

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart April 2023

Will You Die Well?

by Steve Huston



“Our people die well.” This is the phrase John Wesley used referring to the Methodists after his brother, Charles, relayed one doctor’s words: *“Most people die for fear of dying, but I never met with such people as yours. None of them are afraid of death, but are calm, and patient, and resigned to the last.”*

I have heard accounts of and have witnessed those who have *died well* from many other denominations as well. That’s because any true believer is part of the body of Christ; they’ve put their faith in the name of the only begotten Son of God – Jesus, not in the name associated with their particular denomination. They belong to Jesus; they are His. He is the Shepherd of their soul and safely sees them through the “valley of the shadow of death” and into

the eternal fold.

Many of you have likely read numerous accounts of people dying well, either for Christ or, at least, in Christ. Perhaps we’re most familiar with the apostles, those cloud of witnesses in Hebrews 11, and those faithful followers of Christ who are not only eternally written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, but are also temporarily engraved on our minds by having read their varied accounts through the Church’s history. Faithful to the end, we are grateful for the dying grace given by our Heavenly Father to Perpetua, the Scottish Covenanters, the French Huguenots, and many others faithfully chronicled in books like The Martyr’s Mirror. Just as impressive, however, is the grace given to those lesser-known saints who have lived their lives quietly and steadfastly for our Lord, have come to the end of their lives, and “have died well.”

Why did these people die well? Because they lived well, receiving God’s

grace, putting their faith in Jesus’ atoning work on the cross, and, not as a means of salvation but because of salvation, walking in good works that God had before ordained (Eph. 2:10).

But, why do we die well? In part, because of what we celebrate on “Resurrection Sunday.” I Corinthians 15:3-4 tells us that “...Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” True believers have followed Jesus into death and the resurrection, abiding with Him, growing in Him, living a life of holiness, trusting Him.

In so doing, Paul assures us in Romans 6: “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. (v. 6)” And, “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. (v. 8)”

We will still face trials

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We will still face trials



Christ is why we can die well. It begins at the cross where Jesus humbly obeyed the Father's will; it's proven as accepted by God through His resurrecting Jesus. Our assurance of this grows through a living faith, walking as Jesus walked, in obedience to the Father.

As one writer put it: "If you want to know what God thinks of sin, go to the cross. If you want to see God's righteousness, go to the cross. If you want to know what God thinks of you, go to the cross. If you want an evidence of God's love, go to the cross. If you want to be delivered from the power of sin, go to the cross. If you want your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life, go to the cross. If you want to have eternal life, go to the cross. If you want peace that passeth all understanding, go to the cross. If you want to know God, you must go to the cross of Christ." To this let me just add this: If you want to die well, you must go to the cross.

It's by the grace of God alone that we can live well. It's by that same grace that we can die

well.

From the pen of William Jay: A child at school welcomes every messenger from home to him; but he desires most the messenger that comes for him. Joseph sends to Jacob, and for him, at once; and his father not only heard the words, but saw the wagons. "Oh! These are really to carry me to him: I shall soon see my son, and die in peace." Such a messenger, Christian, is death to you. "Come," says God; "you have toiled long enough, you have feared long enough, you have groaned long enough; your warfare is accomplished; enter the rest which the Lord your God giveth you. Come; for all things are now ready." "But the swelling river rolls between." Fear not. The ark of the covenant will go before you, and divide the waves, and you shall pass over dryshod. And then let the streams reunite, and continue to flow on, you will not wish them to re-open for your return. What is misery to others is joy to you. "I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

and tribulations; the devil and his minions will continue to assail; we may be pressed in on every side; BUT GOD will see us through. As Matthew Henry reminds us: "In him I have found shelter, and strength, and succour. He has by his grace supported me and borne me up under my troubles, and by his providence defended me from the insults of my enemies and delivered me out of the troubles into which I was plunged; and therefore I trust he will deliver me. He only can be my rock and my salvation. Creatures are insufficient; they are nothing without him, and therefore I will look above them to him. He has by covenant undertaken to be so. Even he that is the rock of ages is my rock; he that is the God of salvation is my salvation; he that is the Most High is my high place; and therefore I have all the reason in the world to confide in him."

Trusting in this covenant relationship secured by



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