

Precious Death

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[0 : 00] Please turn in your Bibles to Psalm 116. I believed, therefore I said I am greatly afflicted, and in my dismay I said all men are liars.

How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. O Lord, truly I am your servant. I am your servant, the son of your maidservant. You have freed me from my chains.

I will sacrifice a thank offering to you and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people. In the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem.

Praise the Lord. Well, David was close to death, but yet he did not die. The cords of death entangled him, but the Lord saved him and kept him walking in the land of the living.

[1 : 38] Well, why didn't David die? Well, it was certainly because he called on the Lord. He cried for mercy.

The Lord heard him and answered his prayer. But there's another reason, and you see it in verse 15. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

Precious. It means something weighty, something valuable, something rare, something costly or influential.

It doesn't say that he loves their death, but he does say that their death is valuable to him. Important to him.

Something that's too valuable, too precious to simply throw away. Too precious to not save for just the right moment. Or too precious not to guard and keep with the utmost care.

[2 : 44] That's how he looks upon the death of his saints. It's precious. And David is saying in this passage that my death is too precious for him to merely throw away.

Until just the right moment. Or too precious for me, for him to let me die yet. And so he saved me. Now, that is a great comfort there, brothers and sisters.

There's a great comfort for us in our own deaths. That God is not flippant about your life.

He's not flippant about your death. Some of you have made some very hard end-of-life decisions for parents.

God thinks about and protects our death with more care than we have ever pondered those questions.

[3 : 46] We can think about them for weeks or months. But the Lord thinks about our death and plans them from all of eternity.

So this verse is of great comfort for Karen Richards this evening. The passing of her own father. Or Pastor John. Karen's father, Josie, their deaths were of more worth and better protected than the crown jewels of England ever were.

Guarded and kept. And that's a great comfort for all of us. Now, what I want to do this evening is just to look at this verse.

And think about in what way is the death of the Lord's saints precious to him? And how does he show that? And then I want to move to Jesus and his death.

[4 : 45] And so, think together with me. Why is it that their death is so precious in his sight? Why are the death of his saints so precious in his sight?

Well, one, because they are his saints. They're his saints. You see that in the very verse.

They are each his own. Bought at a very high price. These saints. The price was the death of his own son.

His own son's precious death. He bought them with. And so, they are his at a great cost. They are his because he knew them and chose them before the foundation.

Before the beginning of the world. Their names have been on his heart. These saints. And written on the palms of his hands, we sing that. Eternity itself will not erase our names from the palms of his hands.

[5 : 47] So, in love, he predestined them to be adopted as his sons and daughters. His saints. To be his children.

And so, they are on his heart. They're in his book. They're his. They're his because he called them by name out of darkness.

And into his own wonderful light. He called each and every one of them to come close to him. To be his. To belong to him. To be devoted to him.

Every saint is called by name. We read this this morning. The shepherd calls his own sheep by name. The Lord knows the name of all of his people. And he calls them to himself.

He leads them out. And when he has brought out all of his own. He goes on ahead of them. And his sheep follow him. Because they know his voice. So, they're his sheep.

[6 : 43] They're his. His saints. They're called by name. He has a voice that their ears hear. And follow. And they come.

And they come close. Right to where he wants them. They're his because he lives in them. By his spirit. For we are the temple of God. The home.

The house of the very Holy Spirit. And so, the spirit of God lives in all of his saints. Their bodies are his temple. And so, not lightly does he let his temple fall into decay.

We are his home. His house. So, they are his saints. Well, why is their death precious to him?

Secondly, because he loves them. They're his saints. But he loves them. He loves us. And takes nothing in our life.

[7 : 42] Or in our death. For granted. Every day is treasured. Every day is known and planned. Every tear is kept.

Every sigh recorded. He's close to his people. He loves them. He values his saints' lives. Because they're lives that are pleasing to him.

Isn't that wonderful that your life, dear child of God, is pleasing to the Lord? Now, you might think that your life doesn't amount to much. Or God doesn't think much of you and what you do.

But your life is his handiwork. Prepared. Created. Planned. And all of the good things that you do. He's prepared in advance for you. So, your life is 180 degrees from the life of a sinner. Where he gets no light. No joy. No glory from them.

[8 : 41] But your life is pleasing to him. An aroma pleasing to the Lord. And so, he loves their life. He loves your life. So, your death is precious to him. And so, he cares for it.

Watches over it. Watches over it. He's careful with it. So, then what does he do? What does he do? How do we see that it's precious to him? How do we see that? How do we see his care? Well, I just have three things here.

One, he uses that death for his glory. He always makes sure that the death of the righteous is a glory to him. Brings him honor.

The Proverbs say that the memory of the righteous is blessed. And so, after or at a funeral, there's honor given to God as they remember that life.

[9 : 44] It's a blessing. And God brings honor to himself. And it brings joy to us as we think about their lives. We look back on their lives. And we say that we admire their faith.

But more than that, we admire the God who kept them. Who held them. Who never let them down. Who always came through for them when they were believing.

And so, their families bless God for their lost, their departed one. The world looks in and wonders. Do you remember Balaam looking over Israel and he says, Oh, let me die the death of the righteous.

Completely apart. They're special people. So, how does God show that their death is precious? Well, he brings great glory to himself out of their death.

Secondly, he carefully plans their death. One person said their death is under his special arrangement.

[10 : 49] So, if you're a wedding planner or a floral arranger and you're decorating a place, every flower you watch out for, you especially arrange all of the details.

And so, he carefully plans their death. Because it's precious to him. The time. The place. The manner.

The whole season. All of it. None of it by mistake. And so, we look back and we say, Oh, the Lord knew what he was doing. The Lord knew what he was doing. He wasn't being careless at all. And we look and we say, Oh, look how the Lord loved that person. Or look how the Lord is loving us in this. Oh, it was precious to him.

So, he plans it. And three, he attends their death with special grace. You know, there is living grace. And then there is dying grace. God's people, his saints, never lack dying grace.

[11:52] So, Jesus is there. The Holy Spirit is there. To guard their souls. To protect them from the evil one. To guard their hearts. To keep their faith burning through that dark valley.

And so, what accounts for all of that? Usually, it's not because their faith is so strong. And it probably never is because their faith is so strong. Because, especially at this time, many are so weakened that they are down to nothing.

And so, what is it? How do you account for it? It's that he holds them fast. He holds them fast. There's dying grace.

Help. Now, that's a very quick summary. Their death is precious to him. They are his saints. His holy ones. Predestined. Called.

Indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Loved. Their lives are of great value to him. And they honor him in their life. And they honor him in their death.

[12:55] They live together as friends devoted to the end. And so, what does he do? He uses their death for his glory. And he plans it out. And he prepares the whole thing.

And he attends that death with special grace. And so, David says, Precious is in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Now, if that is true, then I want you to think with me of just how precious our Lord's death was to him.

How weighty. How weighty. How significant. How costly. How valuable. It was. Now, saints.

That's in our verse here. Verse 15. His saints. It means his holy ones. But who was the holy one?

The saint. The saint of all saints. The holy one of all holy ones. Well, in another place it says, I will not let my holy one see decay.

[14:01] Today. Jesus is that holy one. Just listen to Isaiah chapter 42. And I want you to notice all of the similarities to the things that I've already talked about in his saints death.

And why it's so precious to them. I just want you to hear these similarities. This is Isaiah 42. Here is my servant. Whom I uphold.

My chosen one. We've talked about that. Chosen. Predestined. Elected. In whom I delight. So. His life was pleasing to the Lord.

This is my son with whom I am well pleased. I will put my spirit on him. Remember the spirit of the Lord rested upon him. So we are his temple.

We are his temples. But Christ is the temple. Remember. You destroy this temple. And I will raise it up again in three days.

[15:05] The Lord's. The Lord lives in us. But. God lives in and on Christ. As a man. Lives forever. In his home.

In his heart. Christ. Heart. Christ. Is God's throne. And God's bed. The place where he lives.

He is the temple of God. Indwelt fully by the Holy Spirit. Then later on in Isaiah 42. I the Lord have called you in righteousness. It's not us that.

It's not only us that receive the call of God. No. God says. I called him. In my righteousness. I will take a hold of your hand. And was Christ's life precious to him.

Did he find it useful. Did he find joy in it. We've already quoted. This is my son with whom I'm well pleased with. Listen to Isaiah 42. A bruised reed. He will not. Break.

[16:02] And a smoldering wick. He will not snuff out. And faithfulness. He will bring forth justice. He will not falter. Or be discouraged. Till he establishes justice on earth.

In his law. How the islands will put their hope. Now what is this? In one part. It's God. Predicting. Christ's ministry.

But in another way. It's God. Admiring. And enjoying. What his son. Will do. So everyone else has failed.

Up to this place. In Isaiah. In the Old Testament history. Everyone. Has failed. Israel. As a nation.

Has failed. To do this. To bring glory to himself. In the whole world. To establish justice on the earth. But. But now. God looks at his son. And says. Not him.

[17:01] He has this perfect combination. This perfect combination. Of gentleness. And power. Kindness. And kingship.

Every moment. Every moment. Of Jesus. Life. Life. Was. And is. A thrill. To God. The father. And so.

Was his death. Precious to him. Was it a treasure. To. To not be squandered. For anything. Carefully kept. And treasured. Yes.

He loved his son. He called his son. He chose his son. All of this. His son was the saint. The temple. And so. What did he do? Well. He carefully.

Planned. His son's death. The time. The place. The manner. The whole season. We can't go into all of this.

[18:01] But think of when he started. His planning. Says he was the lamb slain from the foundation of the earth. Foundation of the world.

Now that doesn't mean that Jesus cross. Happened before there was a creation. It doesn't mean that. But what it does mean. Is that his death. Was in the works.

Was in the plan. Before. The world. Was created. So valuable. So precious. So treasured. Long planned for.

Long prepared. Now all of Old Testament history. Pointed. Forward. To that one. Day. And the glories that would follow after it.

That place. That time. So you remember what it says in Galatians. At the fullness of time. When the time was just right. His son came forth.

[18:59] And he goes to a cross. And all throughout the Gospels. You get this. Sense of. It's not my time. It's not my time. It's not my time. And then all of a sudden.

He turns his face to Jerusalem. And his time had come. And do you remember. The Pharisees. And the Sanhedrin. Were doing everything they could.

To make sure. They wanted to kill him. But not during the Passover. And yet. Everything they were doing.

They could not stop it. From coming. Exactly. When it happened. The plan was set. This death. Was going to happen. And nothing could stop it.

His son's death. Was so precious to him. That it was going to go. Just. How he wanted it. To go. Exactly. As he.

[19:54] Had it planned. And did he attend. Christ's death. With special help. With grace. Well. You remember.

Angels attended him. In the garden. Helping him. And then. It came to the time. Of the cross. And through all that. Dark. Midnight. Of here he is. God's wrath. Is upon him.

But the spirit of God. Was upholding him. Giving him power. To believe. Giving him strength. To hold on. When all was lost. To still. In faith.

Cry out. My God. My God. He's holding on. To the very end. Hebrews 9.14. Says. How much more than. Will the blood of Christ.

[20:50] Who through the. Eternal spirit. Offered himself. Unblemished to God. Now. I take that to mean. That the spirit of God. Helped. Empowered.

The manhood. Of Jesus Christ. In his. Death. That Jesus. As a man. Is now. Facing. Hell. And now. Facing the horror. Of God's. Anger. And the nightmare. Of the cross. Of having his father. Ignore him. And pour out his wrath. Against him. Now. My question is. How could any man. Endure that. Face that. Well. The spirit of God. Was there to strengthen. Our Lord's manhood.

There was dying help. Well. Why? Because the father. Was saying. And ensuring. My.

[21:45] Son. And his death. Will not fail. He will conquer. My son. Will triumph. Where all others.

Failed. His death. Is too precious. To waste. He will have. The prize. For which.

He dies. Now. Did God get glory. Out of the cross. Jesus said. This is my greatest glory. He says. Now. It's time for me. To be glorified.

And he's not going. To a throne. In Jerusalem. He's going. To a cross. Outside of Jerusalem. And he says. The hour. Has come. For the son of man. To be glorified. So it was his great glory.

And it was to the. To God's great. Glory. And so now. The one. And same God. Could be. Justifier. And just. He could justify.

[22 : 39] Sinners. And still be. Righteous. And just. He can be. Merciful. And loving. And at the same time. Just. And righteous.

And God is glorified. People see now. This is our God. Perfectly righteous. Perfectly kind. And so now.

The world will see. How great. The father's love is. That while we were still. Sinners. Christ died. For us. It was an unveiling. It was a disclosure. A revelation. A demonstration. Of God's heart.

And from that day. To this day. And forever on. We will be saying. Wow. Our God is amazing. God is glorified. In his son's death.

And so when our loved ones. Die. And in that moment. We can weep. Not for them. If they are in the Lord. We weep for ourselves.

[23 : 35] And our own loss. Why. Why. Is that. Why. Can we. Face the death. Of our loved ones. And still. Have. Joy.

In some part. Of our hearts. Isn't it because. Jesus died. He died. The death. That they deserve. To die. And now.

They are going. To his reward. They are going. To enter. Into his joy. And together. Our hearts. Soar. At his glory.

And his goodness. So his death. Was precious. So tonight. As we. We remember. The Lord's death.

I want you to think about. How precious. That death is. That death was. To God. Himself. Think about. How precious.

[24 : 29] This death is. That we remember. Tonight. And if it was.

So precious. So valuable. So weighty. So rare. So costly. So influential. Then. I think. It calls us. To do.

At least. Three things. Child of God. One. Think. Think. How secure. You are. Think.

Of how secure. You are. Our sin. Is under the blood. Our sin. Is buried. In that tomb.

That is so precious. He died for us. We are hid. In his life. And in his death. And so. Can hell.

[25 : 24] Or God's anger. Ever come for you. Child of God. His wrath. Can it ever come upon you? Well never.

Because that would say. That his son's death. Wasn't all that special. After all. It wasn't worth that much.

It didn't do. What it was. Designed to do. It didn't really do. Much of anything. So think about. How secure you are.

You are. As secure. As. The death of Christ. Is precious to God. There's nothing more valuable. To God. Than Jesus. And if he died for you.

Then you are safe. And secure. So look away from yourself. Are you looking for assurance? Look away from yourself. Look to Jesus.

[26 : 22] Look to that death. Two. Rest your faith. Rest your confidence. Your optimistic hope.

Rest your secure. Security. Your faith. On the preciousness of Christ's death. So how do we know. That God loves us. How do you know.

That God loves you. How do we. How do you know. That your sins are forgiven. Where is their righteousness. Where is their salvation. Well it's. It's here. It's in his. Death.

This one. Of a kind. Rare. Valuable. Precious to God. Death. He gave up the one he loves.

Above all others. Then you can rest. Yourself in him. You can rest yourself. In Jesus. And then finally. Third. Make that cross.

[27 : 17] Your only boast. We saw that. Last week. I just wanted to bring it up again. What does it mean to. Boast in something. It means to celebrate.

To rejoice in. To exult in. And that's what I'm saying. Make the cross. Your only boast. So did the father. Give up his son for you. Did the father.

Give up his son for me. Then oh my soul. Rejoice. Did Jesus. Love me. And. Submit himself. To death.

Even death. On the cross. Then oh my soul. Rejoice. He did that for you. We want to rejoice this evening.

Rejoice. And boast in our Lord. Rejoice. Then as we eat this meal. Together. Rejoice. In the Lord Jesus. As we eat this meal.

[28 : 12] With Jesus. Present. With us. Rejoice. Then and draw close to him. Even now. This is such a precious time.

He's drawing close to us. So draw close to him. And rejoice. That you are doing this. With. The Lord. As you remember. His precious death.

For you. Amen.