

ENTERING HIS REST WITH ETERNAL LIFE
(Topical Funeral Sermon)

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A FUNERAL OF A BELOVED BELIEVER IN CHRIST

It is said at funerals, "we are here to celebrate the life of our beloved one", which implies the celebrating of the good things about our loved one's life while they were with us here on this earth. As well, each of us, no doubt, have fond memories of our loved one, with thoughts of noble and good acts with which they did in their short time on this earth, and in remembering all of their positive attributes which blessed others as well as ourselves, and maybe even in finding humor in their human flaws that we knew them for, yet we learned to love them anyways, just as they learned to love us in spite of our own flaws.

[This would be the place to add personal story of loved one]

We especially though can be celebrating the life eternal that they have now entered into, as they have finally arrived in God's perfect and eternal rest. When we think of rest, we may think it is in not having to do anything, like in the laying down on the sofa and falling asleep to a football game or in relaxing in a lounge chair at the beach under the shade of a large umbrella while enjoying the breeze and allowing the regularity of the splashes of the waves on the shore to lull us to sleep. When speaking of eternal rest, it may be thought of that they can now just be at peace, being forever still and restful, nevermore to be encumbered with the worries of this world, where all demands of the heart and mind are suddenly taxed or grieved no more, or even where their body and mind is now floating in a visceral state of blissful silence, like a baby in a mother's womb.

But that eternal life and rest that I speak of today are both found from the same source, and that is through the Lord Himself, Jesus Christ. Jesus said, in the book of John (of the Holy Bible), in chapter 14 and verse 6, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Jesus also said in **Matthew 11:28-30**, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Right before that Jesus said in verse 27 "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." Jesus indeed holds the key not only to eternal life but also His perfect rest. That rest is further explained in the book of Hebrews, Chapter 4. Verse 1 and 2 says this, "Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it." Jesus spoke of the promise of entering His rest and He also spoke of the promise

of eternal life. So what is that eternal life and how can someone be ensured of it and how can one receive the promise of that rest that Jesus spoke of? It can be found once again in the Words of Jesus. In John 3:16-17 Jesus said, " For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." Saved from what, you may ask? As God's Word tells us we have all transgressed and sinned against God and His Holy and Perfect Ways and the wages or consequence of that is death, that is an eternal death. Our sin against God has caused a separation from God, a severing of ties with God, a complete estrangement from any kind of relationship with God. But God's Word, says that we can find forgiveness of our sins through the sacrifice that Jesus paid for us by the shedding of His blood, and dying on a cross and that when He rose from the dead on the third day, Jesus has then conquered death and allowed **life eternal to all who will believe in Him**. When Jesus said He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, He was saying that He is the **ONLY** Way, the **ONLY** Truth, and the **ONLY** Life. There [is] salvation in [no] other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) All that is required of us is to believe on Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:4-9 says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast

Jesus gave the promise of entering into His rest and we can have eternal life in Him that can begin in this very moment, although it is of an image of what is yet to come. That is, once we have passed on from this present life we will fully enter into His perfect rest and be in His eternal Kingdom of Heaven that transcends this present time. As any Christian knows, that promise of rest can be had in the peace that God gives us, **even in this present time**, but since we are still in this world where evil still exists all around us, and even we ourselves, as Christians, know that we have not been perfected yet, and that there is still that blessed hope of a perfect rest, and a longing to be in His eternal kingdom, free from all of the evil that still exists in this world and free from our own struggles that we experience while dwelling in our present flesh.

Romans 8:18-25 says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance."

While we may suffer in this present time, and we may have pain, and we will have sorrow for the loss of our loved one, we can have **hope** for what is to come. Yes, we can have the hope of the promise of life eternal in Jesus Christ and find rest for our souls through Christ, but we still wait for that eternal hope where "... God will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things [will] have passed away. God says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who **overcomes** shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son."" (Revelation 21:4-7)

When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we receive His Holy Spirit as a promise guaranteeing what is to come. His Spirit also testifies with our spirit that we are His children and then as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the [children] of God. Children of the most High God. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Lord God Almighty, Creator of all things! We are promised as children of God that we are heirs to His kingdom, joint-heirs with Jesus! Our hope in His promises are for now, yet are perfected when we are with Him, for **when we see Him we will be made like Him**. Right now we are living in the image of what is to come. Some of what God has in store for His children has been written in His Word.

To the angel of the church of Ephesus, Jesus said, "To him who **overcomes** I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

To the angel of the church of Smyrna, Jesus said, "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" and "He who **overcomes** shall not be hurt by the second death."

To the angel of the church of Pergamos, Jesus said, "To him who **overcomes** I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

To the angel of the church of Thyatira, Jesus said, "he who **overcomes**, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—"

To the angel of the church of Sardis, Jesus said, "He who **overcomes** shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

To the angel of the church of Philadelphia, Jesus said, "He who **overcomes**, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name."

To the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, Jesus said, "To him who **overcomes** I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

Just imagine our beloved one sitting with Jesus on His throne!

Our beloved has overcome and found that promised hope of rest and eternal life and it's for certain that if they were to speak to us right now they would cheer us on towards God's promises that are in Christ Jesus our Lord. Don't give up the faith, don't give up in the hope that one day we will be in the full glory of God Almighty and we will be His beloved children for all of eternity! We will miss our beloved one, but their passing on should more than anything give us hope. Hope for His **perfect rest and eternal life in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord!**