



“For when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.” Acts 13:36

- Science and the Scriptures
 - “Christianity is not just involved with “salvation”, but with the total of man in the total of the world. The Christian message begins with the existence of God forever, and then with creation. It does not begin with salvation. We must be thankful for salvation, but the Christian message is more than that. Man has value because he is made in the image of God”---Francis Schaeffer: Art & Bible
 - The Scriptures report and describe spiritual realities that we must all recognize and deal with on a daily basis.
 - Salvation and theological doctrine are often neglected in our “modern” world of Science
 - The Scriptures do also recognize that we live in a Creation that includes atoms and electrons, a material world with which we must also deal with on a daily basis.
 - Our bodies, including illness are a constant reminder of this material reality
 - “Life”, as it is referred to, deals with both of these Biblical realities. We cannot neglect nor misunderstand the material and immaterial realities
 - At the twilight of biologic life, humans often reduce their thinking to only one Biblical reality, not seeing them simultaneously. Unfortunately, even Christians fail to see the realities simultaneously as is required to see accurately. This is why I selected the title for this session “End of life as we know it best”
 - CS Lewis, in *Screwtape Letters*, said it well. The tempter explained:
 - “They (humans) find it all but impossible to believe in the unfamiliar while the familiar is before their eyes”
- We generally have an expectation of any given situation. The issue is whether the expectation is realistic, that is, based on reality. Expectations rest upon an understanding. If our understanding is incorrect, unbiblical, or maybe just incomplete; then our expectation is likely not realistic.
- Realities (Biblically confirmed truths)
 - Biologic death is part of life
 - Then the Lord said, “My Spirit will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal, his days will be a hundred and twenty.” Genesis 6:3
 - And as it is appointed unto man once to die,... Hebrews 9:27
 - Biology is not our only death; humans have a “*double death*” because of our unique nature given by God.
 - The Lord formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being. Genesis 2:7
 - *Dust of the ground* is the material (atoms and electrons) component of being human



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- *Breath of life* is the immaterial (spiritual) component of being human. This aspect is most like God, who has no body but rather is spirit (John 4:24). Jesus took on our flesh (God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man Romans 8:3) to become human. Humans are the unique pinnacle of Creation.
 - Life was ideal in the Garden of Eden; man was alive in both components. True spiritual life was enjoyed in daily communion with God in the cool of the Garden (Genesis 3:8). Biologic death was not yet a reality for man.
 - Death became real!
 - “But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.” --- Genesis 2:17
 - As God had declared, with the eating of the forbidden fruit, man was banished from the communion of the Garden (Genesis 3:24). Biologic decay, disease and eventual bodily death also resulted. Man’s Double Death was now a reality. Romans 5:12, “just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men...”
 - Double Death has a solution- Double Birth
 - Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, You must be born again.” --- John 3:5-7
 - To enter the Kingdom of God one must first be born with a human, as referred to by water (amniotic fluid), flesh to flesh. Given, however, that we are born spiritually dead in sin, we must be reborn also be Spirit to see the Kingdom. A second birth; “you must be born again”.
 - NB: Theologians are not all in agreement on the meaning of this passage regarding births and water.
 - “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.” ---John 5:24
 - “But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.” --- Romans 8:10
 - Note, the body is “alive” but still headed toward biologic death in the future. It will need a resurrection
 - In summary, humans are born spiritually dead in our sin, in need of spiritual rebirth in Christ. We are born, physically alive, only to die later. Our biologic death is only defeated by the resurrection or return of Christ.
 - We all find death an unwanted reality, an enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26). Humans long to return to the original Garden, in a state of “utopia,” the void in our hearts filled with communion with God, no disease, no decay and no death. Unfortunately, we live in the second Garden, the Garden of Gethsemane, with unfulfilled desires, heartache and even death.
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- Do we have hope?
 - Can we find peace in our situation, which includes probable death? Do we have enough trust? If we have lost a Believing loved one to death, even a child, do we rejoice that they are not dead, but alive with Christ? Do we know the “sting of death” will not hold them (1 Corinthians 15:56)? Can we write the eulogy for a child who knows Christ? Is the Easter Resurrection real to us?
 - “Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like rest of men, who have no hope.” --- 1 Thessalonians 4:13
 - Double Death Reversed, not just one, but BOTH
 - This bodily resurrection is as real as all of Jesus’s teaching, our spiritual rebirth and forgiveness of sin. All the components are real or “we are to be pitied more than all men”. ---1 Corinthians 15:19
 - 1 Corinthians 15 contains our best information of this reversal of bodily death. Our new body will be different in ways we cannot fully understand, nor need to understand, but we can and do have hope! The biologic death that most dread and lament will one day be reversed. Many do not and some cannot relate to their state of spiritual life and death; they focus only on bodily death. Even some Believers misapply this reality.
 - Paul begins, as we must, with the Gospel by which we are saved!
 - “Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.”---1 Corinthians 15:1-2
 - Paul immediately turns to the reality of resurrection from physical death mentioning that Christ died, was buried and was raised.
 - “For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.” --- 1 Corinthians 15:4-8
 - Our Resurrection is a MUST
 - “And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile: you are still in your sins. (17) But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep (20).” --- 1 Corinthians 15:17, 20
 - Because death is so presently real in this life, Hebrews 2:8 helps reminds us of the bright future
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- "...and put everything under his feet (Christ). In putting everything under him, God left nothing that was not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him" --- Hebrews 2:8
 - Our future is certain
 - The last enemy to be destroyed is death ---1 Corinthians 15:26
 - It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body---1 Corinthians 15:44
 - Death has been swallowed up in victory---1 Corinthians 15:54b
 - An increasing problem in modern America is one of over reliance upon Science.
 - In the middle of the discussion of resurrection, this is addressed. Paul is relating that we must not take our eyes off the resurrection and live like those who do not understand its reality. We must beware of "osmotic learning". Osmotic learning is the absorption of cultural ideas, which is the "bad company corrupting good character" (thinking). This most certainly affects our thinking about double birth.
 - "If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, 'Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die'." Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." ---1 Corinthians 15:32
 - What is a Biblical view of Science?
 - God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over..." --- Genesis 1:28
 - This is the immaterial; God gives man some responsibility in the material world. We use our understanding of the atoms and electrons to reduce suffering and improve life. We have all benefited from science by warmer houses, safer cars, and yes, amazing healthcare.
 - The problem is not science, but scientists who become too self centered and fail to recognize God for ALL He is
 - Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." Genesis 11:4
 - This is an example of early science being used to build better bricks, bricks which humans sought to use to steal God's glory
 - God's invisible qualities...-have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so men are without excuse --- Romans 1:20
 - Be forewarned of scientists who fail to recognize God's sovereignty.
 - It is important to recognize that Christianity or Reality, *does* include the material existence in which we are currently embedded. Truth is an accurate description of reality. God (Scripture) is the source of the most accurate and authoritative description of reality. Science, however, is limited to observation, not the role of authoritative description like Scripture. Both Science and Scripture must be used correctly.
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- At the End of life, one problem is the allure of Modern Medicine (Science). We allow “bad company” (unbiblical ideas) to set our expectations.
 - What is our purpose in life? The cultural mandate often becomes our priority.
 - We call upon Science to provide our goals: live long, be functional, be comfortable.
 - We may neglect our actual purpose-- to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.
 - The best understanding comes from Paul’s experience. Philippians 1:20-24
 - I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. --- Philippians 1:20
 - Exalting Christ, “whether by life or death”
 - For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. --- Philippians 1:21
 - Death is not seen as a negative end to life
 - If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. --- Philippians 1:22-24
 - Life here is not seen as to fulfill selfish desires of longevity, but in service to others.
 - Medicine is not the elixir of life, The Lord whom death could not hold is the elixir of DOUBLE Life
 - Is death a failure? No, it is graduation. We cannot graduate before our time, but must be prepared to graduate when the time comes.
 - “For when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.” Acts 13:36
 - Then I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.” ---Revelations 14:13
 - Is death to be feared? It is not the end, but a transition to something fuller.
 - Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. --- Hebrews 2:14-15
 - Is life sacred? Of course, but not to be worshiped; that would be idolatry
 - They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. ---Revelations 12:11b
 - Is there sadness in the loss of human life? Yes, Jesus wept at the sense of loss, even knowing he would call Lazarus back and later into Eternity
 - When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled...Jesus wept. --- John 11:33, 35
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- Remember we live in the wrong Garden, longing for the goodness of God in the original Garden, without disease, decay and death.
 - Practical considerations at the end life as we know it best
 - Except Enoch (Genesis 5:4) and Elijah (2 Kings 2), humans in Scripture underwent death
 - Woody Allen captures much of our sentiments on dying, however we must recall, we do not chose our death any more than we chose our birth.
 - “I am not afraid of death, I just don't want to be there when it happens.”
Woody Allen
 - Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS)
 - PAS like suicide is not an option for the Christ follower. The purposeful taking of innocent life is morally wrong. Such independence from the purposes of God is to steal His glory.
 - We are always to care and not kill
 - We are not to judge the worth of life by it's utility or pleasantness
 - Medically aggressive care
 - Just because we have technology, does not mean it must be employed at every opportunity. Wisdom is required to guide the use of some forms of treatment in some situations. The use of futile treatment may lead to cruel, not compassionate care.
 - Health Care Proxies---An agent to speak on our behalf
 - We do not get to plan our illnesses or accidents. Each of us, young or elderly, could find ourselves at any moment incapacitated and unable to participate in decision making regarding our care. A Health care proxy will help to state our wishes on our behalf, but only if they already have a sense of our expectations regarding end or near end of life. These conversations are important to have now while they are possible.
 - Advanced directives—A written statement expressing one's desires for medical care when one is not able to express one's desires.
 - Previously written statements are fixed and unable to interact with every conceivable situation, but do help to make one desires more than guess work. A Healthcare Proxy with our Advanced Directive is best. This helps settle family disagreements.
 - MOLST (Medical Orders for life Sustaining Treatments)
 - A very specific set of orders signed by both the person and the physician. The areas touched upon include common treatments such as; CPR, mechanical ventilation, nutrition, antibiotics, dialysis, blood transfusions or hospital care. The MOLST discussion is good for patients and families facing a terminal illness. Many Gospel discussions occur at times like these.
 - Transplantation---The donation and moving of body tissue to another in need.
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- A very controversial area often in play near end of life, both the receiving and the donation of organs. The Slippery slope of the ethical issues involved are abundant. This is worth praying about before the situation arises, in both the giving or receiving position.
 - Hospice—the giving of compassionate care in terminal situations
 - Not everyone has the blessing of actively being aware of his or her eminent death. What an opportunity for both Believers and non-Believers.
 - Lord help our unbelief
 - “...they find it all but impossible to believe in the unfamiliar while the familiar is before their eyes.” Screwtape CS Lewis
 - Life as we know every day will end; is our faith prepared for this reality?
 - Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” ---John 20:27-9
 - God has “set eternity in the heart’s of men” (Ecclesiastes 3:11b), but life does not look the same through out. Do we trust enough for the entire journey? Faith in Christ is essential. Science will be in the story, but NOT in the lead role.