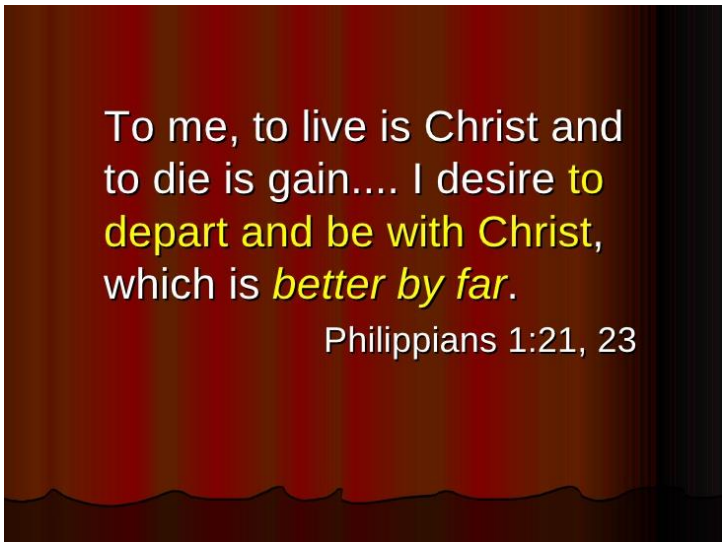
Christian View of Death



Every life is valuable and every life is eternal. Death is the last and for many the most difficult trial we face in this earthly life. The spiritually healthy Christian lives in the reality that death has been defeated by the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who do not have this hope either are not Christians or are not spiritually thriving.

When it comes to the end of life, we must understand that the choice of life and death lies in the hands of our Maker. Our lives, at whatever stage they are and however we feel about then, are not for us to take. We are not our own.

This is why Paul could write, from a jail cell, about his peace with God's ownership of his last breath:

> Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. [22] But if *I* live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruit from *my* labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. [23] For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is* far better. [24] Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

For the healthy Christian, the thriving Christian who lives with the eternal perspective, death is not a disaster but a doorway to a better life with Christ.

However, note that Paul's preference to be with Christ (vertical spirituality) did not translate to being so preoccupied with being with the Lord so as to be unproductive in this life (horizontal spirituality). For Paul, as for all of us, there is work to do in this life until the moment God calls time on it and calls us home. We must continue to seek out those in need for the Lord as long as we are able.

Our life is not our own, and in death we will not be on own. In brief, the healthy Christian is, in one sense, always keen to die and "depart and be with Christ," and also more determined to live, in "fruitful labor."

In His Matchless Grace,

Pastor Don