



The Sermon

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Genesis 50:22-26

"The End of the Beginning"

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TRANSCRIPT

Well, we've come to a very special Lord's Day, and I'm so glad that you're here, because for the last two years we have been preaching through the book of Genesis verse by verse. Literally, two years ago I started us on this journey, Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and we have taken our journey through this extraordinary book; and so this Lord's Day I think we've come to the last sermon. So, we have.

So, I want you to take your Bible and turn with me to Genesis chapter 50, and today we're going to look at verses 22-26, which is going to be the grand crescendo of this book, the great climax, as we now reach the pinnacle of the book of Genesis. It concerns the death of Joseph. So, I want to begin by reading this passage, Genesis 50:22; and this is God's inspired and inerrant and infallible Word.

Beginning in verse 22, "Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father's household, and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph's knees. Joseph said to his brothers, 'I'm about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.' Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, 'God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here.' So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin

in Egypt." And so the book of Genesis comes to conclusion. Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to have the record of what took place these many years ago, that we may understand history, that we may understand what it is for a person to come to the end of their life, to come and approach death, and to die with full faith in God, and bearing witness to others in that moment. I pray that the lessons that we shall observe today and apply to our lives, I pray that they would be lasting lessons. We ask now for the ministry of the Holy Spirit to prepare every heart, that we'd be receptive to the teaching of Your Word, that You would fill me with Your Spirit and stir up within me the gift to teach and to preach. We pray that You alone would be honored and glorified. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. [End]

The title of this message is "The End of the Beginning." In these verses, we come to the end of the beginning. We come to the end of the book of Genesis. The word "genesis" means beginnings or origins, and it's drawn from the first three words of this book in chapter 1, verse 1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

This is a book of beginnings. It's the beginning of, really, everything. It's the beginning of the universe. It's the beginning of earth. It's the beginning of the human race. It's the beginning of marriage, family. It's the beginning of temptation and spiritual warfare. It's the beginning of human sin. It's the beginning of the gospel being made known. It's the beginning of death, of human history, of human civilization. It's the beginning of nations. It's the beginning of God's chosen nation Israel. And in a very real way, the entire Bible rests upon this firm foundation of Genesis.

Genesis upholds the entire Bible. The rest of the Old Testament is just really an extension of what has begun in Genesis, and the New Testament is really the fulfillment and the consummation, the completion of what God began here in Genesis. So everything in the entire rest of the Bible, the next 65 books, all rest squarely upon this foundation. No book in the Bible

stands detached from Genesis. No book in the Bible stands independent of Genesis. Every book, every truth, every promise in the Bible is supported and upheld by the book of Genesis.

And so we come now to the last scene of the last patriarch: Joseph. What we have recorded here is his death. His time has now come; the end of this journey is now here; the time of his departure is at hand. He has kept the faith, and he has finished the course. And the connection to your life and my life is very obvious, because the same will come to you one day. You will come to the finish line of your life, you will come to the end of your life's journey and race; death will come for you one day, and will come for me, and it is inescapable and unavoidable. And what we want is we want our last day here on earth to be our best day. We want our last day here on earth to find us strong in faith in God, and pointing people to God, and bearing witness for God, as we come to the end, just like we see here with Joseph. This is an amazing scene, as he dies strong in the Lord.

I want you to die strong in the Lord, and I want your last day here to be your first day in heaven. So let's walk through this passage. And the first thing I want you to note is "the last days." In verses 22 and 23, we see the last days of Joseph.

Verse 22 begins, "Now Joseph stayed in Egypt," - let's stop right there. He stayed for another 54 years. Between verses 21 and 22 is a time gap of 54 years. So after his father Jacob has died and they have buried him in Canaan, as Moses records the book of Genesis, he hits the fast-forward button, and we come all the way, 54 years now, to verse 22. And during this time of more than half of a century, Joseph stays in Egypt, he lives in Egypt, and he lives, we see in verse 22, with his father's household. I would refer to Jacob's other sons, the other eleven sons, as well as his servants, and it speaks to how they live together in harmony and a tight family unit - "and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years." That was not uncommon in that day. In fact, it was a normal lifespan at this time in human history, especially here in Egypt.

And just to remind you, Adam lived to be 930 years old. Methuselah, 969 years old, and that's before the flood when people lived longer. Abraham lived 175 years, and Isaac 180, and Jacob 147. So human life is declining in the number of years; and Joseph dies, now 110 years old. He's the second youngest brother; so his other brothers, at least most of them who are surviving, are older than he is, and so they are older than 110.

Just to put this in some perspective, Joseph lived his first 17 years in Canaan and the last 93 years in Egypt. He's been here in Egypt a very long time. And the human timespan, lifespan would continue to decline to what it is today. And 400 years from this point Moses wrote one Psalm, it's Psalm 90. It's the only psalm written by Moses in the entire Psalter. And in that psalm, which was written 400 years later, he writes in Psalm 90:10, "As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years." So I find myself right in the middle of that, between 70 and 80.

In verse 23, "Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons." Depending upon how you look at that, it's either he lived to see his great-grandchildren or his great-great-grandchildren. And this was a blessing of God to be able to see his grandchildren, and perhaps, his great-grandchildren, perhaps his great-great-grandchildren. Proverbs 17:6 says, "Grandchildren are the crown of old men." Well, he has many crowns upon his head.

"And he also lived to see" - verse 23 tells us - "the sons of Machir," - that was the son of Manasseh, as it says here - "and they were born on Joseph's knees." The descendants, the offspring just continued to come to Joseph. And this expression "born on Joseph's knees" is a euphemistic expression, a euphemism for Joseph adopting them. So he adopts his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren to be his own children, just as Jacob had done with Joseph's own sons earlier.

And before we move on the point I want to make with you by way of application is none of us have a guarantee on how long we're going to live. Everyone in this room will live a different number of days and, basically, a

different number of years, by and large. Some will die young, some will die old.

As I was thinking about this, just even in church history some of the greatest men that God has ever used died young. King Edward VI who followed Henry VII who was the predecessor to Bloody Mary, he assumed the throne of England at age nine; he was the teenage king. And he was the Protestant king who dispatched John Knox to go throughout England and to preach the Reformation truths of the gospel. Edward VI died at age 15. What a strange providence, because he was then followed by Mary I, who was Bloody Mary. We would have kept Edward VI on the throne, and we would have put Mary in the grave. But in the strange providence of God, God put Edward VI in the grave, and put Mary I on the throne, who burned at the stake 288 Protestants in England.

Other men who have died young: David Brainerd died in the arms of Jonathan Edwards at age 29, who was the pioneer missionary to the Native Americans. And Robert Murray M'Cheyne, the favorite son of Scotland, he too died at age 29 in the full zenith of his ministry, and God just brought him home early. William Borden, the missionary to China, died at age 25 before he could get to China. He died in Cairo, Egypt learning the Muslim religion so that he could carry a witness further east. But in the strange providence of God, he died at age 25. And Jim Elliot, the missionary to the Auca Indians, he was taken out at age 29. And what about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; He died young, by any standards, at approximately age 33. None of us have any guarantee of tomorrow and how long we will live. "Boast not yourself of tomorrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth."

And in the providence of God, the sovereignty of God, other men live longer. Billy Graham lived to 99. J. I. Packer lived to 93. John Wesley lived to 87. John MacArthur this summer will be 84 and he'll never die. He's canceled any life insurance policy. I mean, only God knows how long we're going to live, and it's different for everyone in this room. But here's what's important. Whether you live long, whether you live short, every day must be live for the glory of God. Every day must be lived as if this is your last

day. "Boast not yourself of tomorrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth." It was Richard Baxter who once said to preachers to always preach as a dying man to dying men, as never to preach again. We should live today as a dying man, as though this is my last day here upon the earth. So, that's the last days of Joseph; he lived to be 110.

I want you to note, next, "the last words," the last words of Joseph there in verses 24 and 25. And this is the last scene of Joseph's life. In verse 24 we read, "Joseph said to his brothers," – these are the last, now, words to come from his mouth. It's been well said, "Last word should be lasting words." And he says – 'I'm about to die.'" He senses that he's come to the end. His energy is being depleted. He recognizes his strength is leaving him, that he's about to die.

And again, he's the second youngest of the twelve brothers; his other brothers will outlive him, and he is dying relatively young. But would you please note, there's no panic in Joseph's voice or in his words. And I think we would ask the question, "Why is that?" And two reasons come to my mind. Number one, it was 54 years earlier he stood at the deathbed of his own father, and he witnessed his father Jacob die strong in the faith in God. He saw his father pull his legs up and settle himself in bed and then breathe the last, and he saw his father courageously and heroically face the greatest enemy, death, and to do so strong in the faith. And that, no doubt, is still in the heart and the mind of Joseph, and he bears his father's witness to face death.

I think there's a second reason why there's no panic in Joseph's voice, because he has seen the hand of God upon his life all these years. He has seen the providential care of God take him through all of these episodes that we have been looking at for quite some time. We have seen Joseph has witnessed God's protection as his own brothers sold him to slave traders. And the slave traders took him away to a foreign land to Egypt, and there he's falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, and then he's thrown into prison. But every step of the way, God has been with Joseph. God has never abandoned Joseph.

And so now in this final hour of his life he has every reason to believe that God will never be more with him than in this last hour, and that God will give him dying grace. Notice what he says, the witness that he gives after that: "I'm about to die," - and he looks at his brothers and says - "but God will surely take care of you." His last words are pointing people to God. His last words are pointing people away from himself and pointing upward to God.

That's the way you want to come to the end of your life: strong in your faith in God, and pointing people to God, and giving your greatest witness for God, preaching your best sermon on your deathbed. "Surely God will take care of you." Literally in the Hebrew it reads, "Surely God will visit you." And that's how it's translated in the King James and in the ESV. The NIV translates it, "And surely God will come to your aid." And the idea is all the same, that as Joseph is stepping off the scene, God will remain on the scene, and God will be the great caretaker of your life. And so what he is doing here is he is encouraging his brothers to put their faith in God, to put their trust in God, "and God will come through for you, and God will surely take care of you."

In a sense, while Joseph has been alive, he's been, of course, the prime minister of Egypt, and he's taken care of all their needs. He gave them a place to live, he's given them food, he's given them resources; but now as Joseph leaves, there'll be no one looking after them. But he says, "But God will take care of you."

In reality God was taking care of them the whole time, God was just simply working through Joseph as a means to the end. But now that Joseph will be removed, there will be no difference: "God will still be here, and God will still take care of you." He encourages them by reminding them of the unchanging presence of God in their lives and the unfailing provision of God in their lives.

This is the greatest encouragement we could ever give to someone as you and I seek to encourage others. And there's no one in this room who does

not need to be encouraged; we all need to be encouraged. The greatest encouragement that you can give to someone else is to do what Joseph is doing here, to point them to God, to point them away from yourself and to reinforce and to remind them that God will take care of them, if they're a believer in Jesus Christ. And that is what Joseph is doing here.

And this should remind us also that when we come to this final scene of our lives, it is an opportunity to give the greatest witness for God that we will ever give, because it's in a moment like this that people think about life and death and heaven and the final judgment and hell, and people begin to think about eternity and what lies beyond this life and what's on the other side of the grave; and it is the greatest opportunity to open our mouth and to tell people about the Lord. That is what Joseph is doing here. He is a role model for each and every one of us.

And then he reminds them of God's promises. He points them to the Lord, but he also points them to the word of God and to the promises of God; and we see this at the end of verse 24, for he continues to say, "and God will bring you up from this land to the land which He" - God - "promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." There are very specific promises in the word of God to which Joseph now reminds them. And what this is, is there is a spirit of prophecy that rests upon Joseph, just like it did Jacob, that we looked at weeks ago, that God pulls back the veil and enables Joseph on his deathbed to peer into the future and to see what lies ahead.

And he says here, "After my departure, God will bring you up from this land," - this land is Egypt - "and when God brings you up from Egypt," - he's referring to the exodus, he's referring to what will take place in 400 years under the leadership of Moses, when God will open the door and allow the people of God to escape the slavery and bondage of Pharaoh, and to leave Egypt; and this says, please note - "bring you up from this land to the land" - and the land is the Promised Land, it's the land of Canaan, the land that is flowing with milk and honey - "which He" - God - "promised on oath."

Now what oath did God take? God swore by His own name. God swore by Himself, because there is no one higher than God. And God pledged by His own holiness and His own faithfulness that He will take the people of God out of this land, Egypt, and take them to the Promised Land, to Canaan. And so what Joseph is doing here is he is citing what will become Scripture. Moses has not yet written the book of Genesis, that will take place some 400 years later during the wilderness wanderings; but nevertheless, by oral tradition, this has been passed down from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Joseph, and the word of God is very etched in his mind, and so he now cites the word of God and the promises of God to his brothers. If you'd like to know what the passage is, it's actually Genesis 15:12-14, and I want to just take a moment to read those verses, because this goes way back when Abram first enters into the Promised Land; and it's when Abram is converted, when he believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

In Genesis 15:12 we read, "Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him. God said to Abram, 'Know for certain,' - I love the way God is so emphatic when He speaks - "know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land" - well that land is Egypt - "a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years." Even the amount of time that they will be in Egypt has been made known to Abram by God.

Verse 14, "And I will also judge the nation whom you will serve," - and God did bring judgment upon Egypt. And it says Moses inflicted the ten plagues upon Egypt, including when he struck the Nile River and it turned to blood. The firstborn son in Egypt would be struck dead by the death angel. I mean, that was the judgment of God upon a godless nation. And then in verse 14 - "and afterward they will come out with many possessions." It refers to the exodus. So that is etched in Joseph's mind. And even on his death bed, he is contemplating Scripture - or, the Scripture hasn't been written yet - he's contemplating the word of God, and he's meditating upon these promises, just like you and I should be anchored to what is now recorded in written Scripture.

So, verse 25, this gets better: "Then Joseph made the sons of Israel" - that's his eleven brothers - "swear." Now to swear means not to curse, it means to take an oath. And in taking an oath you are pledging yourself before God to fulfill what is required in the oath. And if you will execute faithfully what you've agreed to do, the blessing of God will be upon you; but if you fail to keep your word under oath, then God will curse you. So Joseph binds them to take this oath. And Jesus later will say, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no, and anything beyond this is evil."

So Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, take this oath, what they will do after his death. And he begins by giving them this encouragement. Again, "God will surely take care of you," - and so he reaffirms and repeats what he said in verse 24 to solidify this in their minds that God is with them, that God is for them, and that God will provide for them. But now comes to the part of the oath, toward the end of verse 25 - "and you shall carry my bones up from here."

Now Joseph knows that this will not take place for another 400 years, because God has already said that back in Genesis 15 that I just read to you; and he knows that when he dies he will go immediately to his fathers and go immediately to the Father, to God; but when the exodus occurs in 400 years he so wants to be identified with the people of God that "when that time comes, you take my bones with you. And it will be a statement, and it will be a testimony, that I believe in the promises of God, and I will be with God's people."

I mean, I feel something like that when I tour London and Oxford and Cambridge and places in Geneva and Zurich that where great men of God have once stood and have given their life, I just want to stand where they stood. There's just something in me. I know there's nothing mystical about this, but in my bones I want to identify with the men of God. There is a solidarity in my heart with them as I stand right there. I mean, I carry in the front of my preaching Bible, probably most of you know, a picture of John Rogers, who was the first martyr burned at the stake by Bloody Mary February 4, 1555, Smithfield, London. And whenever I go to London the first place I go is to Smithfield, and I go to that plaque on the back of Saint

Bartholomew's Hospital, and I stand right there, and I just want to identify with the man of God 500 years earlier, who held fast when he was burned at the stake. I love that.

And there's something like that in Joseph: "When the time comes 400 years from now, when you depart from this land and go to the land, I want my bones to be a part of this. I just want to be in solidarity with the people of God in this dramatic moment." And so that's what's going on with Joseph.

And so we know that Joseph believed at this point that there would be an exodus. And in Hebrews 11:22, Hebrews 11, that great chapter that we call God's hall of fame, God's hall of faith: "By faith Abel, by faith Enoch, by faith Abraham, by faith Sarah." I mean, it's a walk through those who have had resilient faith in God. We read this one verse, Hebrews 11:22, concerning Joseph: "By faith Joseph, when he was dying," - that points back to this very scene where we are - "made mention of the exodus to the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones." He believed that there was going to be the time when God would deliver His people out of Egyptian bondage, "and I want you to take my bones with you, and I want you to take my bones to the Promised Land. That's how much I am identified with God and the people of God."

Now before we move on there's two things that I want to draw to your attention about Joseph's faith. "By faith Joseph," and the first thing I want you to notice: how resilient his faith was. And I want you to put yourself in his sandals. He lived in Egypt for 93 years. He was inundated with Egyptian culture, he has been the Egyptian Prime Minister, he has been given an Egyptian name, he has been given an Egyptian house, he married an Egyptian woman, he raised an Egyptian family, he adopted many of the Egyptian manners and customs, but, but he did not embrace Egyptian gods, and he did not embrace Egyptian morals, and he did not adopt Egyptian religion. He refused to capitulate, he refused to cave in, he remained a strong believer in the one true, living God, and turned his back on the darkness of Egypt while he lived in the midst of Egypt.

And this should say something to us today, this should speak volumes to us, because we are in the world, but we are not of the world; we are in Dallas, but we are not of Dallas. And we must utterly reject the paganism and the idolatry that is going on around us, and we cannot become squeezed into the mold of this world and cave in to peer pressure or the media's agenda. We refuse the woke agenda. We refuse the homosexual agenda. We refuse the lesbian agenda. We refuse the transgender agenda. We refuse the feminist agenda. We refuse the socialist agenda.

We will not be squeezed in while we live here into the world's ideologies and the world's philosophies and the world's immoralities. We are in Dallas, but we are not of Dallas. We are in the world, but we are not of the world. We will be like Joseph; and if we live here for 93 years like Joseph did, we want to remain, we must remain strong in our commitment and in our loyalty, in our allegiance to the God of heaven and to the standards that He has set. They are not up for negotiation. And if we go to jail, we go to jail. That is the price we must be willing to pay. So, the resilience of Joseph's faith: he wouldn't buckle, he wouldn't budge, though he lived in the midst of it. This must be true for you and for me as well.

The other aspect of his faith – and I'll say this just in passing – is that he had a bright hope for the future, not just that he's resilient in the present, but that he has a positive, optimistic view of the future, because he knows God is on His throne, and God will fulfill His promises, and God will bring it to pass. And Joseph knew that there would be an exodus, just like you and I know one day there's going to be an exodus, when we're taken out of this world and we are taken to heaven, a far greater exodus. We have this hope that this world is not our home. We are just strangers and aliens passing through, that we're looking for a better country and a better city that lies above. Joseph stands out like a bright star on a dark night. In the midst of the godlessness of the Egyptian dynasty, he holds fast to his convictions and remains God's man.

Now the last thing that I want you to see is in the last verse, verse 26, "the last breath." We've seen the last days, we've seen the last words, now the last breath. We come to the very end. "So Joseph died." Even the best men

must die. Death comes for all men and women at the appointed time, and it came for Joseph. If anyone could have avoided this, Joseph would be at the head of the list. But even Joseph has this appointed time.

"So Joseph died" - he breathed his last we read - "at the age of one hundred and ten years," - and to put this in a chronological perspective, this is approximately the year 1804 BC, less than 2,000 years before the coming Christ - "and he was embalmed" - just as his father had been embalmed. This was the practice in the Egyptian culture; and the reason that they embalmed their leaders and their pharaohs is because of their pagan religion. They believed that you had to prepare the body for the afterlife. And so they would take out the fluids of a deceased person and put spicy fluids back in him, and then wrap him in linens so that the body would be preserved. Sometimes they would put the body into a ship or on a horse, believing that it would take them to a happy place in the afterlife.

Well, Joseph is a part of this culture, and he goes along with it, despite the fact that he believes in the Lord. The difference is, as it was with Jacob, though it's not mentioned here, rather than having the occult priests perform the embalming, Joseph had earlier had physicians come in so that the separation from the beliefs of the pagan false prophets and false teachers in Egypt that there would be this firewall between him and his beliefs and them; and surely that would be taking place here. But he was embalmed, which would preserve the body longer.

At the end of verse 26, "and placed in a coffin in Egypt." The word "coffin" means a chest, like a wooden chest. It would be much like the ark, only obviously smaller: a sarcophagus. And so translators tell us that there should be a definite article in front of coffin: placed in not just a coffin, but "the" coffin, which would indicate the coffin of a high-ranking Egyptian official, which Joseph was. And so his embalmed body would be placed mummified into a coffin. And as would be the practice of the day, that coffin then would be placed in a public building for people to pass by and see. Pharaohs would go through the same, but their bodies would be placed in pyramids; it would be placed in more architectural buildings of wonder. But for Joseph, he would have been placed in a building, and it would be a

constant reminder to those who saw the coffin that he had been a good man, a good ruler who had come to the aid of the Egyptian people during their seven years of famine. And we are to assume from this that he was never buried, that his body was never placed in a grave, but that it remained in this wooden coffin.

Now fast-forward four centuries to the exodus. And this has been passed down through various means to Moses, and Moses knows of this dying request of Joseph; so when it is time to leave Egypt, after the death angel has come through and killed the firstborn son of all the families in Egypt, and all of the people of God who have been forced to make bricks without straw, they now are all in array and alignment, and they leave now with their possessions and with their cattle, Moses takes the bones of Joseph and marches out of Egypt with them, and has them carried for the 40 years of wilderness wandering. And in Exodus 13:19, "Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." I love that. "Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he" - Joseph - "had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, 'God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you.'" And Moses complied with this. And so 40 years, they probably put the coffin on a wagon of sorts and was led about; "but we're taking Joseph with us, even if it's just his bones. We're all in this together."

And when time comes 40 years later to enter into the Promised Land, God says to Moses, "because you struck the rock in anger, you will not enter into the Promised Land; go up into the mountains and die." And leadership was passed from Moses to Joshua, and Joshua now leads the people of God across Jordan from the east headed west, from the plains of Moab into the very heart of the Promised Land, and Joshua makes sure that the bones of Joseph are brought home to Canaan.

And when you fast-forward to the end of the book of Joshua, the last three verses of the book of Joshua, in Joshua chapter 24 - just earlier in this chapter is when Joshua addressed the nation and said, "Choose for yourself whom you will serve. But for me in my house, we will serve the LORD." Immediately after that, in Joshua 24:31, we read, "Israel serve the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua."

Now verse 32, here it is: "Now they buried the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up from Egypt, at Shechem." It was at Shechem when God appeared to Abram. As soon as he entered into the Promised Land, God appeared to him in Genesis 12:6 and spoke to him about the land. Joshua goes, "Okay, then that's where we're bringing him. We're going to take him to Shechem and we're going to bury the bones of Joseph in Canaan just as he had requested." So in this sense, even the book of Genesis just continues to extend into Exodus, and it extends into Joshua, to the end of Joshua; and it will continue to extend throughout the rest of the Bible, all the way to Revelation chapter 5: the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

So as we bring this to conclusion, as death came for Joseph, death will one day come for you. Hebrews 9:27 says, "It is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment." You have two unbreakable appointments that you cannot get out of: death and judgment. And so the question for you is, "How will death find you? When the time comes, will you be in Christ?"

None of us know. That day could come today for someone here. When that time comes, will you be in Christ? And the only way to be sure that you will be in Christ on that last day is to be in Christ today. If you are in Christ today, I can tell you that you may die in peace and wake up in heaven, beholding the glory of the face of the Lord Jesus Christ, that if you die in Christ, your last day will be your best day, because it will be your graduation to glory into the immediate presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So my question for you is, "Are you in Christ today? Have you believed in Him?" He is the resurrection and the life. He holds the keys to the grave; and no one enters the grave nor leaves the grave apart from His sovereign authority. He has removed the sting from death. He is the only one who has ever conquered death. Your life must be in His hands if you are to live with Him forever.

And if you've never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, I call you today on His behalf, to turn your back to the world, to turn your back to Egypt, to

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turn your back to this world of sin, and to turn to Christ and entrust your soul to Him, who suffered in blood and died for sinners upon the cross, who made the only atonement for sin. If you have never believed upon Jesus Christ, today could be your greatest day. This could be the first day of your life in the kingdom of God. May that reality be true in you, if this is where you find yourself today. Do not leave here today without Christ. Let us pray.

[Prayer] Father, thank You for this glorious passage. We do not hesitate to talk about death, because You do not hesitate to talk about death. And while the whole world refuses to even deal with the subject of death, yet we as Christians, we as Christians have committed our life to the victor who has triumphed over death. And though we die, we shall live forever with Him, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. [End]

For the closing benediction: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. God bless you.