

Precious Is the Death of Saints

Psalm 116:1-19 Psalm 116:15 is used in many funeral services, and the message conveyed is that God is blessed by the death of His saints. What a wrong interpretation of this scripture! Death is an enemy of God and has been since the Fall. God is the God of life, and death is the result of sin. God desired for us to live with Him in fellowship with Him forever when Adam and Eve were created. In His foreknowledge, however, He knew we would choose death over life. This is why Jesus had to come and die and be resurrected so that death would no longer be the conqueror. Jesus tells us in John 10:10 who is the author of death and who is the author of life. "The thief [Satan] does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

When Jesus died and was resurrected, death was swallowed up in victory. Jesus was given the keys to death and hell. The Bible tells us clearly, "It is appointed for men to die once" (Heb. 9:27). I believe every person has an appointment with death, and the time he is to die is written in the book of life. I always pray for people to make their appointment right on time, not a moment under or over what is written in their book of life. We can shorten our days by not being prudent in our care for our bodies. We also can shorten our days by living a life of sin because sin always leads to death. We must get our theology straight. Sin and death are inseparably linked, and sin never blesses God.

Then what does this passage mean when it says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints"? The word precious in Hebrew means "costly." It is so costly for God to lose a living witness on earth through death. God does not need us in heaven. He needs us to be living witnesses on

earth. When a saint dies, a light has gone out on earth. We are saints of light.

When my mother died, God rejoiced when He had the opportunity to greet her in heaven, but He also felt the same loss that everyone on earth who knew her felt. A shining light was snuffed out by the darkness of death. The good news is, however, that she is with Jesus in the spirit now. One day she will have a resurrected body to shine once again as a light on earth for Him. From the time of her birth, she was designed to be a living witness to shine with God's glory.

Lord, teach me to number my days that I might apply my heart unto wisdom. Help me to be wise in the way I take care of my body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. I want to live out my days according to what is written in my book of life, and I want always to be a shining light for You while I have breath on this earth.

**READ: 1 Samuel 24:1-25:44; John 10:22-42; Psalm 116:1-19;
Proverbs 15:20-21**