

On The Frontier

“for the glory of God and the furtherance of the gospel”

There Are Many Ways To Die But Only One Way To Live

By Linus A. Mathis III

There are an endless array of means whereby man may meet his demise. This being the information age most of us are abreast of every one. Where we are uninformed the kind folks at "Media Central" are ever vigilant to inform us of the latest discovery. They way I see it, I am just as dead should I slip in the bathtub and break my neck as I would be if an asteroid impacted our planet. Is death by volcano more lethal than death by Mack truck? Regardless of how spectacular or foreboding a new found cause for mortality may be, dead is dead is dead.

Ecclesiastes 9:5

For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

Since the dead know nothing, the cause is of far less importance than the loss.

Psalms 116:15

Precious [costly] in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

God would prefer we lived so that we could fellowship with Him and be of service to Him and His people.

Psalms 115:17,18

The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.

But we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

The knowledge of this ever growing list of life threatening potentialities does more to promote fear than awareness. However, it happens that fear and death do have an interesting correlation. Self-preservation is a very strong motivator and most men fear death. So, fear and death are linked.

Hebrews 2:14

Forasmuch then as the children [humanity] are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Jesus Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy [make useless, void, unemployed] him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

This is referring to the remarkable accomplishments of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's noteworthy to point out at this time that it's the Devil (not God) who holds the power of death. The greater significance, however, is that he has been deprived of force.

I Corinthians 6:14

And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

II Corinthians 4:7-18

But we have this treasure in

earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair;

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

I Thessalonians 4:13-ff

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Death, though presently an enemy, will someday be swallowed up in victory.

I Corinthians 15:51-58

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Consequently, death does not have the "finality" the Devil would like it to have.

Hebrews 2:15

And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The fear of death keeps a man in bondage for a life time. Fear is a very strong motivator albeit a negative one. But, praise God, the Lord Jesus Christ has delivered us from this fear. Why? Because we know that death shall be powerless to maintain its grip on us. With the trump of God the dead in Christ shall rise. Thus the Devil's greatest leverage upon mankind has been forever diminished.

Proverbs 29:25

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.

Fear is the enemy of believing. Fear is sugar in your gas tank. A monkey wrench in the works. A disfigurement to the canvas of life! But, since we have been delivered from the fear of death, we have deliverance from all fear. You see, the fear of death is the basis for ALL fears. For instance; a man fears losing his job because he won't be able to pay his mortgage. Thus, he will have no place to live. Soon he will have nothing to eat and with no food and shelter, he will . . . ! If you don't get your raise and the cost of living continues to escalate . . . ! That cold you've contracted could develop into pneumonia, or worse! You might be admitted into a hospital! You could receive tainted blood and . . . ! Most fears seem silly when viewed in this manner, don't they? The truth is clear. We have been delivered from the fear of death. No more bondage! Why be afraid of a Dr.? Why be afraid of a medical test? If you are ill and your Dr. identifies the nature of your illness, you were afflicted before your problem was pin-pointed. The Dr. didn't give you the illness, you already had it. The test didn't make

you ill, it only confirmed the character of your malady. Honestly, once you isolate a problem you can begin to solve it. Whether you choose a spiritual solution, a medical one, or a combination, you can't solve a problem unless revealed.

Either way, the will of God regarding our well being is blatantly revealed in His Word.

III John 2

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

Since that is the case, we can know of a certainty that God is on our side.

Romans 8:31

What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

What then have we to fear? Perhaps our only fear should be having fear. I am reminded of something I read as a child, "a coward dies many deaths, a brave man dies but one." Fear is not natural, fear is not good, fear is bad. It hinders us from enjoying life. How blessed we should be that our Lord delivered us from it.

How odd that today we are told to embrace our fears and learn how to cope with them. This maybe clinical but it's definitely not Biblical.

Psalms 34:4

I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

Psalms 46:1-3

God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Though the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah [pause a moment and reflect upon these words].

Psalms 56:4

In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.

Psalms 118:6

The LORD *is* on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

II Timothy 1:7

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

You will find the clinical and the Biblical to be "poles" apart at times. Which way would you rather live? Coping with fears or delivered from them?

There may be many ways to die, but there is only ONE way to live! After all is said and done, life IS the better choice.

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

That same Jesus has delivered us from the fear of death. The bondage is broken, pass it on!
