

SERMON: Will "Your Time Come" This Year?

GOOD MORNING AND WELCOME TO FATHER'S HOUSE

In this Message I will bring out meanings in the Newer Testament to encourage Christians to win the battle against the "Fear of Death." In my last Message I asked us to ponder or examine ourselves about what trials we may face in 2026! I considered some crisis events in nature or wars. These events may move us all to ask ourselves "What may tempt us to turn away from Jesus in 2026." Most people turn away from the LORD by not trusting the LORD beyond their understanding, or by fear of the unknown. This morning I will focus on the fear of death. There are real unknowns in Nature Events and the Wars on Earth. Many of these events go beyond our understanding....Not so with death! For the Bible teaches us clearly that there is nothing unknown to Christians about death. The only unknown is where and when will "My Time Come." As I said last month, we must remember that where fear comes in to our heart, faith goes out!

A CHRISTIAN'S IMMORTALITY IN CHRIST

Reading (1 Corinthians 15.52-56) *52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible will put on incorruption, and this mortal will put on immortality. 54 When this corruptible will have put on incorruption, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then the saying that is written shall come to pass: "Death is swallowed up in victory. [Isaiah 25.8]" 55 "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.*

Our natural desire to avoid death may have us Christians all "prefer" to be still alive when the last trumpet of God sounds. This will be the Rapture and Resurrection of all Christians. However, for 2026 years now all Christians experienced, but did not see, death to go to be with Jesus. Why be afraid of something Jesus has taken the sting from. As the Apostle wrote in (1 Corinthians 15.55-56) *55 "O death, where is your sting?*

O grave, where is your victory?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

NORMAL HUMAN FEARS

God has created all living things to have a natural instinct of self-preservation such as: Avoiding danger as in taking shelter in a life threatening crisis; or being careful crossing a busy street; or wearing a mask during an epidemic. Even a cockroach will act dead on its back after you hit it! In a few seconds it flips and hurries to safety. This in itself is the instinct for survival that God has placed in all living creatures, even us! Actually many wounded men in warfare act wisely like cockroaches after being wounded. Then, they sneak away to fight another day.

FEAR OF DEATH

Quoting from my last Message: "If China begins to invade Asia will you make your physical life more important than Eternal Life? **Jesus taught Christians to fear or reverence God, not men in (Matthew 10.28): Do not fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.** There are obviously several fears if China invades Japan such as Japan's sovereignty as a nation for all of us who love this nation. But the underlying fear would be pain and death at the hands of an invading army." I cannot promise anything about pain and suffering except that God promises to be with all His

Children who believe in Jesus through all trials. But, I can show from the Bible what God's Word promises about Death!

DEATH ENTERS THE WORLD - GARDEN OF EDEN – THE FALL OF MAN

Genesis 2.16

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

The MAN, Adam, had stood by Eve as she accepted Satan's lies and did eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam's failure was greater than Eve's in that he was created with authority to protect her as she was created from his side, a rib. The Devil's temptation was a half-truth. For the LORD GOD defined the tree as having fruit of *the knowledge of good and evil*. So, after eating, it gave them *the knowledge of evil*, their sinful hearts, and, *the knowledge of good*, the LORD GOD from whom they now must hide. **Imagine** that if they said NO to Satan, they would have actually received the knowledge of evil, Satan, and good, the LORD GOD, whom they would have just obeyed against Satan; thus *the knowledge of good and evil* by obedience without eating the fruit! **This TRUTH, that never happened in the Garden**, must be remembered by us Christians today regarding obedience to God's Word and Authority.

Adam and Death

Romans 5.12

12 Therefore as sin came into the world through one man {Adam} and death through sin, so death has spread to all men, because all have sinned.

The Bible makes it clear that God's curse on Mankind was first and foremost spiritual death. Mankind's sinful nature was inherited in every person born by union of a man and a woman. Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit so the sin nature was not passed down from Mary. But the curse on Mankind also meant physical death. Gradually through the ages the Bible illustrates that the lifespan of Man changed from almost 1,000 years to 70- (because of strength) 80 years. Of course, God makes it his sovereign will regarding both strength and early death according to this average Biblical example.

As Christians we too often focus on our physical death. The Holy Spirit is not a Gnostic *spirit*. God does not call material things such as our physical bodies evil. Seeking scientific medicine to help these bodies is not a sin. We should seek natural help for our infirmities through the science available to us.....but prayerfully! Death, and Christ's Return, are both facts of life. As the Bible tells us in **(Hebrews 9.27-28) 27** *As it is appointed for men to die once, but after this comes the judgment, 28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many, and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin but to save those who eagerly wait for Him.*

Even a good worship song like *Ten Thousand Reasons* in [Verse 3] says” *And on that day when my strength is failing, The end draws near and my time has come.*” This song praises and gives real worship to our Lord Jesus. It presents the Christians desire to keep praising our Lord Jesus even on our deathbed, ***my time has come***. That is a wonderful desire! But, I really believe many of us will find that we only realize that “***my time has come***” as we find ourselves surprised to be in Glory as we look into Jesus Face!!! Regardless of that good idea to still be praising Jesus through life and death, **over focus on our physical death often hides the glorious promise of our spiritual eternal life after we pass through death without seeing it!** This incorrect focus on guessing when ***my time has come*** is a real danger of the fear of death replacing faith for eternal life. Over focus on this puts too much importance on our understanding rather than God's wise control of our life and death!

Also, do we **fear** that when ***my time has come*** and we are not praising Jesus that He will not take us to Heaven? Saints, it is not our faithfulness but His that we must depend upon. The Apostle Paul

taught his student Timothy in **(2 Timothy 2.13)** *If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.*

Another such promise for Christians' **faith over fear** is given in the New Testament in **(Romans 6.23)**: *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

JESUS' WORDS FOR ENCOURAGEMENT OVER DEATH

John 5.24

24 *“Truly, truly I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has eternal life and shall not come into condemnation, but has passed from death into life.*

John 8.51

51 *Truly, truly I say to you, if anyone keeps My word, he shall never see death.”*

Here Jesus is promising that Christians who keep His word shall never **see death**. Let us note that He did not say shall never physically die.

You may ask: Pastor Bruce, how much of His word must be kept for us to not see death?

Jesus did not give us mathematical spiritual equations to keep. This would simply become the LAW which He nailed to His Cross. But the spirit of the Law, now Jesus Teachings, is in our hearts of love for our Jesus. As God Promised through His Prophet Jeremiah in **(Jeremiah 31.33)** *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law within them and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.* The Apostle Paul confirmed the Church's identity as the *house of Israel*, all Believers in the Messiah Jesus, as Paul repeated **(Jeremiah 31.33)** in **(Hebrews 10.15-17)**: **15** *The Holy Spirit also witnesses to us about this. For after saying, 16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them, after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” 17 then He adds, “Their sins and lawless deeds will I remember no more.”*

Having God's Words Written in our hearts as Christians we are empowered to walk close to Jesus. Unlike sinners, we can choose to obey. Obviously we need to read and memorize God's WORD to give the Spirit of Christ more to work with inside our hearts. But God promised an *inside job to make us become like Jesus*.

So, how can we get some idea of how we keep His word unto salvation, and how much of His Word and not see death? .

Since Christ came, all Believers in Him, Jew or Gentile, are now the *house of Israel*. God gave Christians His Spirit to keep that writing in remembrance and continually happening throughout our lives until death! So Christians who keep His commandments out of love for Him will never see death. All of Jesus teachings are commands on how to live for Him. Loving Jesus moves all Christians to want to obey His teachings as commandments. **But the Apostle John chose one of Jesus' commands as a test necessary for anyone to be called a Christian at all!** John emphasized that if we keep walking in Jesus, the Light, we will stay in relationship with God. Then we will never see death. **The command John chose centers on LOVE!**

THE COMMANDMENT MOST VITAL TO WALK ON WITH JESUS-AND NOT SEE DEATH

At the Last Supper on the night Jesus was betrayed Jesus said to His Apostles in (John 13.34): *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*

The John introduces in his Letter, the importance of keeping all of Jesus' commandments, but he emphasizes the commandment to love one another. In this Letter the Apostle John **repeated Jesus' command as an "old" commandment**. He was referring back to Jesus first giving it at the *Last Supper*, the night before Jesus' Crucifixion.

Remember church that keeping Jesus' commandments from the heart is what God sees. He sees our **desire** to love Jesus even when we stumble in faithful obedience. Nevertheless John stresses a warning in a Christian's relationship **to remain in Christ! This is in (1 John 2.3-6):** *3 By this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 Whoever says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word truly has the love of God perfected in him. By this we know we are in Him. 6 Whoever says he remains in Him ought to walk as He walked.*

AND in (1 John 2.9-12): *9 Whoever says he is in the light but hates his brother is in darkness even until now. 10 Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling. 11 But whoever hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. 12 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for His name's sake.* I now will bring out the details of the meaning of these verses to love our fellow Christians including Jesus' strong emphasis of giving us a **New Commandment** just before His Glorification on the Cross.

Hating a Christian brother is not just a one time sin event in a moment of anger. It is a continual practice affecting a Christian's lifestyle! This attitude to Christians continuing to sin is the overriding meaning in John's Letter. This is clear in the original Greek verb tenses as translated in **(1 John 3.6/MOUNCE)** *6No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.*

As we read these verses we really **need to note the Greek tenses.** This makes it clear that a real Christian who loves Jesus may sin; but will not *keep on sinning*. What John wrote in **(1 John 3.6/MOUNCE)** was in effect Holy Spirit making clear in practice what Jesus meant. That is that hating fellow Christians as a way of life threatens one's relationship with Jesus. It threatens one's getting to Heaven at all! Constantly grieving the Holy Spirit by hate takes a Christian out of God's protection zone. As in **(1 John 2.11)** *11 But whoever hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

Note that the one doing the hating as a habit is at this point still a Christian. He *hates his brother* who is a Christian. But, this is a Christian who does not know where he is going, and has hate blinding his eyes. He is therefore **Meat for Satan!** As the Apostle Peter warned us all in **(1 Peter 5.8)** *Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

Pastor, I am struggling with not hating a Christian! What can I do?

If a Christian is struggling with hating anyone, especially a Christian, he should plead with God to create love in his heart for that person. God will answer our pleas to keep recreating our sinful hearts to become pure and loving like Jesus' heart. It is a matter of humbling oneself at the feet of Jesus in prayer.

CONCLUSION ON HOW MUCH OBEDIENCE OF JESUS' WORDS TO NOT SEEING DEATH: We would be wise to have a reverential fear of hating the brothers but not a fear of death. Often we say that God's love is unconditional. These verses show that God's love is not unconditional. But if we desire to keep loving Jesus, God keeps giving us more of Holy Spirit to change our hearts to be more like His Son, and then we mature in obedience to Jesus' Commandments.

SINCERE CHRISTIANS WALKING WITH JESUS NEED NOT FEAR DEATH

I know that there are some Christians who still fear death as they walk with Jesus with a sincere faith in His saving them. Some Christians think that they can discern if "*My Time Has Come.*" This means they think they will know when they are soon to depart this life and *graduate to Heaven.* Of course a doctor's report or other death causing diseases might make this true. But, Jesus to His Glory often shows the doctors **wrong.** Trying to calculate if *My Time Has Come* if we are

basically in good health makes us anxious and worrisome. Remember Jesus taught us in **(Luke 12.25/MOUNCE)** *And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his span of life?*

THE CHRISTIAN'S PILGRIM ROAD TO IMMORTALITY, TO GLORY

We have already seen how the grace of God helps us stay on the Pilgrim Path to Heaven. This grace will teach us obedience and give us Holy Spirit zeal and unction to *keep on keeping on!* ...Or, as in **(Acts 14.22)**, *Continue in the Faith.*

Now, let us look at some things the Bible tells us of our **Immortality Ahead of us!** Repeating my opening Bible verse in **(1 Corinthians 15.52-54)** *52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible will put on incorruption, and this mortal will put on immortality. 54 When this corruptible will have put on incorruption, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then the saying that is written shall come to pass: "Death is swallowed up in victory. [Isaiah 25.8]"* About three years before this Letter to the Corinthian Church the Apostle Paul revealed Jesus' truth about a Christian's hope of the Resurrection. This is found in **(1 Thessalonians 4.15-18)** *15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall be forever with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.*

Someone might say that Jesus meant only *spiritual death* in **(John 8.51)** *Truly, truly I say to you, if anyone keeps My word, he shall never see death.* It is true that Christians will never see the spiritual death that sinners will see after God's Judgement Day. However, the context of these verses in John's Gospel point to physical not spiritual death.

John Chapter 8 is Jesus' discourse with the Jews who directly opposed Him. The audience included other Jews and, of course, Jesus' Disciples. In **(John 8.23-24)** Jesus confronts these Jews: *23 He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins. For unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins. This is clearly physical death.* God's grace abounded against Jesus' enemies as in **(John 8.30)** *As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.* Even the Jews who still opposed Jesus understood His referring to physical death in **(John 8.52)** *Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham and the prophets died, and You say, 'If a man keeps My word, he shall never taste death {see death}.'*

The teaching from Jesus by Paul regarding the Resurrection emphasizes that those already dead will not be treated as less important than those alive when Christ returns. The Bible teaches us that Christians alive now in this the *End of the Age* will be surrounded by more activities of the *spirit of Anti-Christ*, even before this Man of Lawlessness is fully revealed. Remember that about 90AD the Apostle John revealed in **(1 John 4.3)** *This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and is already in the world. ... That was about 1,936 years ago!*

(1 Thessalonians 4.17) says: *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. I strongly believe that Christians who are alive at Jesus' Return, the Rapture, will have endured more spiritual (not necessarily physical) warfare as the Devil is about to get full control of Planet Earth. But, at death or the Rapture, it will be the same experience for all Christians regardless of the time as in (1 Corinthians 15.52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. In the twinkling of an eye means Christians will not see or taste death anymore than a raptured Christian will, as our inner self or soul goes to be with the Lord. We graduate from our Christian School on Earth to our Heavenly Home to rule with our Jesus! "That will be Glory for you and for me, saints!"*

JOY IN DEATH?

This sounds crazy to the natural man and maybe to some Christians. But the Bible points more to *joy in death* than to *sadness*! The obvious joy is that now we will see and be with Jesus if we "get through" death. But I believe there will be also an unexplainable experience of "joy" sent from Heaven as we pass. Maybe as we approach *our appointed Time* and "**my time has come.**" disease will be racking our body with pain. But, death itself will be painless. The Bible tells us this in **(1 Corinthians 15:55-56)** *55 "O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.* Christian's are not under Law, but under Grace. Forgiveness means death has lost its sting. **Like a honey bee can only sting one man, then it's stinger drops off it and it dies. So, Jesus was stung by death..and death lost it stinger for us forever.**

SURPRISED BY JOY IN LIFE.... IN DEATH?

Joy in death does sound crazy. But, it reminds me of the Salvation Testimony of the famous Christian writer, C.S. Lewis. This testimony is in his book *Surprised By Joy*. He was once a vocal beligerant atheist. But, as he was busy in his college education God's Amazing Grace found him. Lewis wrote in *Surprised By Joy* : "You must picture me alone in that room in Magdalen [College, Oxford], night after night, feeling, whenever my mind lifted even for a second from my work, the steady, unrelenting approach of Him whom I so earnestly desired not to meet. That which I greatly feared had at last come upon me. In the Trinity {3rd} Term of 1929, I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England."

Lewis also wrote in 1931:"The Divine humility which would accept such a reluctant convert as me!" Lewis's reluctance dissolved as Jesus caused him to become *Surprised By Joy!* This atheist became one of the most prolific writers in Christendom.

I believe many Christians will be similarly *Surprised By Joy* as they pass through a **stingless death to Jesus!** Christians may have either a small or a large faith, but have saving Faith. We all get grace to graduate out of this world to be with Jesus and His Glory. So let us all persevere in obedience to Jesus' Commandments, praying for hearts to stay in love wth Him who has shown His great love for us to save us. Then we will be still with Jesus unto that glorious Day!

I want to close this Message with a hymn from the 20th Century titled: *I'll Fly Away*. This hymn captures the positive attitude that all Christians can have about "**When My Time Has Come.**"

1. Some glad morning when this life is o'er, I'll fly away;
To a home on God's Celestial shore, I'll fly away
2. When the shadows of this life have gone, I'll fly away
Like a bird from prison bars has flown, I'll fly away
3. Just a few more weary days and then I'll fly away
To a land where joys shall never end, I'll fly away
CHORUS: I'll fly away, O GLORY, I'll fly away;
When I die, HALLELUYAH, by and by, I'll fly away.
Let Us Pray(Holy Communion)

REFERENCES

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Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life is a partial [autobiography](#) published by [C. S. Lewis](#) in 1955
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