



Draw Close to God and He Will Draw Close to You: From Death to Life

LENTEN REFLECTION FOR THE TASTE PROGRAM – MARCH 23RD, 2023

Opening Prayer

2

See, I have today set before you life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I am giving you today, loving the LORD, your God, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and ordinances, you will live and grow numerous, and the LORD, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

If, however, your heart turns away and you do not obey, but are led astray and bow down to other gods and serve them, I tell you today that you will certainly perish; you will not have a long life on the land which you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the LORD, your God, obeying his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land which the LORD swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give to them. (Deuteronomy 30:15-20)

Draw Close to God and He will Draw Close to You

3

- ▶ *Feb 23rd- Return to Me: turning to the Lord*
- ▶ *March 2nd - Be Converted: All about “conversion”.*
- ▶ *March 9th - Detest Your Sins: Seeing our sins for what they are.*
- ▶ *March 16th – Rejoice: A break from the heavy topic of sin. It’s time for joy.*
- ▶ *March 23rd – From Death to Life: A deeper look at death and life.*
- ▶ *March 30th – Embracing the Cross: That’s right we’re going to embrace our cross, not just carry it. I’m not trying to one-up Jesus, but when we see our cross for what it really is, we won’t want to ever put it down.*

A Brief Recap

- *Awareness of sins bring contrition – Godly Sorrow that causes us to turn to God. God’s grace abundantly flows, and we respond to that grace.*
- *This leads to conversion. (Repentance happens in a moment, but conversion is ongoing, a sustained act of faith.)*
- *We grow more in love with God, see Him more for who He is. In humility we see ourselves more for who we are. We are being transformed; we are being converted. Jesus reveals us to ourselves!*
- *A converted heart informed by church teaching sees sin as detestable.*
- *Yes, we spoke about joy and rejoicing last time, but today’s talk picks up on the talk before. It picks up on “Detest your Sins”*
- *Sin darkens the mind, distorts the will, and suffocates the heart.*
- *Sin tries to make us like Satan*
- *Sin Brings Death*

Free Will

There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between these two ways.
(*Didache*, Ch. 1)



Let's Talk About Life and Death

6

The Rich Young Man

Mat 19:16 Now someone approached him and said, “Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?” 17 He answered him, “Why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good. **If you wish to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” 18 He asked him, “Which ones?” And Jesus replied, “ ‘You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; 19 honor your father and your mother’; and ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” 20 The young man said to him, “All of these I have observed. What do I still lack?” 21 Jesus said to him, “**If you wish to be perfect**, go, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. **Then come, follow me.**” 22 When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

What is Eternal Life?

- ▶ When Jesus had said this, he raised his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your son, so that your son may glorify you, just as you gave him authority over all people, so that **he may give eternal life** to all you gave him. Now **this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.** (John 17:1-3)
- ▶ We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment **to know the one who is true. And we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.** (1 John 5:20)
- ▶ For the wages of sin is death, but **the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.** (Romans 6:23)

Returning to the Rich Young Man

8

Mat 19:23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I say to you, **it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.**" 25 When the disciples heard this, **they were greatly astonished** and said, "Who then can be saved?"



Returning to Our Opening Prayer

9

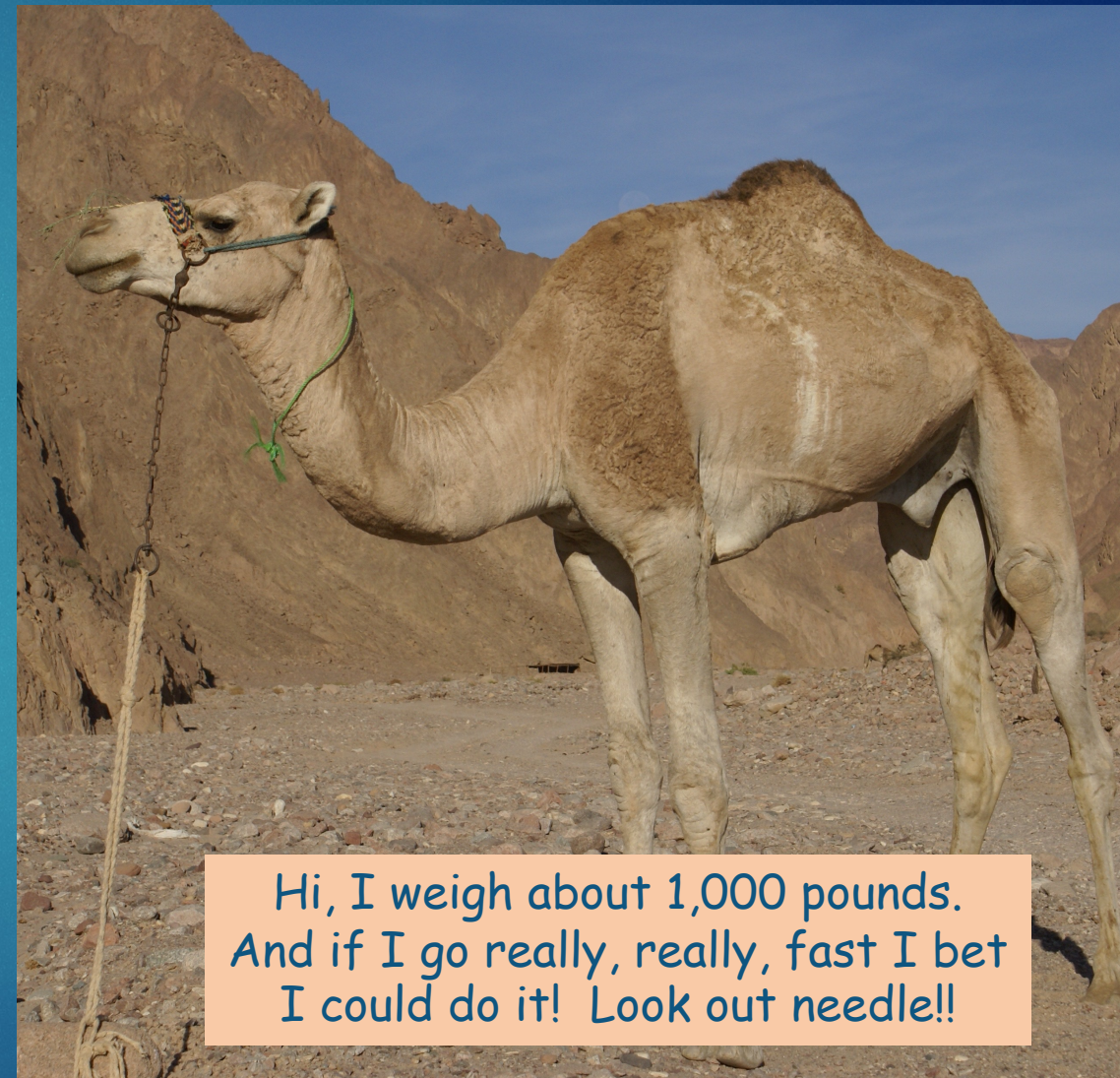
See, I have today set before you life and good, death and evil. **If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God**, which I am giving you today, loving the LORD, your God, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and ordinances, you will live and grow numerous, and **the LORD, your God, will bless you** in the land you are entering to possess.

If, however, your heart turns away and you do not obey, but are led astray and bow down to other gods and serve them, I tell you today that you will certainly perish; you will not have a long life on the land which you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: **I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse**. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the LORD, your God, obeying his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land which the LORD swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give to them. (Deuteronomy 30:15-20)

It's Impossible. That's all there is to it.

Mat 19:26 Jesus looked at them and said, “**For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible.**”



Hi, I weigh about 1,000 pounds.
And if I go really, really, fast I bet
I could do it! Look out needle!!

Let's Talk About Our Bodies

11

- ▶ The body, however, is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body; ... Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? ... your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body. (cf. 1 Cor 6:13-20)
- ▶ But the body dies. What is death?
- ▶ By death the soul is separated from the Body (CCC 1016)
- ▶ Because of Christ, Christian death has a positive meaning: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "The saying is sure: if we have died with him, we will also live with him. What is essentially new about Christian death is this: through Baptism, the Christian has already "died with Christ" sacramentally, in order to live a new life; and if we die in Christ's grace, **physical death completes this "dying with Christ" and so completes our incorporation into him in his redeeming act** (CCC 1010)

Let's Talk About Our Souls

12

- ▶ **SOUL:** The spiritual principle of human beings. The soul is the subject of human consciousness and freedom; soul and body together form one unique human nature. Each human soul is individual and immortal, immediately created by God. The soul does not die with the body, from which it is separated by death, and with which it will be reunited in the final resurrection. (CCC Glossary)
- ▶ Baptism leaves an indelible mark on the Soul: The Holy Spirit has marked us with the seal of the Lord ... "Baptism indeed is the **seal of eternal life**." (cf. CCC 1274)
- ▶ But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. (1 Cor 6:17)

This is Eternal Life: Union With Jesus

13

- ▶ When Jesus had said this, he raised his eyes to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your son, so that your son may glorify you, just as you gave him authority over all people, so that **he may give eternal life** to all you gave him. Now **this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ.** (John 17:1-3)
- ▶ We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment **to know the one who is true. And we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.** (1 John 5:20)
- ▶ But now that **you have been freed from sin** and have become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification, and **its end is eternal life.** For the wages of sin is death, but **the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord** (Romans 6:22, 23)

Living the Sacramental Life

14

- ▶ Celebrated worthily in faith, the sacraments confer the grace that they signify. They are *efficacious* because **in them Christ himself is at work**: it is he who baptizes, he who acts in his sacraments in order to communicate the grace that each sacrament signifies. The Father always hears the prayer of his Son's Church which, in the epiclesis of each sacrament, expresses her faith in the power of the **Spirit. As fire transforms into itself everything it touches, so the Holy Spirit transforms into the divine life whatever is subjected to his power.** (CCC 1127)
- ▶ The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are *necessary for salvation*. "Sacramental grace" is the grace of the Holy Spirit, given by Christ and proper to each sacrament. The Spirit heals and transforms those who receive him by conforming them to the Son of God. **The fruit of the sacramental life is that the Spirit of adoption makes the faithful partakers in the divine nature by uniting them in a living union with the only Son, the Savior.** (CCC 1129)
- ▶ The Church celebrates the mystery of her Lord "until he comes," ... and **even now shares in everlasting life**, while "awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus." The "Spirit and the Bride" say, 'Come . . . Come, Lord Jesus!' (CCC 1130)

From Death to Life

15

- ▶ Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever keeps my word will never see death. (John 8:51)
- ▶ We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love remains in death. (1 John 3:14)
- ▶ Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)

Summary

16

- ▶ There are two ways: Life and Death
- ▶ Participation in divine life is life
- ▶ Eternal life participation in divine life to its fullest
- ▶ By Baptism we are incorporated into Christ (Body and Soul)
- ▶ Didn't talk about sin & death, but sin tries to separate us from the love of God bringing about real death.
- ▶ Living the sacramental life

Questions?

+++++++16