



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

### The Sermons of Dan Duncan

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

1 Corinthians

“The Death of Death”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Thank you, Mark, and good morning. We are in Corinthians 15 and we are finishing this great chapter on the resurrection. We're going to look at verses 50 through 58. All right. "Now I say this, Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable and this mortal must put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord." The Lord bless this reading of His Word. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, we do thank You for this time together. We give You praise for it and thank for it because this is our opportunity to gather together with the saints and we can be numbered among them by Your grace and Your grace alone. But what a privilege it is to be here with fellow believers, open the Word of God and study it. There's no book like this. This book we call the Bible is unique of all books. It is alive. It is powerful. It dissects our soul. It examines us. It shows us the flaws. It corrects us and it gives us hope of great glory to come. And that's what we study this morning, Father, and what a joy it is to consider the resurrection of the body. We've been doing that. We've come to this glorious conclusion of this subject, and Father, look to You to bless us with an understanding of it and an appreciation of your grace and your power and what is a certain hope that every believer in Jesus Christ has.

And it's good to reflect upon that and remember that as we go down this prayer list that we have in the back of the bulletin, and when we consider the names of other believers whose names aren't even listed there. We're reminded of our weakness as we look at the needs of some of the saints, and we know that if we're honest with ourselves that even when we're in good health we're weak and we're subject to the same problems that others have, and many of us will have them at some point or another. It reminds us of the transientness of this life and the weakness of the flesh and yet we have a glorious hope to come. We thank you for that, Father. Bless us with an appreciation of that and bless those who have sought our requests and are going through great difficulty. Many of them are and we pray if You give blessing to those here in our congregation and friends and family abroad from this place. We pray that You encourage them and heal them.

We pray that You would give endurance in the midst of the trials. That’s what so many people need. And help them to look for the promises and just rest in that and know that at some point You will bring and end to these things. You’ll bring healing. In some cases You’ll bring that person into your presence, but what a glorious thing that really is. We won’t be here forever; these bodies will go to the grave, but Paul assures us – Your Word assures us – they’ll be raised and we’ll have a glorious future.

So we thank You for that and pray You bless us as we study these things this morning. Give us encouragement, build us up in the faith, equip us for today and for the week to come. May we be used of You and may we maybe do what Paul encourages us to do at the end of this great chapter, to engage in your work. It is, in a sense, toil but it is not toil that will go unrewarded. Bless us. To that end we pray. We pray these things in Christ’s name. Amen.

One of the oldest theologians of the church is Irenaeus. He was one of the early church fathers in the second century. He wrote a book titled *Against Heresies*. We learned a lot about the ancient heresies from that book, particularly Gnosticism. But in it he also asked a basic question: “For what purpose did Christ come down from Heaven?” He answers: “Christ came that He might destroy sin, overcome death, and give life to man.” That’s a good summary of Christ’s ministry and Paul’s lesson here at the end of 1 Corinthians 15 where he declares that death is swallowed up in victory. Of all our fears and enemies, that one is the greatest. Death is the last enemy and it is the most implacable. We must all face it. It’s the king of terrors, the terminator, the Grim Reaper. It robs man of everything that is dear to him – people, possessions, life. It gives his body to the worms and it sends his soul out into the great unknown for all eternity. But like some great champion, Christ came into this world fit for battle and He swept the field of every foe – the Devil, sin and its effects, even death itself. It has been swallowed up. So Paul now concludes this great chapter on the resurrection with what has been called a magnificent crescendo in celebration of His victory and what it means for us.

He begins his crescendo, or his conclusion, by telling us that a change is going to come. Now he’s already been speaking of that. He’s been telling the Corinthians about the change. He has actually been answering a question of the skeptics in verse 35, “How are the dead raised,” and “With what kind of body do they come?” And they were asking that, as I said, as skeptics and seeking to reduce the resurrection of the body to an absurdity. If a resurrection is going to occur, just think of what it would be – raising these dead bodies, raising people whose physical condition is corrupt and decomposed. And Paul answers that silly objection and he says that it’s not going to be like that at all. The resurrection will be a transformation of the body. It will be from a perishable body transformed into an imperishable body. The resurrection is something far different from what you imagine, he’s telling them. It is from dust to glory. And he illustrated the reasonableness of that from nature. A seed is planted, it goes into the ground. The seed dies, but it doesn’t cease to exist. And what comes out is not the only seed, it’s the opposite. Something new comes, a stalk of wheat or a great tree. The seed has changed and so to this body will be changed.

Well now having shown the reasonableness of the resurrection, he shows the absolute necessity of the resurrection and the transformation of the body in verse 50, “I say this, Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.” Flesh and blood is, of course, a reference to the physical bodies. They are magnificent. Even in this fallen condition these bodies are amazing. They are amazingly adapted to this present material world. The human body is really a marvel. You see something on it, you read something about it, you watch some program on the physical body – the natural body – and it

is quite amazing. It is so complicated and yet so coordinated. It is resilient. It has the capability of healing itself. We are truly fearfully and wonderfully made, but for all of that these bodies are mortal. They’re fragile. They’re subject to sickness and weakness and ultimately death. They’re well-suited for this present world, but not for the world to come and we learn about that world from the things Paul says. It’s an eternal world, a world without end. It is a spiritual realm that will require spiritual bodies adapted to a completely new dimension of existence.

The mortal cannot inherit the immortal. Paul’s adamant about that. He excludes every crude idea about the resurrected body. There must be a change. A fish can’t live in the air. A bird can’t live in the ocean. There has to be a change, and the same is true with us. These mortal bodies cannot live in that immortal realm. Something must be completely different and that’s what the resurrection produces. Now that’s not all together new, what he is saying here. Paul said it earlier in verse 42. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body. But what he says in the next verse, in verse 51, isn’t new. What he speaks of he calls a mystery. It’s part of God’s plan that’s not been revealed to us. It’s part of God’s plan that has been concealed until now. He says we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed. Sleep is Paul’s word for death, that is the death of a Christian. Some Christians, he’s saying, won’t die – they won’t sleep – but they will be changed. That answers a natural question that people would have had about the transformation that is necessary in order for a person to enter into the Kingdom to come. If it happens through the resurrection, what about those who are still alive when Christ returns? Must they die first in order to be glorified and enter into that glorious Kingdom? Paul says no. They will be changed while alive, and then in verse 52 explains how that will occur. It will happen instantly. It won’t be a slow transformation. It’s not like a seed that grows into a plant; you plant it one day and then you wait weeks, months and the harvest comes. This is different from that. This will happen in a flash, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. “For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed.”

Now that is pure revelation. It is a mystery. It’s something that the human mind could never reason its way to. This is truth beyond human understanding. It’s about things that we cannot see, that we cannot know. It has to be revealed to us, and that’s what he’s done here. He reveals this to us and shows that God is sovereign over everything. He is in control of history in general. He is in control of our own histories personally, in particular, and in His time He will send His son back into the world and we will be changed. When is that going to happen? I don’t think it’s going to happen next Saturday. That’s what the billboards are telling us. I could be wrong. I hope it does. It may happen today. What we do know is we will know when it happens. It will be announced by the sound of the trumpet. We’ll learn more about that in other text such as 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 where Paul describes the nature of the rapture of the church. The Thessalonians were very concerned about this, so Paul tells them that the dead will be raised first and then we who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet him in the air. They were concerned about that. They needed clarity and comforting on that because they were worried about those believers who had already died. Would they be left behind when Christ returns? That was their question. Paul says no, the dead will rise first. Here among the Corinthians, the concern was not for those who had died, but for those who were living when Christ returned. What will happen to them? Will they be transformed? Paul says yes, they’ll be transformed in a moment, in the dart of an eye. It will happen like that.

Now that’s the main point in both of those passages in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians. All of us, whether we die before the Lord returns or whether we happen to be the last generation of the church alive at His coming, we will all experience a change. It will be an instant change. It will

be a glorious change, certainly a dramatic change. It will be complete. He describes that in verse 53. “For this perishable must put on the imperishable and this mortal must put on immortality.” Paul doesn’t mean that we will lay aside this present body and put on a different body. This mortal body will be put aside and then God will create a holy new imperishable, immortal body like we’re taking off one suit and putting on a nicer suit. There’s continuity here. There’s connection here. It is the perishable body – this present body – that will put on the imperishable. This present body will be transformed. This old suit will become a new suit, is what he’s saying. Paul indicated that in verse 51 when he said, “We will be changed.” This body won’t be destroyed or abandoned or discarded, but transformed. So there is continuity, but change – change of form, but the same body of the same person. But the change will be as complete as the change is from a small nut to a large tree – complete. But again, we can only imagine what that is going to be like, but the analogies that Paul has given in this chapter, the comparisons that he’s made from a seed to a plant, that helps. It gives us some indication of what he is speaking of here when he speaks of our bodies and describes them as being immortal. Our bodies will be transfigured into a new form and made of a substance that cannot wear out, cannot get tired. It is incapable of dying.

Earlier Paul called them spiritual bodies. He didn’t mean by that that they are ethereal, insubstantial bodies. They are material, but they’re fitted for a completely new and different dimension. I think C.S. Lewis was onto something in his book *The Great Divorce*. It’s a fanciful story, probably some of you have read it. It’s a story about a bus trip from Hell to Heaven. The passengers are ghosts. The bus leaves a grim, gray, joyless city and it arrives at the outer edge of this heavenly land. It’s a beautiful place, but it is so solid that the ghosts cannot even walk on the grass without extreme pain. Even a small leaf is too heavy for them to lift. It’s a way of illustrating the nature of the world to come. It’s not going to look like that or be like that, but it is not some airy realm where spirits float around like clouds. That’s not the world to come. It’s a solid realm of substance. It will be a physical real. It begins with the millennial Kingdom. In Matthew chapter 19, verse 28 the Lord describes it by saying – speaking of the Kingdom as the regeneration. When Christ comes back there are going to be massive changes in this place. It’s not going to look like it looks out there, at least not in my opinion. I take it from what he says there in Matthew 19 that there is going to be a great transformation of the world. It will be a glorified world suited for the glorified men and women who will inhabit. History will end in triumph with paradise regained, but that’s not the end. The Kingdom is not just a thousand-year Kingdom. That’s one phase of it. It’s an eternal Kingdom and that earthly Kingdom, the regeneration, will be transformed into something even greater, into the new Heavens and the new Earth and we will have bodies that are suited for that new Heavens and new Earth. We’ll be able to walk on the grass.

Now Paul telescopes all of this, that is he brings it all together. He doesn’t give all of the details of eschatology in this passage or in this chapter for that matter. He doesn’t describe the Kingdom age or the resurrection in judgment of the wicked. He doesn’t speak of that. None of that is his purpose here. Paul stays on the subject and the subject of this chapter, and this passage of the chapter, is the resurrection of God’s people and our final victory over death. That’s what he’s focusing upon. So in verse 54 he quickly comes to that triumph that was predicted by the prophets, predicted specifically in Isaiah 25:8 where the prophet said, “God will swallow up death for all time.” Paul says that’s as good as done. He writes: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” Back in Isaiah chapter 5, *Sheol* or death – the grave – is described as, “a hungry monster with a large throat and a gaping mouth swallowing souls.” It’s really a horrifying vision, but it’s true – completely true. The grave devours men and no one can resist it. Here, the grave that swallows souls is swallowed up. Death is swallowed up in victory. As a result, what swallowed up God’s children

will give them all back. They’ll be resurrected. That is the only thing. That is the only thing that in the end gives comfort. That’s the only thing that at the graveside gives comfort. I’ve stood by many gravesides and not always the gravesides of believers. And there is no joy for those without faith because they have no hope. It’s a grim moment. But those who do have faith, and fortunately I’ve stood by more gravesides of those than the other, they do have hope. They have certain hope. They know that someday the earth will give up its dead, that death’s victory is only temporary. It will be reversed. There will be reunion. We will see our loved ones again, our friends. We’ll see a host of saints we’ve never met but we’ve read about. Others we’ve never heard about will have magnificent stories. We’ll be reunited and united with a host that is innumerable. Millions upon millions of people will be our closest friends. That’s what the resurrection promises, because death is defeated. It has been swallowed up in victory.

Then echoing the words of Hosea 13:14, Paul taunts death. Verse 55: “O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?” Those are rhetorical questions that he’s asking and the point is you have no victory, you have no sting. Death’s been defanged. The scorpion’s sting has been removed. The serpent’s tooth has been broken. The grave has been neutralized. It still exists. The grave is still a reality, but it is harmless. So David could say in Psalm 23 as he walked through the valley of the shadow of death, “I don’t fear any evil.” And he could be confident of that because for him death was a shadow. He’s confident of that because as he walked through that valley, the Lord was with him. But that valley is the shadow of death. Shadows are dark, shadows cause fear, but they don’t hurt. Spurgeon said, “The shadow of a dog cannot bite. The shadow of a sword cannot kill. The shadow of death cannot destroy. Let us not, therefore, be afraid.” We have every reason not to be afraid. We have every reason to rejoice with the apostle and be courageous and confident. He didn’t get carried away in all of this. He doesn’t overstate his case here. He overstates nothing. He understood exactly what he was saying. He understood exactly what had happened. He could speak boldly to death. He could taunt death because it has been robbed of victory and it has been robbed of victory because Christ triumphed over it at the cross. His sacrifice removed death’s sting. It will point to that in a moment in verse 57, but before he does that first he explains what the sting of death is and why it is not venomous. “The sting of death is sin,” he says. In other words, sin is the cause of death. Paul tells us that in Romans 6:23, “The wages of sin is death.” And we know that from the beginning of the Bible, because in Genesis 2:17 God warned Adam that he was not to eat of that tree in the middle of the garden. He could eat of all of the trees of the garden, but not that one tree because on the day that he ate of that he would surely die. That’s the penalty of sin. That’s sin’s wage.

Well, he would die – Adam – spiritually immediately and later physically, but it’s the spiritual death that is the terrible penalty. It is eternal separation from God, from life and light in endless punishment. Sin is the cause of that. It is the sting of death and sin gets its power to sting and kill from, of all things, the law. I wouldn’t think that. The law is good. Paul tells us the law is good. But that’s what gives sin its power. Without that – without the law – sin has no power. There’s bad behavior, there’s unreasonable and harmful behavior, but without the law that behavior is not counted as guilt because no rule has been violated. Sin is any one of conformity unto or transgression against the law of God, so where there’s law there’s sin. Without it there’s no guilt. I’ll give you an example of this. In Germany – some of you have been there. You may have rented a car and traveled the highway. Well if so, you know that on the Autobahn there’s no speed limit. You can go as fast as your car will take you. I’ve been in cars on the Autobahn that didn’t take me very fast and so it wasn’t a very pleasant ride, but I’ve been on others where you can really move. And some of these cars go 120, 150 – I don’t know how fast cars can go today, but as fast as they

can go they go down that highway. But if they’re traveling at these high rates of speed, when they come to the border of Holland they’ve got to slow down because there, there is a speed limit. So what was not illegal in one place becomes illegal in another. It’s the same act, but the law is different and the law makes that same act a sin and it empowers the patrol to give tickets. That’s how the law gives strength to sin. It defines behavior, it exposes what’s there, and makes that behavior sinful and worthy of guilt; makes that behavior guilty behavior, I should put it that way, and worthy of death. The law can do that. What the law cannot do is make us who are guilty innocent and righteous. It can’t remove our sin. It cannot give us the ability to obey God. The law can strengthen sin. It can define sin. It can defeat us. It defeated Paul. He talks about that in Romans 7. But it cannot give us victory. For that we need a Savior and for that, Paul gives all the praise to God in verse 57: “But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

That’s the reason that He came into this world from Heaven; to destroy sin, overcome death and give life to man – to give us victory. He did that at the cross where he became our substitute in death. We deserve that death. That’s the wage of sin. That’s the penalty. All of us are guilty of that. We may not think we’re terribly guilty of it, but we’re guilty. We’re all sinners, if we’re honest with ourselves. I don’t have to tell you that. You know that. But to the world it doesn’t. We’re all sinners. We deserve death, but He came, He went to the cross in our place and there He took all of our sins upon Himself and He was punished for them instead of us. He was punished for them in our place. Sin was a debt that we could not pay. Those who choose to pay it will pay it for all eternity. He came and paid the full amount and cancelled all our debts. He makes the believer solvent. In fact, he makes the believer rich with his own righteousness. When God looks at us He doesn’t look at a sinner. We’re still sinners, at least we still sin, but those sins have been paid for. Every believer – that’s true for every believer. When He looks at us he sees us clothed in the righteousness of Christ. We’re completely acceptable to Him. So Paul could write in Romans 8:1 “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” No guilt. God’s justice has been satisfied through the substitute, through the Lamb of God, through Jesus Christ. Therefore the sting of death has been removed. Death is now a warrior and a fearsome warrior, but a warrior without a weapon. It can touch us, but it cannot harm us. It’s like a bee without a sting. We run from bees. We don’t like to play with bees, but when a bee stings it loses its stinger and then it’s harmless. Christ took the sting for us and drained death of all its venom. Now it’s as harmless to us as a stingless bee. It’s like a shadow. But he’s done more than that. He has defeated the Devil. He’s delivered us from his domain of darkness. Paul speaks of that in Colossians 1:16-17. He strips Satan of any power that he had over us. We did, at one time, dwell in that darkness. We were in the power of the Evil One. That’s how John ends – 1 John. It tells us about the whole world lies in the power of the Evil One. We’ve been delivered from that. Not only that, but we’re being changed presently. We are God’s possession. We are in the Kingdom of Light and He is presently making us holy. He’s changing us. That’s a great work of sanctification and someday He will make all of that complete and He’ll complete us when He restores our bodies in the resurrection and makes them glorious like Christ. We will be holy and complete, body and soul. That’s our hope. That’s the future.

But Paul doesn’t end there. He ends in the present and with instruction on how we are to live in these difficult days. Everything that Paul has written here about the future has to do with the present. It affects the way we live and that’s the point that Paul makes in verse 58 and how he ends this great chapter on the resurrection, with an exhortation. He writes: “Therefore, my beloved Brethren,” in other words, in light of everything I’ve been telling you about the future, about your

hope, but where life is going for all of you, he says, “Therefore, be steadfast.” Don’t be swayed from the gospel by these worldly philosophers and philosophies and these doubters who are questioning the resurrection. Be immovable. Don’t let their ideas and their questions shake your understanding and conviction. Remember, if the dead don’t rise as they were saying, then Christ hasn’t risen and if Christ hasn’t risen from the dead, then our debt has not been paid, the sting of sin has not been removed, we’re all still in our sins and that means we’re all doomed – if the dead do not rise. But the dead do rise and Christ has been raised, and the scripture has not only prophesied it, but there are many people who witnessed it; 500-plus witnesses – eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Christ. And because he was raised, we who have believed in Him must be raised. As I said, that’s our hope and it is certain. Don’t doubt it. “Be steadfast,” he says, “Be immovable, but also be active. Always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain.” Well what is the work of the Lord? For Paul it was carrying the gospel across the world and planting churches wherever he went. And their work was to support him in that, promote the gospel there in their town of pagan Corinth. They were to build up the church through the use of spiritual gifts. They were to be lights in the midst of darkness. They were to take care of one another. They were to minister. That’s true of all of us. We are to join in the ministry of our local church to support it in a variety of ways. We’re to support it with our time, with our efforts, with our possessions. We’re to do all of that as the Lord leads. He’ll lead you in one way and another in another way – all certainly within the same parameters, but He has a different calling for each one of us. We’re to be using our gifts and using our efforts and time to build up the body of Christ and we a witness to this world.

But what Paul has to say here really involves more than just that. It involves every aspect of life. Our responsibilities as husbands, our responsibilities as wives, as parents, as children, as employers and employees, as students – in every aspect of life we are to be living for Him and be a living witness for Him. Everything we do – everything we do – is to be done with the Lord and for His glory. Paul said that back in chapter 10, verse 31 where he says, “Whether than you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all with the Glory of God.” Now that is a verse that defines how the Christian is to live his life. The most mundane things, eating and drinking, you’re to glorify God in that. It’s an act of worship is to do that. If that’s true of the most mundane, certainly it’s true of the most lofty. If we’re to live a life to the glory of God and really be pleasing to Him and a witness to others, it begins right there in the most mundane things, in the most daily things, in the most common things. If we don’t glorify Him in those things – the simplest things – we won’t glorify Him and we won’t be a living witness, so this applies to everything. We are to be abounding in this work of the Lord. We are to be excelling in it always he says. There’s no compartmentalizing Christian life. It’s not just an activity that takes place on Sunday morning, and maybe for the really zealous, Sunday night as well. This is a 24/7 life that we live. It’s not easy. It’s not easy to live a life to the glory of God in the most fundamental, mundane kinds of things and live it consistently. Christian life is not easy for Paul. You can read the Book of Acts and read 2 Corinthians 11 to get a sense of the difficulty it was for him. It was full of challenges. It’s full of challenges for us as we live obediently. The Christian life is the abundant life. The Christian life is a life full of joy; only it is. The unbelieving world might have some fun, but real joy – that’s what the Christian has. There is no rest for the wicked, Isaiah says, and that is true today as much as it was in his day. There’s rest for God’s people here and throughout eternity.

Nevertheless, it’s a challenging life and it can be hard and it can be difficult. Paul recognizes that when he describes our work here as toil. It can be toil. Like when toil is out in the field and Paul toiled in the field of the church and he agonized over the condition of believers. He prayed

earnestly for them. He speaks of that. And we do that and we experience rejection. We experience the difficulty of simply studying the Bible, finding the time to discipline ourselves to do it, and then we come to it – we come to these texts, some of them right here in our passage, and what does that mean exactly? How is this resurrection going to unfold exactly? There are many passages that we puzzle over and it may take us weeks – years – before we finally come to an understanding of it. It takes toil in the Word of God, toil in the work of God, but not one act that we perform, not one deed that we engage in is wasted. Not one. Everything we do for Christ, even the most minor things – eating or drinking or whatever it is – lasts forever; has eternal value. Nothing, Paul says, is in vain. Everything the world does, the greatest deeds that it accomplishes, it’s all smoke. What we do lasts forever. And when it is all tried by fire as Paul says it will be back in chapter 3, that which is done for Christ and not for self will be gold, silver and precious stones. That should influence our attitude about life and our service. First it should instill a profound sense of gratitude to the Lord. He’s given us everything we have from our physical life to our spiritual life to our possessions to our health to our friends. Everything you have, every gift you have, every ability you have, everything you have is a gift from God. And think of what He’s given you as a Christian. That’s true of everybody. That’s true of you as a Christian, and think of what else He’s given you. He’s given you eternal life. He’s delivered you from death. He’s taken its sting.

As we reflect upon that, it should create within us a gratitude that makes us want to serve Him and we should serve Him with urgency because time is short. There’s much to do, there isn’t much time to do it. We may not have more than today. We may have a week. We may have 20 years, 30 years, 50 years, but even that is short. Time is short, there’s much to do, and the rewards for doing it are great. Nothing is in vain and we should live with confidence. Whatever happens in this life is temporary. We have heavenly home waiting for us. We’ll have glorified bodies in the days to come. And so we should live confidently in this life. We are victors. We’re triumphant, and that’s how we should live. A few years ago I was in Nuremburg, Germany. I’d been asked to come over and teach some classes over there. While I was there, I actually was outside of Nuremburg, but when I was in Nuremburg I visited the house of Albrecht Dürer. Albrecht Dürer was a famous artist of the Reformation, and whether you’re familiar with the name or not, you’re probably familiar with one of his most famous works which is *Praying Hands*. He did an etching of these hands in prayer and it’s quite well known. While I was there I picked up a print that I was familiar with and that I liked and ended up having it framed and put on the wall of my study. It’s titled *The Devil*. It’s a picture of a Christian knight on a horse traveling to a castle on a hill. The castle is in the background, the knight is in the foreground. He’s in his full suit of armor, his sword is at his side, and he’s surrounded by danger. The Devil is behind him with that wicked spear. Death is in front of him with a grin on his face and an hourglass that he’s holding up to the knight. But the knight has a peaceful and determined look on his face. He’s completely undistracted by all of the ghoulish characters around him. He’s going to that city on a hill – and so are we. We will face danger, be hit with the darts of the devil and if the Lord doesn’t come back in our day we’ll all face death. We’ll taste that. But the pain is temporary and it’s not fatal – not eternally fatal. Christ has taken the sting for us. He has tasted death for us. He has overcome death. He has opened Heaven to us and our future is as certain as our past. He who began a good work in us will complete that work unto the day of Christ Jesus. We will be glorified. He do have our inheritance is as eternity and we will enter it. In a sense we already have. We have eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, so like that knight we are to stay on the path, remain steadfast and immovable and be abounding in God’s work and we will do that by God’s grace and by God’s grace alone. If you’re here without Christ, then without Him you have no hope. Death will come someday. It may come

“ The Death of Death” by Dan Duncan

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very soon. It takes everything from you and it sends you out into the eternal night. But there’s a way of escape and that way of escape is very simple. It’s through the person and work of Jesus Christ and all one is called to do is believe in Him. Trust in Him and through faith you’re attached to Him. You lay hold of the cross, the work of Christ, what he’s done as our substitute. You’re forgiven of your sins, you’re transformed, you’re clothed in the righteousness of Christ and you’re made an heir of the Kingdom to come. So come to Him. Believe in Him. And may all of us be abounding in the work of the Lord. The rewards are great.

Father, we thank you for your son. We thank you that as believers in Him we stand in His power – and that’s resurrection power. Now – and if that resurrection is coming – will our bodies be raised to glory beyond comprehension. We give you praise and thanks for that and pray that in the meantime we’ll live diligently to your glory. We pray these things in Christ’s name. Amen.