



GOD'S PRESENCE IN THE HOUR OF DEATH

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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God's Presence in the Hour of Death

SERMON REFERENCE: Genesis 50:22-26

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2250

The fear of death keeps people in bondage. Yet, a child of God can smile at death. That's what Joseph did; in Genesis 50, we see Joseph practicing God's presence in his hour of death.

If we want to have the assurance that Joseph had, we must first remember the unbreakable promises of God. We will not have peace in the hour of death unless we have God's promises to stand on.

For Joseph, He remembered God's promises to Abram. Hebrews 11:22 says, "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones." What is faith? Faith is not positive thinking or hoping for the best. Faith is getting in the Word of God and believing it. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Second, we must rest in the unshakeable power of God. Faith is not shaken by appearances, human reason, emotion or delay. The Word of God gives the assurance of faith. Adrian Rogers says, "Your emotions are the shallowest part of your nature. Salvation is the deepest work of God. God doesn't do the deepest work in the shallowest part. Forget your emotions... put your confidence in the unshakeable power of God."

Finally, we must receive the unmistakable peace of God. Joshua 24 explains that Joseph's bones were buried in Shechem, where Abram was buried. Just as Joseph had faith to believe, it was done. Why was Joseph concerned about the burial of his bones? He wanted to leave a monument of faith. His success in Egypt paled in comparison to his desire to be a part of what God was doing next. We see later in the Book of Joshua that every time the people saw his burial site, they were reminded of the vapor of life and the length of eternity. If they were living in prosperity, those bones reminded them that one of these days, they would leave it all behind. And if they were living in adversity, those bones reminded them that there was a better day coming.

LIFE APPLICATION

Let every casket you see and every funeral you attend remind you today is the day of salvation. Give your heart to Jesus and you can smile at death.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Man is the only creature who knows that he is going to die, and he is desperately trying to forget it.
- b) The fear of death keeps people in bondage.
 - i) Hebrews 2:14-15
 - ii) Jesus came to deliver us who, through fear of death, spend our lives in bondage.
 - iii) We are not ready to live until we are no longer afraid to die.
 - iv) Jesus came to deliver us from that bondage of fear.
- c) A child of God can smile at death.
 - i) This is what Joseph did.
- d) Joseph was a great man, but he still died.
 - i) The only possible exception to death is the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus; if Jesus comes before we die.
- e) Genesis 50:22-26
 - i) Joseph told his family that he was going to die and that God was going to visit them and take them out of Egypt.
 - ii) Joseph told them to take his bones with them into Canaan.
- f) 25% of the book of Genesis is about the life of Joseph.
 - i) Out of everything included in the book of Genesis on the life of Joseph, the New Testament commented on one thing: that he wanted his family to carry his bones with them.
 - (1) Hebrews 11:22
 - (a) Joseph, by faith, reminded the children of Israel that they were leaving Egypt and going to Canaan.
- g) Joseph was still practicing the presence of God in the time of death.
- h) There are three main points we find in this passage in Genesis that will help us practice the presence of God in the time of death.

2) REMEMBER THE UNBREAKABLE PROMISES OF GOD (Genesis 50:24)

- a) We won't have any peace at the time of death unless we have promises to stand on.
- b) It was by faith that Joseph mentioned leaving Egypt and by faith that he told them to take his bones with them.
 - i) Hebrews 11:22
 - ii) Joseph had the Word of God.
 - (1) Romans 10:17
 - (2) More than 300 years prior to Joseph's statements, God had made a promise to Abraham.



- (a) Joseph knew of this promise.
 - (i) Genesis 15:13-14
 - iii) Joseph's faith was rooted in an unshakeable, unbreakable promise of God.
 - c) There is no possible way we can practice the presence of God in the time of death without faith.
 - i) What is faith?
 - (1) Faith is not positive thinking.
 - (2) Faith is not following a hunch.
 - (3) Faith is not hoping for the best.
 - (4) Faith is not a feeling of optimism.
 - (5) Faith is not self-confidence.
 - (6) Faith is not wishing upon a star.
 - (7) Faith is getting a word from God and believing it.
 - ii) Hebrews 11:1
 - (1) The word "hope" does not mean "maybe so" or "perhaps so;" hope in the Bible means rock-ribbed assurance based on the Word of God.
 - (a) The Second Coming of Jesus is called the blessed hope.
 - (i) This does not mean a blessed maybe or a blessed perhaps; it means absolute assurance based on the Word of God.
 - iii) Faith is the substance of the absolute assurance based on the Word of God.
 - (1) God made a promise to Abraham, and God cannot lie.
 - (2) Joseph, in the time of death, could smile at death because he had the unbreakable promise of God.
 - iv) Faith is not naming it and claiming it.
 - (1) You cannot claim it until God names it.
 - v) Faith is standing on the promises of God.
 - d) Joseph had much faith because he had soaked his soul in the Word of God.
 - e) Genesis 50:24
 - i) God took an oath.
 - ii) God cannot lie.
- 3) REST IN THE UNSHAKEABLE POWER OF GOD (Genesis 50:24)
 - a) The promises without the power mean nothing.
 - b) Genesis 50:24
 - i) Joseph could be so sure because God is the Almighty God.
 - c) Faith is not shaken by appearances or reason.
 - i) At the time Joseph quoted the promise that God had made, there was no reason, based on appearances, for them to think of ever leaving Egypt.
 - (1) Joseph was the prime minister in Egypt.
 - (2) There was no famine in Egypt, and they were in a place of privileged position.
 - ii) We should never take any promise of God and parade it past the judgment bar of our reason.



- (1) We should not re-examine the Word of God in the light of present-day circumstances.
 - iii) Joseph's faith was unshaken in the face of human reasoning.
 - d) Faith is not shaken by emotion.
 - i) Emotions don't really matter when it comes to God's Word.
 - (1) In today's passage, nothing is said about Joseph's emotions.
 - ii) Feelings come and go, and they can be deceiving.
 - (1) The Bible is the Word of God; nothing else is worth believing.
 - iii) Do not take counsel with your emotions as to whether or not a promise of God is true.
 - (1) Emotions are the shallowest part of our nature; salvation is the deepest work of God.
 - (a) God does not do the deepest work in the shallowest part.
 - iv) The Bible does not have much to say about our feelings.
 - v) We need to place our confidence in the unshakable power of God and not in our reasoning or emotions.
 - vi) John 5:24
 - vii) It is the Word of God and not our feelings that gives assurance.
 - e) Faith is not shaken by delay.
 - i) The promise that Joseph was standing on was 300 years old.
 - (1) It would still be centuries yet before the children of Israel would leave Egypt.
 - ii) Faith can wait.
 - (1) Habakkuk 2:3
 - iii) Ezekiel 26:3, 12-14
 - (1) God made a prophecy concerning the ancient nation of Tyre.
 - (2) Though it looked like the prophecy was not going to be fulfilled literally, hundreds of years later it was fulfilled.
 - iv) Joseph did not try to allegorize the Scriptures.
 - v) When God says He is going to do something, He is going to do it and do it literally.
 - vi) Many people missed the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ because they tried to explain it away.
 - (1) When the Bible said that He would be born of a virgin, He was.
 - (2) When the Bible said that He would be born in Bethlehem, He was.
 - (3) Jesus' second coming will be just that real.
 - vii) Delays mean nothing.
 - (1) Many people question why the Lord Jesus hasn't yet returned.
 - (a) The Bible addresses this very thing.
 - (i) 2 Peter 3:4
 - (b) But the day of the Lord will come.
 - (i) 2 Peter 3:10
 - (c) 2 Peter 3:8
 - f) What God says He will do, He will do.
- 4) RECEIVE THE UNMISTAKABLE PEACE OF GOD (Exodus 13:19)
- a) Joseph's faith was rewarded.



- i) Moses took Joseph's bones with him out of Egypt.
 - (1) Exodus 13:19
 - ii) Moses did not get to go all the way into Canaan, so Joshua finished the task and took Joseph's bones into the promised land.
 - (1) Joshua 24:32
 - (a) Shechem is where Abraham was buried.
 - (b) Just as Joseph had faith to believe, it was done.
 - iii) It always happens as God promises that it will happen.
 - b) It was important to Joseph that the children of Israel take his bones with them out of Egypt because Joseph wanted to be a part of what God was doing.
 - i) Joseph was a wealthy man and could have had a monument built for him in Egypt, but he instead built a monument of faith.
 - (1) He had wealth, and God could trust him with it.
 - ii) Many people live for this world, but Joseph wanted to be a part of what God was doing.
 - (1) All of the success of Egypt meant nothing to Joseph; he wanted to leave a monument of faith.
 - (a) It's possible that Joseph knew that God was not finished with his bones.
 - c) There will be a great getting-up morning one day.
 - i) Daniel 12:2
 - ii) John 5:28-29
 - d) Joseph knew that one day, the voice of the Son of God is going to speak, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
 - i) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
 - e) When we know the Lord and know the unbreakable promises of God and the unshakeable power of God, we will then experience the undeniable peace of God when it comes time to die.
- 5) CONCLUSION
- a) Joseph left a legacy to his brothers.
 - i) Every time they saw the coffin containing Joseph's bones, they were reminded of the brevity of life and the length of eternity.
 - ii) If they were living in prosperity, those bones reminded them that they would have to leave it all one day.
 - iii) If they were living in adversity, those bones reminded them that there is a better day coming.
 - b) 2 Corinthians 6:2
 - c) Proverbs 27:1
 - d) Every coffin and every funeral that we see are reminders to us that today is the day of salvation.
 - e) When we give our hearts to the Lord Jesus, then we can smile at death.
 - i) Have you given your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ?
 - f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into



your life.

- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Take your Bibles. Find Genesis chapter 50. Genesis, as you know, is the first book; chapter 50 is the last chapter in the first book. And we're coming to the closing verses in the book of Genesis and the life of Joseph, and in a moment, we're going to begin reading in verse 22. The title of the message in our thought today, "God's Presence in the Hour of Death."

Man is the only creature who knows he's going to die, and he's trying desperately to forget it. I believe that's the reason that some ladies, when they reach a certain age, overdo the cosmetics. I believe that's the reason that some guys get that sports car. They're trying to hold on to that youth that is slipping away and receding over the horizon.

And you know, the fear of death keeps people in bondage, did you know that? Let me give you a verse of Scripture, even before we read from Genesis. It's found in Hebrews chapter 2 verses 14 and 15. It speaks of Jesus who became a human being. And He came to this earth for one purpose and that is to destroy the works of the devil, and listen to this. The Bible says, "And He also likewise took part of the same," that is, flesh and blood, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death," that is the devil, "and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Now you think about that. He came to deliver those who, through fear of death, all of their lifetime were in bondage. May I tell you something? You are not ready to live until you're no longer afraid to die. You're not ready to live until you're no longer afraid to die. And Jesus came to deliver you from that bondage of fear.

A child of God can smile at death. That's what Joseph did. And I want you to read the Scripture here, Genesis 50 beginning in verse 22, "And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years." But he still died. One hundred and ten years. But, you know, he was a great man, but he still died. And no matter who you are and how great you are, you're going to die. The only exception to that, possible exception, is that if Jesus were to come before death.

Let's read now in Genesis 50 verses 23 to 25, "And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation." And then skip to verse 24, "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die." That's a pretty flat statement, isn't it? I die. "And God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swear to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." That is, God's going to take you out of Egypt and God's going to bring you into Canaan. "And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel," his brothers, "saying, 'God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.'" That is, "God's going to come. He's going to take you out of Egypt. He's going to bring you to the Promised Land, and when He does, you take my bones with you. I wouldn't be caught dead here. Now, when you go, you take my bones with you." Now notice verse 26 of Genesis 50, "So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."

Now, was that important? That little statement, "God's going to visit you. He's going to take you out of Egypt. And when He takes you, you take my bones with you, will you please? Just carry me out



of Egypt into Canaan.” Question: was that important? You better believe it was important. Remember that 25% of the book of Genesis is given to the life of Joseph. And when the New Testament comments on the life of Joseph, do you know what one thing the New Testament commented on in the life of Joseph? It’s an amazing thing. This statement, that, “You carry my bones with you.”

Put in your margin Hebrews 11 verse 22, and listen to what it says. Hebrews 11 verse 22, “By faith, by faith, Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones.” Now, of all of the things that could have been written about the life of Joseph, by faith, the Bible says, he reminded them that they were clearing out of Egypt, they were going to Canaan, and he made mention of his bones, and he did it by faith.

Now we’re going to talk today about the blessing in a box of bones. I’ll give you a skeleton outline, all right? We’re going to talk about the blessing that is in that box of bones. Here Joseph is saying, “Look, I’m leaving here. I’m going with you. I’ll be dead, but I’m going with you. We’re clearing out of here. No longer are we going to be in Egypt. We’re going out. And when you go, you take my bones with you.” He’s still practicing the presence of God. Now he’s practicing the presence of God in the time of death.

Would you like to be able to smile at death? When your feet touch those chilly waters of Jordan, when loved ones around your bedside, when they’re talking in hushed tones, if that’s the way you go, would you like to have the assurance that Joseph had so long ago?

Three things I lay on your heart that come out of this passage of Scripture if you would practice the presence of God in the time of death. The first thought: we need to remember the unbreakable promises of God. Now, you’re not going to have any peace at the time of death unless you have some promises to stand on. We need to remember. Get it down in your heart now. Let God the Holy Spirit write this on your heart. We need to remember the unbreakable promises of God. Now, how could Joseph do all of this? The Bible says in Hebrews 11, remember that he said it was by faith that he made mention of leaving Egypt. It was by faith that he said take my bones with you. You see, Joseph had the Word of God.

Remember what the book of Romans tells us in Romans 10 verse 17? “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” Well, what had God said? Listen, more than three hundred years before Joseph said what he said, God had made a promise. God made a promise to Abraham. Three centuries ago, God said something to Abraham and Joseph knew it, and that’s the reason Joseph said what he said. What did God say to Abraham? Put in your margin Genesis chapter 15 verses 13 and 14, “And He said unto Abram,” that is, God the Father. Abraham’s name was Abram at that time, “Know of a surety,” that is, you can bank on it, “that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs,” that is, you’re going to Egypt, “and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.” That’s what God said.

“Abram, I’m going to make a great nation of you, but your descendants are going down to a place, a land that’s not theirs. They’re going to stay there four hundred years. And after they stay there four hundred years, they are coming out, and when they come out, they’re going to come out



very wealthy." Now Joseph knew this. Joseph knew this. And that's the reason Joseph said what he said by faith. His faith was rooted in an unshakeable, unbreakable promise of God.

Now, do you want to smile at death? Do you want to practice the presence of God in the time of death? There's no possible way you can do it without faith. And what is faith? Let me tell you again what faith is. Faith is not positive thinking. Now I love positive thinking, but that's not faith. Faith is not following a hunch. Sometimes our hunches are good, but that's not faith. Faith is not hoping for the best. I hope you hope for the best, but that's not faith. Faith is not a feeling of optimism. I love optimists, but that's not faith. Faith is not self-confidence. Self-confidence is all right if your confidence is first in the Lord. Faith is not wishing upon a star. What is faith? Faith is getting a word from God and believing it.

Hebrews 11 and verse 1, that same chapter of Hebrews, it says, "By faith, Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones." Hebrews 11 verse 1 tells us what that faith is. It says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." That word hope, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for," does not mean maybe so, perhaps so. Hope in the Bible means rock-ribbed assurance based on the Word of God.

The Second Coming of Jesus is called the blessed what? Hope. That doesn't mean a blessed maybe, a blessed perhaps. It means absolute assurance based on the Word of God. Faith is the substance of the absolute assurance based on the Word of God. God had made a promise to Abram. God cannot lie. Joseph, therefore, in the time of death, could smile at death because he had the unbreakable promises of God.

Now, what is faith? Faith, friend, is not naming it and claiming it. You can't claim it until God names it. Faith is standing on the promises of God. "Well," you say, "How come Joseph had so much faith and I have so little?" Well, Joseph had soaked his soul in the Word of God.

There was another preacher, other than Billy Graham, in another century, but he was as well-known as Billy Graham. His name was Dwight L. Moody. Dwight L. Moody was not an educated, seminary-trained man, but Moody, it is said in his biography, said he took two continents; North America and Europe, and shook them for God. Moody was a man of great faith. He gave this testimony concerning his faith. He said, "I wanted faith." He said, "I prayed for faith, I prayed for faith, I prayed for faith, I prayed for faith, but," he said, "my faith didn't grow." Then he said, "I read in the book of Romans that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," and he said, "I stopped asking God for faith. I got in the Bible. I saturated my soul with the Word of God, and," he said, "My faith began to grow and to grow and to grow."

Now, do you want to be able to smile at death? Do you want to practice the presence of God in the time of death? Then remember the unbreakable promises of God.

Notice in Genesis 50 verse 24, look at it again, "And Joseph said unto his brethren, 'I die; and God will surely visit you, bring you out of this land into the land,'" now watch, "'which He swear to Abraham.'" Underscore that, "He swear to Abraham." God took an oath. If one promise in the Word of God fails, God loses His character. Friend, God can't lie. Remember that.

So, what's the first thing? We need to remember the unbreakable promises of God. Have you



got it? Okay. Second thing: we need to rest in the unshakeable power of God. You see, the promises without the power mean nothing. Now, notice what He says in verse 24. He says, "God will surely bring you out." How could he be so sure? Because God is God. He is the Almighty God. Now let me tell you something else about faith.

You see, faith is not shaken by appearances. You think about it. When Joseph quoted this promise that God had made, from all appearances, there was no reason for them to think of ever leaving Egypt. They were ensconced there. Joseph was the prime minister there. They had it good there. They were living a life of ease. They had come from the land of Canaan to Egypt because of a famine. There's no famine now in Egypt. They're in a place of privileged position. Don't you take any promise of God and parade it past the judgment bar of your reason. Don't say, "Well, we'd better re-examine the Word of God in the light of present-day circumstances." It was unshaken in the face of human reasoning. Also, it was unshakeable in the place of human emotion.

You know, emotions don't really matter when it comes to God's Word. Now, in the passage in front of us, nothing is said about Joseph's emotions one way or the other. I don't know what they were, but I want to tell you, they really did not matter that much. Feelings come and feelings go and feelings are deceiving. The Bible is the Word of God, naught else is worth believing.

Don't take counsel with your emotions as to whether or not a promise of God is true. I've told you before that your emotions are the shallowest part of your nature. Salvation is the deepest work of God. God doesn't do the deepest work in the shallowest part. Forget your emotions. The Bible doesn't have a whole lot to say about your feelings. Put your confidence in the unshakeable power of God, not your reasoning and not your emotions.

Martin Luther, the great reformer, had an encounter with Satan. It seemed like Satan was just face to face with him. And Satan said to Luther, "Do you feel your sins are forgiven?" Luther says, "It doesn't matter how I feel, it's what God says." I like that.

I read a corresponding story, very different, but almost the same, of a young man, a little boy, really, went to a revival, a crusade. And in this revival crusade, the preacher preached from John chapter 5 verse 24, "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." The boy believed that message, gave his heart to Christ, and was saved, but he said, and he gave this testimony later on as a mature Christian. He said, "That night, when I walked home," he said, "it seemed as if Satan was perched on my shoulder, whispering in my ear, saying 'You're not saved, you're not good enough, you're not strong enough, you didn't do this, you didn't do that, you'll never make it,'" And he said, he went home and Satan kept taunting him. And the little fellow said, "I sat on the couch in our living room." And he said, "It seemed as though Satan were under the couch he was that real." And he said, "I got to thinking, well, maybe I'm not saved. I'd better look at that verse again." And he picked it up and re-read John 5 verse 24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." He said, "Well, Jesus is speaking." "He that heareth My Word." He said, "I've heard it." "And believed on Him that sent Me." He said, "I believed." "Has everlasting life." He said, "I have everlasting life. There, devil, read it for yourself!" Put his finger on the verse, put it under the couch. He said from that moment, from that moment he had the



assurance. You see, it is the Word of God, not your feelings, that give that assurance.

Now I'll tell you something else. Faith is not shaken by reason, it is not shaken by emotion, it is not shaken by delay. The promise that Joseph was standing on was already 300 years old, and Joseph now is talking of his bones. It will be centuries yet to come before they go out. Did you know that faith can wait? I love that passage in Habakkuk chapter 2 and verse 3, "For the vision is for yet, is yet for an appointed time, but at the end, it shall speak and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come." Is that not a great verse? Listen to it again, "For the vision is yet for an appointed time," God has His appointed times, "but at the end, it shall speak and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

In preparing this message, I thought about how God sometimes delays, and I thought about a prophecy He made concerning ancient Tyre, which was a nation just north of Israel on the seacoast of the Mediterranean. And here's what God said concerning ancient Tyre. Put this down. Ezekiel 26 verse 3, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God: 'Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causes his waves to come up.'"

Now they were on the seacoast; they could understand this. And then in Ezekiel 26 verses 12 through 14, "And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise," now listen to this, "and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses; and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water. And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease, and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I will make thee," listen to this, "like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon, thou shalt be built no more; for I the Lord, have spoken it, saith the Lord God."

Now God says, "Look, Tyre, you're so high and mighty, so wealthy, so luxurious. I'll tell you what I'm going to do to you. I'm going to bring a number of nations against you, and what's going to happen is this. I'm going to take your beautiful houses, your temples, your timbers, all of it, I'm going to take it and wipe it out. I'm going to cast it into the sea, even the dust. The only thing'll be left of you will be a place where fishermen will spread their nets."

Now, about 550 BC, Nebuchadnezzar came, and he came against the nation of Tyre. And when the people saw Nebuchadnezzar coming, they knew they could not defeat this Babylonian monarch. And so, there was an island just off the coast and the people fled to the island and they left the city. Well, there in ancient Tyre, the walls were still there, the ruins of the buildings were still there, the ancient timbers were still there. It was not like the top of a rock. It looked like Ezekiel's prophecy really was not going to be fulfilled literally, actually. But more than 200 years later, Alexander the Great came.

Now the people of Tyre had gone out to this island and they built the strongest navy in the world, and they had a great navy there. Alexander the Great had no navy, but he had a great army. Alexander the Great asked for help from the people of Tyre. They said, "Nope, we're not going to help you. We have it fine out here on our island nation. We're not going to help you." That infuriated Alexander the Great. He decided he would do something. He couldn't sail out there, but he decided he would do something. He said, "I'm going to build a causeway out to you. I'm coming after you."

And he told his soldiers, he said, "We're building a causeway out to that island. We're going



to march on that island." "Well, where are we going to get the materials?" He said, "You see these timbers? You see these stones? You see these walls? Take them and build a causeway." And they built a causeway from the coast of the Mediterranean out to the island where the city of Tyre was. They took all of the stones, all of the rocks, all the timber, all the dirt, all the dust, and when they'd finished it was as bald as a rock, and the fishermen there would spread their nets on that rock.

Friend, listen. I'm glad that Joseph didn't try to allegorize the Scriptures. I'm glad that he did not try to spiritualize the Scriptures. When God says He's going to do something, He's going to do it. It may take 500 years, but He's going to do it. He's going to do it. And He's going to do it literally.

"Do you believe in the literal Second Coming of Jesus Christ, Adrian?" Of course I do. I believe Jesus Christ is coming back to this earth actually, literally, visibly, bodily. Many people missed His first coming because they tried to explain away the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the first time. When the Bible said He would be born of a virgin, He was! When the Bible said He'd be born in Bethlehem, He was! And I'll tell you, His Second Coming is going to be just that real. I like what the little girl said, "If God didn't mean what He said, why didn't He say what He meant." No, delay means nothing.

People are saying, "Well, Pastor, you believe Jesus is coming again? Why hasn't He come?" Well, the Bible speaks of people who say things like that, and Peter says in Second Peter 3 verse 4, "Many shall say, 'Where's the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were.'" But Peter says in verse 10, "The day of the Lord will surely come." And then in verse 8, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years; a thousand years as one day."

Now, let's move to the third and final thing, if you would learn to smile at death. Now, listen, first of all, what do you do? You remember the unbreakable promises of God. And you rest in the unshakeable power of God. What God says He will do, He will do. I hope you believe that. You see, God will surely bring you out. That's what Joseph said. All right, His unshakeable power.

And then receive the unmistakable peace of God, the unmistakable peace of God. That's the third thing. You see, was Joseph's faith rewarded? Put these Scriptures down in your margin. Exodus chapter 13, beginning in verse 19, "And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him." When Moses was getting ready to go, he said, "All right. Go get that coffin. Get old Joe. Load him up on that wagon." And when they said, "We're, we're clearing out. Hi Ho. Let's go. Take his bones." And there's old Joseph's coffin riding along.

Well, Moses didn't get to go all the way into Canaan. Who was it that led them into Canaan? It was Joshua. And, you read in the book of Joshua chapter 24 verse 32, "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem." Shechem is where Abram was buried. And so, they're taking the bones of Joseph. And Moses brought them across the burning sands of the Sinai and Joshua carries them across Jordan into Shechem, and there the bones are buried there in Shechem. Just as Joseph had faith to believe, it was done, it was done. It always happens as God promises that it will happen.

Well, why did Joseph say, "Take my bones with you?" I mean, why is that so important? I mean, after all, he was dead. Well, you see, Joseph wanted to be a part of what God was doing.

Have you ever seen the tombs in Egypt? I've been to Egypt on a number of occasions to see



some of those tombs. I've been inside the Great Pyramid. Incredible! Have you seen all of the accouterments that belonged to the king, old King Tut? If you go to the London Museum and see all of those sarcophagi and see those mummies there in the London Museum. It's something to see. Boy, I'm glad you can't find one of Joseph in there. I mean, Joseph was not a materialist. He had all of this wealth. He could have built a monument, and a colossal monument. He built a better monument, a monument of faith. Now, he had wealth, but God could trust him with it.

I heard about a lawyer. Got him a BMW, always wanted one, was so proud of it. Just when he opened the door to get out, a car came along and sideswiped it, tore the door off while he was opening the door. He said, "Oh no, oh, no, my Beamer, oh, no." A policeman said, "Man, are you crazy? You're worrying about that door. Look, it ripped your left arm off." "Oh," he said, "oh, no, my Rolex!" Got a lot like that. They're living for this world, this world only. Joseph, he was wanting to be a part of what God was doing. You know, all of the success of Egypt meant nothing to him. He wanted to leave a monument of faith. You know, he knew. I believe that he knew that God was not finished with his bones.

Let me give you a couple of Scriptures. Daniel 12 verse 2, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," talking about Joseph now, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." There's a great getting up morning, isn't there? What did Jesus say? John chapter 5 verses 28 and 29, "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." There's a getting up morning.

I think when they lowered that coffin into the ground there at Shechem, if you listen, you can hear a little laughter coming from those bones. Maybe a chuckle from a knuckle; and a little glee from a knee, and a grin from a shin, as they put those bones into the ground. Joseph knew that one of these days the voice of the Son of God is going to speak, and the dead in Christ will rise first, and we which remain and are alive will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air.

You see, folks, if you know the Lord, and you know the unbreakable promises of God, the unshakeable power of God, you will experience that undeniable peace of God when it comes time to die. And you know every time those people saw those bones, there's that coffin, what did he leave to his brothers? Every time they saw that, they were reminded of the brevity of life, the length of eternity. And if they were living in prosperity, those bones reminded them that one of these days they had to leave it all. And if they were living in adversity, those bones reminded them that there is a better day coming.

There was a preacher in Texas, Joe Henry Hankins. Joe Henry Hankins preached and the wife of a very successful businessman came to faith in Christ. Hankins thought he would go and visit the businessman. So he went by, and said, "Your wife has been saved. She's going to be baptized Sunday night. I'd like to baptize the two of you together. I want you to give your heart to Christ." The businessman put him off a little bit, but the preacher began to press, and say, "No, sir, you need to



be saved.”

After, there was this encounter that many times soul winners have. The businessman said, “Preacher, I’ll tell you what. It’s Saturday, tomorrow morning I’ll come to church. You give the invitation. I’ll be the first one down that aisle. I will accept Christ as my personal Savior. And that night, when my wife is baptized, I’ll be baptized with her.” The preacher said, “Great, wonderful,” and he started out, put his hand on the doorknob, and he said, “No, wait a minute. Something’s wrong here, something’s wrong.”

Turned around and he went back to that man whose name was Pat, and he said, “Pat, listen. If you’re going to do it tomorrow morning, why not now? Why don’t you just pray now and give your heart to Jesus and come and make it public tomorrow morning?” The businessman said, “Look, preacher. I’m a man of my word. If I say I’m going to do it tomorrow morning, I’m going to do it tomorrow morning. You can bank on it.” The preacher said, “Well, all right.”

He started out again the second time, got his hand on the doorknob, and he knew something was not right. He took out his New Testament and opened it up to Second Corinthians chapter 6 verse 2, the Scripture that said, “Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation.” He said, “Pat, this is what God says. The devil says tomorrow, God says today. Has ever a man anywhere ever done wrong by doing what God says, and has a man ever anywhere done right by doing what Satan says?” The man was taken back a little bit. He said, “Preacher.” The preacher put the Scripture in his hand and said, “You read it. ‘Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.’” The man slammed his hand into his fist and he said, “Preacher, you’re right. The devil has never done anything good for me but lie to me. This is what God says. I’m going to do it now.” And they slipped down on their knees, and Pat prayed and gave his heart to Jesus Christ. Hankins left that house.

When he was having breakfast in the morning, the phone rang. It was Pat’s nephew. He said, “Preacher, they wanted me to call, Pat wanted me to call you. He’s had a heart attack. He said he’s not coming to church this morning, but he wanted you to know that he’s not failing to keep his word. He’s just, he’s had a little heart attack. We think he’ll be better.” They had the service that morning.

When Hankins was having lunch that Sunday, the phone rang again. This time it was a sister-in-law. Said, “Preacher, you need to know that he’s had another heart attack, this one very serious.” Then before Hankins could get up and go to the hospital to visit, the phone rang the third time. They said, “You don’t need to come right away. He’s gone. He’s dead. But, preacher, Pat said to be sure to tell you that he was so glad you encouraged him to give his heart to Jesus Christ last night.” So glad. Friend, the Bible says in Proverbs 27 verse 1, “Boast not thyself of tomorrow; thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

And every box of bones that you see, every casket that you see, every funeral that you see reminds you today is the day of salvation. Give your heart to Jesus and you can smile at death.

Will you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. And if you don’t know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, you can be saved today. I’m not talking about being a Baptist or a Methodist or something like that. I’m not talking about doing better. I’m talking



about being saved, knowing Christ as your personal Savior. Now you need to understand that you're a sinner. Your sin deserves judgment. If you die in your sin, you'll die and be lost in hell forever. But if you will repent of your sin and receive Jesus Christ, by faith, as your Lord and Savior, you will be saved. For the Bible says clearly and plainly in Acts chapter 16 verse 31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll be saved." The word believe doesn't mean intellectual belief alone. It means trust. Trust Him.

Would you like to do that? All right I want you to pray. Pray a prayer like this, "Dear God," that's right, just speak to Him in your heart, in the precincts of your soul, speak to Him. "Dear God, I am a sinner. I am lost." That might be hard for you to say because pride doesn't want to say that. But if you're not saved, you are lost. "I'm lost and I need to be saved and I want to be saved." And I hope that you do want to be saved. "Jesus, You died to save me. You promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You, Jesus." Would you do that? Would you put your faith where God put your sins, on Jesus? "I do trust You, Jesus, right now, this moment with my heart. I'm not asking for a feeling, I'm not looking for a sign. I stand on Your Word. I trust You to save me, now. Thank You for doing it. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be because I'm weak, but You're strong. I will live for You the rest of my life, not in order to be saved, that is a gift that I have received. I will live for You because I am saved. And I will not be ashamed of You. I will make this public. I will not be ashamed of You. I love You, Jesus, my Lord and my Savior. Amen."



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