten by a snake- the snake of sin. And I don't know how you look at Jesus Christ on the cross, but God chose to use the illustration of a snake to describe Him. Why a snake? Why didn't God tell Moses to take a pretty, white lily-of-the-valley so that it would represent the purity of Christ and put it on a pole? Brothers and Sisters, we have a wrong concept of Christ on the cross. We have to remember that Christ needed to be made sin for us! And sin, in the eyes of God, is always an ugly sight. God, for a reason, chose to use a snake to represent Christ on the cross. We try our home remedies called good morals! "Oh, but get that bottle of good morals. Surely, SURELY there's enough good morals in there to take care of my snake bite of sin!!! We try our home remedies of belonging to a certain sect of people or to join a certain church, but listen, my Dearly Beloved, It will not take care of it!

What is the price of eternal life? What does it cost to be born again? The price is blood. The price of life is blood. Way back in Leviticus 17:11 it tells us that "the life of the flesh is in the blood." In the physical the life of the flesh is in the blood. In the spiritual, the life of the spirit is in the blood- the blood of Christ. Let's go back to an Old Testament scene in Exodus 12:1-13. Here we have a wonderful account of being delivered from sin and bondage. This account was set forth to illustrate what the blood of Christ was meant to do in the time to come. God told Moses that at the midnight hour the angel of death was going to pass over the land of Egypt. He told Moses what to do. He said: "You are supposed to take a lamb and slit it's throat and catch the blood in a basin. You are to take that blood and strike it upon the door-posts and the lintel above the door. And He said: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." I don't know what all the children of Israel thought about those commands. All they had to do was obey it. But I know what the fear of man can do in people's hearts. I have experienced a lot of it.

There were many different households there. Perhaps there was a father who did kill the lamb and catch the blood. He had a eldest son who would die if he didn't put blood on the post. And so he takes his basin and heads for the door and looks up and down the street: "Oh, up there comes some Egyptians. I can't leave them see me put it on." Or, maybe he goes out and begins to put it on and the Egyptians go riding past. "What do you think you're doing?!? How foolish!!!" And he cringes and goes inside thinking: "Oh, I must wait until night so no one sees me put the blood on the door-post." Are YOU afraid to apply the blood in your life? Are YOU afraid of what others will think? Are YOU afraid to stand for Christ? Are YOU ashamed of Christ? Listen, if you are ashamed of Christ before men, He will also be ashamed of you! Perhaps this eldest son wonders: "When is Dad going to put on the blood?" His dad goes in the house and sits down in his easy-chair. He gets "altwundrich". He gets a book and starts reading. The basin is beside him with the blood. The son well remembers that 12:00 is the time. "Well, we've got quite a few hours yet." So, the son somewhat relaxes, but yet he's tense. The father totally relaxes. He sits in his chair. 8:00, 9:00, 10:00- the father fell asleep. The son goes out and looks on the door-post and there's no blood. He comes in and looks at his dad and he's sleeping- it's 10:30. So he shakes his dad and says: "Dad! Wake up! There's no blood on the door-posts! If you wait but another hour and a half I'm a dead man!" His father stirs himself: "Oh, I am negligent! I must get the blood out there!" And he gets up and puts the blood on the door-posts so his son can relax. Listen, Are YOU one who is sleeping and the midnight hour is creeping up on you and there's no blood on the door of your heart?

Maybe there's another scene. Maybe there's a grandpa who is the oldest, and his son who lives there is the oldest, and he has a son who is the oldest. All of them are under the death penalty if there's no blood applied. The grandfather's old and feeble. He can't even get on his feet anymore. He's laid up in bed. And the son of the grandfather goes and kills a lamb, he puts blood on the door-posts. But the grandfather is restless. He had heard what Moses said, and he knows that he's the first-born. The afternoon goes on. He calls his grandson and says: "Did Daddy put blood on the door-posts?" And his grandson said: "Yes. Yes he did." So he rests somewhat. But, as time takes on, he wonders: "Did he put it on thick enough that the angel can see it? After all, it's going to be dark when the death angel comes by here at midnight." And he gets worried. So, finally he calls his son to the bedside and says: "Son, are you sure that you put blood on the door-posts?" And his son said: "Yes, Father, I did put blood on the door-posts." So he tries to relax, but 9:00 comes along, 10:00 comes along, it's nearly 11:00 and the grandfather is restless. And finally he calls his son and says: "Son, forgive me for just not trusting, but would you and my grandson please, please take me out to where I can see it that I might rest?" And his son says: "Sure, Daddy, we'll take you out." So they carry Grandpa out and turn him around where he can look up at the door, and he finds peace because the blood is applied.

Listen, we need to be uneasy in our seats if we do not have the blood applied! Let me ask you something: Did YOU apply the blood on the doorpost and lintels of your heart, or has man-fear kept you from it? God said: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." God didn't say "when I see your good works", nor did He say "when I hear your prayers", nor "when I hear your groanings and weepings I will pass over you." No, He didn't say that!! He didn't say "when I see you join church", or "when I see your godly looking home", or "when I see you quit smoking", or "when I see your moral life." He said: "When I see the BLOOD, I will pass over you!" Have YOU applied the blood? There's life in the blood. The song-writer says: "Would you be free from your burden of sin? There's power in the blood! Power in the blood! Would you over evil, the victory win? There's wonderful power in the blood! There is saving power, keeping power, wonder-working power in the blood!"

The price of eternal life- what is it? What did it cost Christ to make the new-birth possible? Think of Gethsemane. Think of the cup which Christ struggled and struggled over. Yea, the struggle was so severe that the Bible says He sweated drops of blood. Why did Christ struggle so hard to drink that cup? What was in the cup? The sins of the whole world were in that cup. The sins of all times. All the sins of the evil men back through history. The thousands of murderers, the thousands of injustices, the guiltiness, all that ever took place on the face of this earth, Hitler with his men and the millions that he killed, the immorality that has taken place, the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, and everything else through the ages of history, men like Saddam Hussein, the vile men, homosexuals, the worst of sins that you and I can even think of and cannot even think of. All the sins of the whole world that ever were, that are at the present, and that ever will be were all put down into the ugly, moving liquid of that cup, and Christ had to drink it. We could say: "Yes, Christ had to drink it, but why was it such an awful thing for Him? Why was it so hard for Christ to drink this cup?" Because: "He that knew no sin was made sin for us." I'm afraid that many of us lightly pass over this. Christ did not just drink that cup and walk away innocently knowing that he did not commit those sins. The Bible says he was MADE sin.

When Christ drank that cup with your sins and my sins and all the guilt of the sins of the whole world, he was made responsible for them. He had to be changed into the ugliness of sin. Why? "So that WE might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He that knew no sin had to be made into the ugly snake of sin, a loathsome thing in the eyes of God. You see, our sins had to be punished with more than just a physical

crucifixion. Many people think of the crucifixion and think of the physical suffering that Christ went through. Listen, it was a lot more than that. That was only the physical. The spiritual was much, much more agonizing. Christ's greatest suffering was not physical but spiritual. Three times in Isaiah 53, the soul of Christ was referred to in his sufferings. In verse 10, God required Christ's soul to be offered up. God was not satisfied with just the offering up of Christ's body. He wanted Christ's soul to be offered up. In verse 11, God looked at Christ, in deepest agony of soul, and was satisfied. God looked down from heaven and said: "Just the physical suffering of Christ's body is not enough. I want to get a-hold of the innermost being of my son. I want to get a-hold of the innermost feelings and emotions. The part that hurts, the part that feels everything, I want that part made into sin." And verse 12 indicates how deep this agony went, "unto the death of his soul." Read it brothers and sisters and friends, read it. Hebrews says that: "Christ tasted death for every man." And that is not just speaking of dying physically. God could not allow you and I to have salvation by the mere physical suffering of a man. God had to have sin punished, and have it punished rightfully.

How much did Christ pay for you? How much did He pay to release me? What did Christ pay to make the new birth a possibility? Think of the whipping-post, Dearly Beloved. Isaiah 53:5 says this way, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed." You and I know what it is to be guilty. We've never known anything but guilt from our little days on up. But those of you who have found peace, there was a price paid for that peace. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him." He had to be whipped for our peace.

The way I have been told, they would have a wooden post in the middle of a big open area. And the man who was to be whipped would have to get on his knees and put his arms around that whipping-post, and they would bare his back. Then they would have a strong man who knew how to handle his whip on either side of him. Their whips were about 4 or 5 feet long of leather, and at the end of these strips were little pieces of bone tied on to it. And then they would give it all they had on the back of that poor man. As soon as the one would retrace his whip, the other one would give his whip, and then the first one again. Paul talks of it. Paul was whipped three times 39 stripes. If he would get 40, they had to quit and they were never allowed to do it again. They tell me that those men were so good at using those whips, that by the second or third lash, a man's back was laid open so that you could see the bone. Christ endured 40 of them! Can you imagine why Pilate said when he saw Jesus: "Behold the man. Behold the man." "Is it a man, or is it ribbons of flesh?"

I don't know what all must have happened in the throne-room of heaven, but God was watching. Those of you who have boys, how would you feel as a father to be sitting somewhere and evil men would take your son and tie him to such a post and start whipping him, and whipping him, and whipping him, and you know that, with the strike of your hand, you could wipe it all out, but you constrain yourself because you have a purpose in your heart? None of us can grasp what God must have went through to watch his son being whipped like that. I can well imagine him sitting there on the throne, watching it in deepest sorrow, but yet knowing the necessity of it. And as each lash came harder and harder, and as more ribbons of flesh came loose on his back, I can imagine God saying: "It's enough!! It's enough!! I'm satisfied!!" But perhaps, as He watched this whipping going on, He looked back in the year 2000, and he saw me, and he saw my sins. He was about to stay the hands that were whipping his son, but He looked back to the year 2000, and He saw you and I, and He saw our ugliness! He saw our sins, and He turns and says: "No, give Him more." "By his stripes ye are healed." The songwriter says: "He paid a debt He did not owe, I owed a debt I could not pay- I needed someone to wash away my sins. And now I have a brand-new song: Amazing Grace-

the whole day long."

Let me ask each one of you: Do YOU believe the price Christ paid to buy your soul was enough? Do YOU believe He paid it all? When He cried: "It is finished." right as He died, what did He mean? This is He meant: "I have paid the full price. I have fulfilled my mission to come and make a way for man to be saved. It is finished. It is finished." I'd like to ask you another question: Are YOU going to be hard-hearted enough, and wicked enough to want to try and add to that? You know, We can accept it, or we can reject it. We cannot add to it, neither can we take away from it. All that is left for us to do is one of two things: We can accept God's offer of salvation and be born into His kingdom, or we can be eternally, spiritually lost! God has made all the provisions for us, and with open arms He invites us: "Kommet her zu mir alle, die ihr mühselig und beladen fied; ich will euch erquicken. Nehmet auf euch mein Joch und lernet von mir; denn ich bin fanftmütig und von Hertzen diemütig; fo werdet ihr Ruhe finen for eure Seelen. Denn mein Joch ist fanft und meine Laft ist leicht." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly at heart: and ye shall find rest for your souls. Ye Shall Find Rest, REST for your souls!"

With open arms He invites us: "Come, let us reason together." Isaiah tells us. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." What is He saying? He's inviting you, He's inviting me, He's inviting all of us: "Come, sit down and let us reason together." What does He mean when He talks about reasoning together? When we reason together, we come to terms. "Come, let's sit down and come to terms about this sin in your life!!! I'm willing to talk it over with you!!!" This is our God in Heaven pleading with us! "I'm willing to talk it over with you! Just come, and sit down, and let's reason together! And though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow!!!" Could you find anything better? "Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

He tells us in 1 John 1 verse 9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." What's He saying? He's saying: "Your part is to confess your sins. You need to do your part, and I will do my part." If we confess our sins, the Word tells us that God will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. This is God's word. It is not me. These are not my words. This is God's word- look it up: 1 John 1:9. If we confess our sins, God is faithful. Why did He put the word faithful in there? He's saying: "If you confess your sins, I cannot help but to be faithful to honor it." God is saying: "I cannot lie, so I am faithful. If you confess your sins, I, God, am faithful." To what? "to forgive us." Then, He puts another word in there. He says: "and just." The word just simply means: it's only right that I do it. "If you confess your sins, I am faithful because I cannot lie, and it is only right that I forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness."

My Dearly Beloved, the devil has many times given me a hard time in my life, but this is one verse he simply cannot get out around. He would love to tear it out of the Bible, but, Praise God, he can't do it. It's there to stay. "My word abideth for ever and ever, though heaven and earth pass away." That verse will be in the Bible for all eternity. The Word of God will always remain. "In the beginning was the Word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God." It shall always remain. There's a verse in Ezekiel that says this way: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If a person does not repent, he will die, and he will always be dying, because the Word of God will always be there. If the Word of God would vanish when this earth passes away, and Christ comes in His glory because it is of no more use, people could escape out of Hell. No, the Word of God abideth for ever- the Word of God will always be. That's why there will always be souls in Hell that have not repented, because the Word of God will always hold them there. "The soul that

sinneth, it shall die."

The Hebrew writer asks a straightforward, simple question that I have yet to find an answer for. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" The reason we can not find an answer for that question is: There is none. There is no escape. Spiritual death is the only thing left for such a person. I used to wonder why God was so tough on the unbeliever who lives a pretty good, moral life. He lives a life that, in a lot of ways is commendable. He lives a clean life, he raises a family, he's concerned about doing things honestly and right, he lives a good, moral life. I used to wonder why such a person went to the same Hell as the worst murderer if he's never born again. But, as I look what God was willing to bow to, as I look at the price that God was willing to pay for you and I, it becomes so very clear what God thinks of a person who refuses to accept this offer. Who tries to add to it. Who thinks that, by some good deed, he can earn his way into Heaven. I would like to tell you: There is no surer way to Hell than to try to earn yourself into Heaven! Because, if you try to earn yourself into Heaven, you are asking God for justice. Mercy cannot get a hold of you! Mercy is only for those who have given up and have said: "I am finished! I can never pay the debt! I can never be good enough! I can never earn my way in!" It is only when we make that plead and we plead 'guilty' will the mercy of God be able to reach us. What about this purgatory theory? What about paying for part of your sins? There's no such thing!

Any amount of trying to earn God's approval by some good works, any amount of trying to earn God's approval by a certain way I live, or by a certain thing I do, is not asking for mercy! It is not giving up! It is not where the publican was when he cried out and said: "God, be merciful to me- a sinner!" It is pleading for justice, it is asking God to give you what you really deserve. And that is what every person will have when they're in Hell. We don't need to pray for justice- we get justice. It's mercy we need to pray for. We get justice without praying for it. We need to remember what such a person is doing. He is slapping God in the face and saying: "The blood of Jesus is not enough."

This morning, I don't know what you believe. I can't see into your heart. And I don't know what you think I believe, but I will tell you what I rest in. Since December 19, 1977, I have committed my soul to the power of the blood of Christ. I have nothing to offer God, and when I stand before Him in judgment, there is but one thing I can stand on, and that is His precious blood. That which He freely shed for my soul, and for your soul. Peace comes from believing that the blood of Jesus is sufficient for my sins, and that when His blood is applied by faith, the door-posts and lintels of my heart have blood on them, and He will pass over me.

I recall, this morning, a phrase I have heard so many times, and I still hear. "Du follst lieben Gott, deinen Herrn, von ganzem Herzen, von ganzer Seele und von ganzem Gemüte." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." With all that is within thee- love Him. Listen, I would like to tell you something. For many, many years I struggled with that verse. And I come up with a question that was very hard for me to answer. "How can I love someone that I do not trust?" "How can I love someone with all of my heart, all of my soul, and all that is within me if I do not trust Him to take care of me if He would come again?" My Dearly Beloved, It's an impossibility. This morning, if you do not have that trust in Him, if you do not rely on the blood of Jesus, to love the Lord God with all your heart, soul and mind is an impossibility.

I want to close with the words of Paul in Romans 10. "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. Liebe Brüder, meines Herzens Wunsch ist, und ich flehe auch zu Gott für

Israel, daz fie felig werden. For they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." What is Paul saying? Paul is saying: "My heart's desire and prayer to God is that my people might be saved. For they want to serve God, they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they, not knowing God's way of making man right with Himself, go about trying to establish their own way of making themselves right with God, and have not submitted themselves to the way that God has made for them to be in a right relationship with Him." That's what he's saying.

"Today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." I believe that is what Brother Daniel would tell us if he would be able to get up and speak to us. "Heute, fo ihr hören werdet feine Stimme, fo verftocket eure Herzen nicht." Shall we pray.

Father in Heaven, once again we bow before you, and we ask you, through your Eternal Spirit, to speak to every soul in this place. Father, if you have not spoken yet by the dead body before us, then, Lord, speak, at this point, by your Holy Spirit. I pray, Lord, that every heart would search himself, and every heart would be willing to pay the price of surrendering to the price you have paid. I pray, Dear God, that some seed might have been sown today that would set some soul free who has been struggling. Some person who may feel the weight of sin, and does not have peace. Father, we remember the words of Paul in Timothy when he said: "I have kept the faith, I have fought a good fight, therefore, there is a crown laid up for me." But Lord, he doesn't stop with those words, he says that: "there is also a crown awaiting for all those who love the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ." And Father, when we think of loving the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, I pray, Dear God, that every soul who cannot say they are looking forward to the coming of Jesus would take inventory of their life to see where they are putting their trust. Father, I pray that you would minister to every one of us. Have thine own way, Lord, have thine own way. And we will give you the glory and the praise. I pray these things in Jesus' worthy name, Amen.

Search Your Heart- Are YOU ready to stand before God on the Great Judgment Day?

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." - 2 Chronicles 7:14

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