

Living the Good Life With a View Towards Eternity

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, we finish up our short series this morning with this final lesson, as it says up on the screen, Living the Good Life with a View Toward Eternity.
- And we do this kind of forward thinking really every day. We move through our lives. Sometimes we do it with short-term events.
- Might be like yesterday after these real cold days, icy days. They were using a lot of salt on the road, so the truck was showing up white with all that salt on it.
- So, oh, it's time to wash it off. And so with a view of eternity, not eternity, but with a view of a clean truck ahead, I went ahead and did the work of getting the hose out and scrubbing it off, drying it off, and ended up with a nice-looking truck.
- So short-term events like that, whether it's in some baking, you got your cookbook, it might have a picture in it. You see the picture of the end result of what you might be able to bake, to put together.
- [1 : 1 2] So you go through the effort of getting out the ingredients, mixing it all together, putting it in the oven. I think that's what you do with cakes and stuff like that, and being real general, because I don't do that kind of thing.
- But the end result is usually something you enjoy. And so short-term forward thinking that we do, even some mid-term thinking of events that might be further in the future.
- I don't know if you like to do any gardening, but we usually put in a garden every year, and even probably three or four weeks ago, we already started receiving the seed catalogs.
- Talk about forward thinking. Those companies aren't going to miss a beat as far as getting people to think about what's ahead. And so we look at some of those catalogs, think about what seeds we're going to get.
- And, of course, we usually have to have our garden meeting in our household. And we sit down and look back to the past and think, well, what did we grow last year?
- [2 : 1 9] What worked out well? What produced well? And what do we want to grow this year? What seeds do we want to order? And so we get those seeds ordered after the seeds come.
- So there's lots of activity that we're doing while we're thinking ahead, this forward thinking. And we'll plant some of those seeds six to eight weeks before the last frost and get them germinated, get them growing, set them out, so on and so forth.
- Lots of activity. And later on, it might be even some more difficult activity. Some that's not quite as pleasant, but is necessary to enjoy what's to come.
- And that's the weeding. So Jody usually gets the kids on a schedule. And we get out there and do the weeding and anticipating what's ahead and the harvest to come.
- And eventually, if all goes well, there usually is a harvest that we enjoy. So short-term, mid-term, even long-term thinking.

[3 : 22] We do that when, say, we get kids ready for college, go off to college. It might take four or five, whatever number of years that they have to go through vocational training in order to be trained for their future.

So short, mid-term, long-term thinking that we practice in order to prepare for the future.

And so we need to apply that kind of forward thinking when it comes to living the good life. There is a culmination to the good life.

The good life we're living now is leading to something grander, grander than the harvest that we experience in the garden or anything else. But it is something that we can look forward to with eager and great anticipation.

And the view to the end of this grand culmination of the good life really helps us as we live and walk our journey here, as we heard last week, as pilgrims in this world.

[4 : 34] We are pilgrims here. This isn't our final home. But we do have to live here. But we live here with a view toward eternity. What is to come?

Our future home. And with that view toward eternity, it really does influence how we live in the present, just like with our garden.

And there are certain things we're going to do in the present to enjoy this future that is to come in the harvest. So even as we think of the culmination of the good life, what we're looking forward to does have an influence in our lives now.

And so as we bring this series to a close this morning, we want to take a look at that, look at the culmination of the good life and how for how a view of eternity or toward eternity influences how we live in the world today.

So we'll start with that culmination of the good life. Just as a brief reminder, let's remember that the good life that we're referring to is the life that is lived by faith in Jesus Christ.

[5 : 50] That is the good life. The good life that we can enjoy now. Now we've heard the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ and by faith we believe that gospel, confessing Jesus Christ as our Lord.

And now by the help of the Holy Spirit who is dwelling within us, we take a look into God's word to learn more of him, to learn more of his wise counsel and his commands.

And we make it our goal to please him, to find out what's pleasing to the Lord. And then with that desire the Spirit of God nurtures within our hearts, we make it our ambition to please him and to walk in obedience to him, to be holy even as he is holy.

And as we do that, the person is living the good life. We always want to connect that life of knowing God, walking in obedience to his word, as the good life.

I keep mentioning week after week that that is the message we also want to be communicating to our children. If we're not communicating that kind of message of the Christian life, knowing God to our children, something's going wrong there.

[7 : 11] And not that we're always hopping and skipping through the day, putting on a happy face when there's challenges and insincerely, but we're still helping them see that the good life is connected with knowing God, his word, and living that word out even in the midst of great challenges, and that that good life does not disappear even when the challenges are there.

It gives us a firm foundation for still living the good life, knowing God, enjoying him. So let's be aware of what we're communicating to our children, our grandchildren, coworkers, whoever it is, that we have an opportunity to share with them what the good life is.

So we're living the good life now by faith in Jesus Christ, and the good life really does provide us a foretaste of the glory that is to come.

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine. Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine. So when we think of living the good life with a view to eternity, that means, that doesn't mean that, well, anything good and enjoyable is all in the future.

No, there's a foretaste of that glory that we can experience now as we're in this world. And so that's just a little bit of what I want to communicate as we look at the culmination of the good life.

[8 : 44] Ephesians 2.6, And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

So we see both aspects of this good life here. We're seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. Now, I don't think that that verse is just pointing us to our position that we enjoy in Jesus Christ, that we are there representatively.

Indeed, we are. Even as Jesus is there, seated in the heavenlies, because our faith is in Jesus Christ, we're saved by grace, we are there just as sure as he is there.

We are secure in our position in Jesus Christ. But we also have some of that glory of being in the heavenlies now as we're still in this world.

And that's some of what I wanted to communicate when it comes to this foretaste of glory divine.

[10 : 08] Though our acquaintance with God and his word, or through this relationship, our union with Jesus Christ, and being in his word, we have an awareness of present and future glory.

Those unseen realities. We've heard that in the past in some of the messages that have been presented to us. Things that were unseen to us prior to our salvation, now are seen to us.

Yes, in the word of God we can see what is ahead to some degree, but also in the present we see what is unseen by those who do not have life in Jesus Christ and with God.

Someone gave me a book this past week that had a chapter related to heaven, and so I went through that chapter and read it. And this is a little longer quote, but explains some of that reality that we have now in this foretaste of glory divine.

It said, Older theologians used to explain the heavenlies in the following way. The visible heavens, or the sky, they termed the heaven of nature. The place of bliss where God is visible, they called the heaven of glory.

[11 : 30] The heavenly places of the epistle to the Ephesians that we just read, they termed the heaven of grace. Believers are already in the heaven of grace.

Grace is young glory, as our Puritan forefathers aptly put it. Grace is glory in the bud, and glory will be grace in full flower.

The two are not absolutely separate states. The one is preparatory to the other and leads into it by an inevitable progression.

So this grace that we're living in now, this foretaste of future glory, we're on this path, we're on this journey.

It's an inevitable progression toward the culmination of being in the presence of Jesus Christ. I hope that wells within your heart a little bit more of what we actually have right now.

[12 : 38] That all that is good is not future. A lot of what we will enjoy in the future, we can have a foretaste of that now.

And is really part of the joy and wonder of the good life now. It's in bud form, but there is coming a time when it will be in full bloom.

So, we are in the place where we are aware of the glory of God. Prior to my salvation, I wasn't aware of the glory, the splendor, the majesty of God and the person of Jesus Christ.

I had no real appreciation to it because I was dead in trespasses and sins. I had no life toward God. Therefore, no awareness of the beauty, the grandeur of the person of Jesus Christ.

But by God's grace and faith in Jesus Christ, I was granted new life to see with new eyes. That which was unseen to me before. Now I can see this wonder and this glory.

[13 : 45] Some of these glories of the person of Jesus Christ. We have the opportunity by faith in Christ to live in some of that glory now.

The good life. We can live now. But we're not in the place now where we're experiencing, again, the full bloom of the glory of God. But that day is coming.

And it is certain that it will be here. As he said in here, this inevitable progression. It will not stop for the believer. It is coming.

It is coming. And we will reach that destination. And it will culminate in a richer, full bloom of the glory of God.

Of which now we're just seeing a little bit of that. Well, at that time, we will experience the incomparable riches of glory in the presence of the unsurpassing glory and beauty of the person of Jesus Christ.

[14 : 47] And his glorious kingdom. So that's what we take a look at now. And some of the selected a variety of verses. Because throughout the scriptures, this is mentioned numerous times.

And as in each one of the lessons, we don't have time to go through all of those verses. But we'll give you a taste of some of the glory that is to come.

Jesus reassured his disciples of that coming time, that culmination. We're familiar with these verses. And you recognize the effect that it was supposed to have on them.

And we'll take a look at that later on in our second part of the lesson. But at that time, he was reassuring his disciples of that time that was a coming, that was ahead.

In John 14, 1 through 6, I don't have all the verses written down here. He says, Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God.

[15 : 45] Trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going there to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am.

Future glory with Jesus in a place that he was preparing for them. They were experiencing really a foretaste of the glory that was to come.

And with that understanding, with that view toward eternity, they could live in such a way that their hearts wouldn't be overcome with the trouble of Jesus not being there with them bodily.

So they had to, Jesus was helping them set this new mindset that would take them on through the days ahead when he wouldn't be there with them bodily.

[16 : 44] And so that they were going to have to recall to their thinking, recall to their minds, this truth, this culmination that was to come, so that they would not let their hearts be troubled and overcome with grief.

Well, John also wrote of it in his first short epistle. He showed the connection of what we are now and the culmination that's ahead in 1 John 3.2. He wrote, Dear friends, now we are children of glory, children of God.

And what we will be has not yet been made known. That's the present. That's the bud form, the foretaste of glory. Now we're the children of God.

It hasn't appeared completely of what we will be, but we are something of that now. But we do know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

So what is in bud form now will be in full bloom later on. So again, let that be a comfort to you. Now you are a child of God.

[17 : 57] And you're not everything that God has purchased you to be just yet, but the time is coming when you will be. Culmination.

So practice this kind of forward thinking, this view to eternity every day. All kinds of situations in life where you have to do this in regard to the good life.

Well, Paul wrote of it and the certainty of it as well. Our hope in Christ and his resurrection points us to a culmination, our resurrection as well.

1 Corinthians 15, selected just a few verses. You know that whole chapter is a powerful chapter on the resurrection. Verses 17 and 18.

And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile. You are still in your sins. Now he's making these statements, understanding that these things are not true, so we can come to the conclusion that the opposite of these things is true.

[19 : 04] If Christ has not been raised, he has been raised, your faith is futile. Your faith is not futile. You're still in your sins. We're not still in our sins. You get the idea.

Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. So he's coming to the point, well, of course, we do have hope in this life, even beyond this life.

Verse 22. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. Forward thinking, a view toward eternity. But each in his own turn.

Christ the firstfruits, then when he comes, those who belong to him. Verse 42. So it will be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable.

It is raised imperishable. Verses 51 through 53. Listen. I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed.

[20 : 12] In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

So that kind of forward thinking, looking forward to what is certain to come. Jesus Christ is raised from the dead. A time is coming that you also will be raised from the dead.

It is certain. As certain as he is raised from the dead. Living with a view toward eternity. On a second letter to that church, he wrote of the culmination that's ahead as well.

One that he preferred, in fact. In 2 Corinthians 5.8. He said, we are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

So the culmination, that which is ahead for the person who is in Jesus Christ, is to be preferred above even being connected soul and body.

[21 : 22] There's a lot going on in that chapter. And talking about this. Well, what happens to the person who goes, who dies, and his body is in the grave, and his soul has gone up to be with the Lord?

There's a tension there. If he's out of the body or whatever. Theologians discuss that and debate that as to what's going on. But the point I'm making this morning is the Apostle Paul, he says, okay, there's a dilemma there.

There's a tension there, whatever it is. But if I'm out of the body, well, so let it be. I prefer to be with the Lord. And in his presence. So the culmination, the point is, the culmination that is ahead for the believer is one to be preferred even to what is here.

It is good. It is good. What we're headed toward is good. Better even than the good life that we can experience here in this world now. On another letter, Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica to point them to the glorious culmination that was ahead for them.

Life and death in this world is not all there is. First Thessalonians 4, 13 through 17. We believe that Jesus died and rose again.

[22 : 40] And so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven. And with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet call of God, the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Culmination. We're enjoying a relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ now. But then, face to face. Never to be separated again.

Being with our Lord forever. The culmination of the good life. Well, he wrote another letter to that church in Thessalonica. And he pointed out what was ahead for both unbelievers and believers.

2 Thessalonians 1, 5 through 10. God's judgment is right. He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled.

[23 : 45] This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heavens and blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power. You see, even in that, he's declaring the culmination even for the believer.

And what makes hell so horrendous certainly is the calamity, the punishment, destruction that an unbeliever will experience there, but they'll be shut out from the presence of the Lord.

That's what makes the culmination of the good life so beautiful and grand is the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who have rejected the gospel have shut it out.

They will not have that pleasure. They'll be separated from his presence and from the majesty of his power. On the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed.

[25 : 02] And as you read through the gospel, there were things that Jesus was doing when the disciples were with him. And that they would see what he would do and they would marvel and they would be amazed.

Well, that's going to be the way it is when we finally see him and are with him. As it describes here, those that are brought into his presence to be with him, he will be marveled at among all those who have believed.

Marveling at him. Sometimes I can't comprehend that. And what will I be marveling at?

It's just beyond, really, I think what I can comprehend in this life. I can look in the scriptures, the spirit of God gives me a picture, a view of the person of Jesus Christ.

And even then, it's hard to imagine the grandeur of the person of Jesus Christ. That when I see him, I will marvel at him. But that's what's ahead.

[26 : 08] That's the culmination. While I'm in this life, I have a view of eternity. Of that time, then I will see Jesus. Well, in Revelation, John also wrote of what was certain to come.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Now the dwelling of God is with men and he will live with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God.

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. For the old order of things has passed away.

Then in Revelation 22, No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city and his servants will serve him. They will see his face and his name will be on their foreheads.

There will be no more night. They will not need the light of the lamp or the light of the sun. For the Lord God will give them light and they will reign forever and ever.

[27 : 10] The culmination that's ahead. Having that kind of view of eternity in that book that these folks gave me this past week, short quote that I also included, There will be no limit to our joy because God and Christ, who are the chief objects of delight, are persons of inexhaustible perfection and glory.

Inexhaustible. Goes on and on and on. In fact, I would anticipate as we're there in eternity, our joy will only grow more and more and more. You know, if I'm anticipating that my joy and my rejoicing will be great when I see Jesus Christ for the first time in my eternity that's ahead, well, I can anticipate that as I grow to know him more and more and more and more throughout eternity because he is inexhaustible in pleasures and joy and beauty, that my joy will grow as well.

Talk about something that's hard to comprehend. You know, we experience a good movie, a good meal for a short time, and then it's gone. But when we're there in the presence of Jesus Christ, an opportunity to grow to know him and to know that kind of joy, I trust that that's something as well.

That's something you're communicating to your children. You know, I have joy in the Lord Jesus Christ now. I want you to know that. Even as you're going through times of correction with him, you know you're not experiencing that joy in the Lord right now.

Do you know why that is? You know, and help them see the struggle of sin within their lives, but show them that even in the struggle, they can still be introduced to this one who brings joy in the midst of the battle in this world.

[29 : 06] We want our children, our grandchildren, to understand the things that they're not seeing. We can't determine what their response will be, certainly. Sometimes we wish we could just stick our hands in there and turn their hearts around, but it just doesn't happen.

But we can still communicate the truth of the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ, and we want to do that in every single day, in the various aspects of life, and help them see that we are living with a view toward eternity that affects how we live now in the present.

And what's ahead is even greater. So the culmination of the good life is worthy to be desired. It surpasses anything in this world that this world has to offer.

That's what we see in the scriptures. It's certainly something that is really attainable. Attainable by faith in Jesus Christ. And it's certainly something that is certain to come to pass, even as Jesus was raised from the dead.

And Jesus who said it is to come, and he doesn't lie. So the culmination is there. It is something that is certain for the person who is in Jesus Christ.

[30 : 23] So how do we live in light of such a glorious future that's ahead of us? Certainly, again, it's not meant just to be something that's for the future, but it affects the way we live now.

So that's what we want to take a look at now. How does it help us live the good life now and enjoy the good life now? Well, Jonathan Edwards was challenged by this as well.

I haven't given you any quotes from Jonathan Edwards yet. But he wanted to communicate this to his people as well and wanted them to enjoy living the good life now with this view toward eternity, with the best is yet to come.

And so he tried to encourage them to not let their hearts get tied to lesser things in this world. So now let me give you a little lengthier quote from Edwards as he instructed his people about this.

He said, We ought not to be content with this world, or so to set our hearts on any enjoyments we have here as to rest in them. And that's the key phrase, really.

[31 : 33] He's not saying, Don't enjoy anything in this world. He's saying, Don't let your hearts be so tied to them that they become your savior, that you're looking for these activities, these things to produce what Jesus Christ is meant to produce and be in our lives in relationship with him.

No, we ought to seek a better happiness. If we're surrounded with many outward enjoyments and things are comfortable to us, and if we are settled in families and have those friends and relatives that are very desirable, if we have companions whose society is delightful to us, if we have children that are pleasant and likely, and in whom we see many promising qualifications, what parent doesn't, and live by good neighbors and have much of the respect of others, if we have a good name and are generally beloved, where we are known and have comfortable and pleasant accommodations, yet we ought not to take up our rest in these things.

We should not be willing to have these things for our portion, but should seek happiness in another world or person. We should choose to leave them all in God's due time.

that we might go to heaven and there have the enjoyment of God. That's what they needed, this encouragement from their pastor.

We need this encouragement from one another. One of us can't become pretty comfortable in this world and think that, man, can heaven be too much better than this?

[33 : 17] I've been there at times in my life, and yet it is. We need to be sure that we're not letting our hearts get tied to lesser things.

He wasn't, again, saying that the good things of this world are debased and terrible, but rather that the present and future treasures of God surpass anything this present world offers apart from Christ.

Don't let your heart settle for less when there are surpassing treasures found in Jesus Christ, now and in the future when he returns to set up his eternal glorious kingdom.

Is that where you find your greatest joy is? We can enjoy some of the things of this world in a right way and even enjoy them in a greater and fuller way in relationship with Jesus Christ because we can give thanks to him as the one who has provided all things for us richly to enjoy.

So don't let our hearts get tied to lesser things. But also now live now what's characteristic of the coming kingdom.

[34 : 29] This makes sense for glorifying God and enjoying life in Christ now, but also because that is the eternal life we're headed toward.

It encourages us to live holy lives now. Why wouldn't we live now what we're going to be living in the future? If the future glory of heaven is so grand and glorious where we're all living holy lives, why would we put it off?

Do you want to enjoy the glories of living in holiness with the person of Jesus Christ? Well, the butt of that is be holy as I am holy.

Live that now and enjoy some of that pre-glory of heaven, that eternal existence. That's the kind of thinking you need to bring into those times of temptation.

Why is it that I'm thinking and starting to come to this conclusion that I'll be happier, more blessed by walking in a way that's not characteristic of holiness? And it makes no sense whatsoever for me as a Christian.

- [35 : 39] I want to enjoy life by God's design. Edwards had something to say about this as well. He said, We ought to seek heaven by traveling in the way that leads there.

The way that leads to heaven is a way of holiness. We should choose and desire to travel there in this way and no other. We should part with all those sins, those carnal appetites that are as weights, that tend to hinder us in our traveling towards heaven.

Hebrews 12, 1, he quotes, Let us lay aside every weight in the sin that does so easily beset us. Let's run with patience the race that is set before us.

However pleasant any practice of the gratification of any appetite may be, we must lay it aside, cast it away, if it be any hindrance and any stumbling block in the way to heaven.

And so John wrote that. He said, Dear friends, Now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

- [36 : 48] Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. That's what our future glory will be. Let's pursue it now.

Let's live in that now. Let's make that an encouragement to each other. Help us to each learn how to live that holiness as a husband and a wife, children, parents, workers, etc., etc.

and enjoy some of that glory now. Let's pray, prepare for that life by making it our ambition to live that way now. But then also the encouragement is to lay up treasures in heaven.

That's where our future, our home is even now. He warned his people about building their lives around the temporal. Another quote from Edwards.

All our labor will be lost if we spend our lives in the pursuit of a temporal happiness. If we set our hearts on riches and seek happiness in them, if we seek to be happy in sensual pleasures, if we spend our lives to seek the credit and esteem of men, all these things will be of little significance to us.

- [37 : 55] Death will blow up all our hopes and expectations and will put an end to our enjoyment of these things. Where will be all our worldly employments and enjoyments when we are laid in the silent grave?

Somebody else, Carol got me a book for Christmas on death. Made me wonder since I'm having surgery coming up here soon, you know, and kidded her about it. But it's interesting in the book he's talking about how in the last, I can't remember the number of years, how we've kind of put a pretty face on death and to make it as pleasant as possible and giving us these comfortable coffins to lay in and dressing us up in our best clothes.

And even one advertisement talking, trying to get people to buy the most comfortable shoes for the person who's laying in the coffin. And we no longer have funerals, but celebrations of life.

And anything we can to avoid this whole matter of death and what is to come, well, it's coming. It's going to grip every one of us. And so we have to be thinking not just of life here, but what is ahead.

A view toward eternity. And that's what Edwards was trying to get his people. Mark 8, 36, What good is it for a man to gain the whole world yet forfeit his soul?

- [39 : 27] Matthew 6, 19 through 24, not all those verses. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

For where your treasure is there, your heart will be also. Well, I have to keep on going here. I just have a couple more. Next, it helps us with the right perspective to persevere in difficult times.

Romans 8, 18, Paul says, I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. So the Apostle Paul going through these great, great trials, he thought, they're still not worth comparing to the great glory that's going to be revealed.

And it's not worth comparing these things to. Anything that is ahead, so you see this view toward eternity that helped the Apostle Paul continue on even in the severest trials.

We need to go there at times when trials are difficult. There's others. We heard last week of Abraham and others who were looking forward to another city whose foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

[40 : 45] Let me move on and finish these others up quickly. This view to eternity also helps us to continue on in faithful labor for our Lord Jesus. 1 Corinthians 15, Apostle Paul talking about the surety of the resurrection.

Remember when the perishable will be clothed with imperishable. Verse 55, I'm skipping through some of those. He says, Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?

The sting of death is sin. The power of sin is the law, but thanks be to God. He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, there's an influence that this truth has on us in the present.

Understanding future glory. Therefore, my dear brother, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

The resurrection is there. It's true. The culmination to come that is certain you will also be raised from the dead. Therefore, continue on in faithful labor for the Lord Jesus Christ.

[41 : 57] Next, live in confident comfort of his sure coming. So the Apostle Paul had to write to the believers there in Thessalonica when certain members of the congregation had passed on.

He said, Brothers, we don't want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep or to grieve like the rest of men who have no hope. So already you see the difference. Those who pass away without Christ, those are people who have no hope.

You don't have to grieve like them. Why? Because you do have hope. Therefore, encourage each other with these words. So this, the reality, this forward thinking helps us ourselves when we're dealing with the loss of a loved one, but it also helps us come alongside others who have lost loved ones and we can encourage them.

Well, Jesus comforted his disciples. We already read that verse. Then there was another one, 1 Peter 1, 3 through 4, where Peter said, Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope. This is not a, eh, it's maybe hopeful that this will come to pass. This is a living hope.

[43 : 09] Why? Because it's through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade, kept in heaven for you.

Forward thinking for these people who were losing everything, really, as they were going through this time of persecution. What was the truth? The reality, the unseen reality, that they needed to carry in their daily lives what was the reality, that they have a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

They have an inheritance that's kept for them, reserved for them in heaven. Well, final quote, the good life is lived with heavenly, firm, heaven firmly in view.

It's far off, yes, and sometimes difficult to see, but it is always in view. When one loses sight of heaven, one's faith cannot help but slip. One's resolve naturally begins to weaken.

For this reason, one must always evaluate one's days according to the heavenward perspective. Our business decisions, our parenting, our classwork, our entertainment, put whatever you want in there.

[44 : 23] we must consider all these things and many more from an eternal perspective. So carry that with you through your day today. Carry that with you through your day tomorrow.

Start the day looking with an eternal perspective. There is a glorious culmination of the good life that we've been learning about these past few weeks. A glory that we can enjoy now, and I trust you are enjoying now.

But a good life that will become the best life when we finally reach that culmination of being with our Savior face to face. We'll encourage each other with these words.

Let's close in prayer. Father in heaven, you've been so gracious, so good to us. Father in even just making us as human beings that we could have an awareness of God and then redeeming us in Jesus Christ that we could be once again alive towards you, living a life now that is so good.

And then Father, with such an eternity that's to come, you are to be praised certainly even now as we wait. Help us to give you glory now and praise to one another, to encourage one another with these words.

[45 : 49] May we help each other walk in the way of the good life, obedience to you and others who are yet in darkness. Father, help our hearts burn with a love, compassion for them so that we cannot help but speak of the glory we now know and enjoy.

And that could be theirs too through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. You do that work and we'll look forward to praise coming from their lips as well. Thank you for this time.

Now prepare our hearts even as we go into the morning service. Help us to be ready to receive more truth that we need for life now. And to offer to you, Father, sacrifices of praise in the songs that we sing and encourage one another that way as well.

In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you.