

‘Death: The Final Frontier?’ Isaiah 57:1,2

I. Death too is part of our calling.

A. Do you think of death as a calling? Eccl. 3:1-2a: Do you believe that? Do you believe God makes mistakes? Heb. 9:27

Notice how the Bible speaks of death as an appointment, as a purpose. Death is a divine appointment. It is part of God’s purpose in our lives. A calling is like a summons that comes from God. He summons each of us when it’s our time to go. Sometimes this call comes _____ and without warning. Sometimes it comes with advance warning. But it comes to all and it comes from God.

B. The devil does not have the final say on this. Some think he does. But that is not what the Bible says. Remember Job, how Satan had to get permission each time from God and God gave him the okay but said you cannot kill Job. So Satan didn’t, he couldn’t. Jesus said in Rev.1:17,18 that He, Jesus is alive forevermore and that He has the keys of hades and of death.

Satan cannot snatch those keys out of His hand. He has the keys because He owns the keys. All authority in heaven and earth He said is His. The angel of death moves only at Jesus’ beck and call.

C. The calling to die is a holy calling. This is one lesson that Christians simply must learn. When the summons comes, we can respond in many ways. We can be angry, bitter or terrified. But if we see it as a call of God and not a threat from Satan, we can then so much better cope with its difficulties.

D. When my final summons comes, I want to be able to say, besides my final goodbyes to my family, to say what Paul said in 2 Tim. 4:7,8: *‘I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.’* Only by the _____ of God will I or anyone be able to say that.

II. Why would God allow someone to live for only two minutes?

Story of Marshall Shelley

We need to think Christianly about life and death and eternity, not as this world thinks.

III. God knows what He is doing.

A. Isa. 57:1,2 (NLT) gives us another insight into all this. In great mercy, God takes them home so they won’t have to go through all kinds of evil or trouble here, God is thus protecting them.

B. By His sacrificial death on the cross for our sins, Jesus came to make things right, things that our sin had so badly messed up. Because He conquered death and the grave, all those who put their trust in Him can have hope.

C. In times when someone close has died, the grief is real. The pain is real. And there is no time limit on when it should all go away. _____ will help but in many respects, it will never go away. But there will come a time, different for everyone, when we will need to learn all we can from all that, then get up and go help others who are now just going through it. 2 Cor. 1:3,4

D. The valley of the shadow of death. We would much prefer to go around that valley. But men and women of faith can enter that valley without fear. David told us how: Ps. 23:4.

The presence of God is our refuge in times of trouble. Ps. 46:1 He is our strength to go on. That valley is not a closed end valley, but it is open on the other end. We don’t go in there and stay there. We walk through it, with Jesus. We come out on the other side, into life far more abundant than we could ever imagine. The goal of that final summons is heaven, we all want to go there, but there is no route there except through that valley. Ps. 27:13