

PRAYER MEETING

"DECAY AND RENEWAL TOGETHER"**Introduction**

1. Paul tells us how to face our problem
2. Among our fears is death
3. We need to be reassured here

1. THE BELIEVER WRESTLES WITH DEATH ALL HIS LIFE

- 1) "The outward man is perishing" (Explain):
 - (i) Paul is reviewing the harsh experiences of life: v.8f
 - (ii) He recognises a divine plan here: v.11
 - (iii) The Christian is exercised with the life-long conflict with death even here in life: v.12
- 2) So that the Christian knows what it is to "die daily" – yet to experience daily comfort:
 - (i) "I die daily: 1 Cor. 15:31
 - (ii) "Take up his cross daily": Luke 9:23
OBSERVE: The body of the Christian is declining and he spends his life in deadly combat.
- 3) The Bible teaches us to look realistically at the decline of our body: Job 14 – Eccles. 12 – the patriarchs – Peter and Paul.
APPLICATION: "In life we are in the midst of death"

2. THE BELIEVER HAS AN EXPERIENCE OF INWARD RENEWAL

- 1) "The inward man is being daily renewed"
Explain:
 - (i) the soul, as distinct from the body

(ii) renewed in holiness: 2 Cor. 3:18

(iii) sanctification is progressive: 2 Peter 1

OBSERVE: Two processes go on at once.

- 2) This growth in holiness is by degrees:
 - (i) "first the blade..."
 - (ii) "little children..."
 - (iii) **Illustration**: corn fully ripe
- 3) The energy at work to achieve this:
 - (i) God worketh in us to will..." Phil. 2:13
 - (ii) **Illustration**: refining silver: Malachi 3:3
- 4) The great changes at death:
 - (i) the body laid aside till resurrection
 - (ii) the soul now perfect in holiness
APPLICATION: The more progress, the more reward:
"Lay up for yourselves...in heaven".

3. THE BELIEVER IS ABLE TO FACE DEATH AS NO UNBELIEVER DARE DO

- 1) "For which cause we faint not"
OBSERVE: The believer can face death squarely
- 2) **Illustrations**:
 - (i) Jacob: Gen. 49:33. All his work done.
 - (ii) Joseph: Gen. 50:24-26. His bones.
 - (iii) David: "Everlasting Covenant..."
 - (iv) Simeon: his hearts desire given
ILLUSTRATION: What do you long to see before you go?
- 3) The comforts of the believer which keep him from "fainting" at the approach of his last enemy:
 - (i) v.14: our Saviour is our pattern

- (ii) v.17: present affliction is not to be compared to our future state.
- (iii)v.18: our eye is not on our decaying body but on the world to come and our happiness with God in Christ there.

CONCLUSION

So, let us not faint but look to the unseen.

<p>PSALM</p> <p>71: 6 – 10</p> <p>92: 12 – 15</p> <p>71: 18 – 21</p>
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