

# My Last Sermon

By J. H. Anderson

***You don't have to do anything to be lost, for you are in a lost condition now. The Indiana State evangelist offers the third of a series of sermons presumably preached to an audience of believers and unbelievers who never will be seen again by the speaker***

MY FRIENDS, I am glad to see such a large crowd present, as I shall not be able to meet you again in this life. I am anxious to bring you a message that will, if we give heed to it, open up the way for us to meet in the kingdom of God where we shall enjoy all the good things that God can give us (Psalm 84:11). So I invite your attention to the words of the Savior found in Matthew 7:13, 14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth *unto life*, and few there be that find it."

Friends, in all ages God has set two things before the people, *life and death*. In the Garden of Eden He put life and death before Adam and Eve, life in the tree of life and death in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. See Genesis 2:15-17; 3:17-24. They disobeyed and brought sin and death on themselves and all their descendants (Rom. 5:12). In Deuteronomy 30:15 we find these words: "See: I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil." Turning to Jeremiah 21:8, we find the words: "Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death." Our text puts before us life and death. In Romans 6:23, Paul puts life and death before us. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." So you see, my friends, it's life on one side, death on the other.

What does God mean by life, death? Let's find His answer. "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing" (Eccl. 9:5). "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4). Then, friends, eternal life means to exist forever as intelligent, living being. Death means to go back to the dust, a place where one does not know anything. Christ came into the world that we might have eternal life, never perish. Please read John 10:10, 27, 28.

This eternal life will be given to God's people through Christ at the resurrection (Col. 3:1-4). Without a resurrection of the dead all will perish. Please turn and read I Corinthians 15:12-18 and you will see that all depends upon the resurrection of the dead. No hope in death, no reward in death, but in the resurrection of the righteous dead, translation of the righteous living. "For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." No reward at death, but at the coming of Jesus. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

Friends, to understand the terms upon which God will give eternal life you *must* understand that you are mortal, under the sentence of death, and that unless God gives you eternal life you cannot live anywhere. You don't have an immortal soul, you are a living soul that will soon be a dead soul unless you get eternal life. Take your Bible and study the following passages and you will see that these statements are true: Job 4:17; Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 18:4, 20; James 5:20; John 10:27, 28.

Then, friends, what must we do to receive the gift of eternal life, be saved from the sleep of everlasting death? You will see in Ezekiel 33:8-11 that a great responsibility rests upon the minister and in Acts 20:16-28 how Paul was made free of this responsibility. Then, my friends, permit me to clear myself by pointing out the terms of salvation. I see many in the congregation that have never made a profession. I see others that have. Let us then consider this question first for the unconverted man, then we will consider it for the church member.

My unconverted friend, you don't have to do anything to be lost, for you are in a lost condition now. Read Ephesians 2:11, 12 and you will see your condition, no Savior, no hope. The first thing for you to do is to study God's Word and find out what you must believe, do, to be saved (John 5:39). We find in Hebrews 11:6 that one must have faith to please God. Faith is the belief of a definite message, the gospel. It comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 1:16; 10:17; Mark 16:15,16). Gospel is good news. There is only one gospel (Gal. 3:8). Christ sent His apostles to preach it to every creature and said: "He that believeth and is baptized *shall 1)e saved. : but he that believeth not shall be damned*" (Mark 16:15,16).

You can find *the* gospel in Genesis 17:1-8; 22:16-18. Two promises: (1) "To thee and thy seed I will give the land (the earth-Romans 4:13) for an everlasting possession" (Gen. 17:8). (2) "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22:18). These promises are the gospel (Gal. 3:8). To give the earth to Abraham and his seed for an everlasting possession Christ had to die, be buried, resurrected, come again. So in I Corinthians 15:1-8 Paul points out these great truths as gospel. The seed to whom the gospel was given are Christ and His people (Gal. 3:26-29). To make good the gospel promise the seed now in the death state will have to be resurrected, the living seed translated. Please read I Corinthians 15:12-18, 50-54. To have the resurrection and translation Christ must come. These blessings will come in the kingdom (Isa.25:6-10). So in the gospel we have the good news of the kingdom, not another gospel, but the one preached to Abraham (Gal. 1:6-12).

This is what we must believe. This is the one faith. We are saved by this belief *if* we obey it (Mark 16:15,16). Now what must we do? "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). In John 10:9 Jesus declares that He is the door and that anyone who comes in by Him shall be saved. In I Corinthians 15:22, Paul points out that in Christ we shall be made alive. Friends, as my time is nearly up I shall ask you to turn and read all these passages. How may I come into Jesus, the way, the door? First I must repent, reform, turn from evil to righteousness. Read Acts 2:37,38; 2 Cor. 7:6-10; Matt. 12:41; Jonah 3 :7-10. This reformation is caused by the goodness of God (Rom. 2:4). Now, based on the one faith, followed by repentance, we come into Christ by baptism in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:37, 38; Rom. 6:1-5; Gal. 3:26-29). There is no other way given in the Bible by which we can come into Christ, the door. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). How can we get rid of our past sins? Let Peter and Paul answer (Acts 2 :37, 38 ; 22 :16). This is the only way for us to receive pardon for past sins.

Now, church members, there is yet a work for those in Christ to do. In John 15:1-7 the Savior points out that every branch that does not bear fruit shall be taken out of the vine (Christ). In Matthew 25:14-30 we learn that those who serve God will get the reward and that the others will be cast out. Christ has promised to save those that endure to the end (Matt. 10:22). In 2 Peter 1:4-12 we have pointed out the steps we must take to enter the kingdom, get eternal life. Friends, let me urge you to take the Word which is able to make you wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15-17). Accept it as God's word (I Thess. 2 :13). God wants obedience (I Sam. 15:22). We must be a separate people (2Cor. 6: 14-18).

It is eternal life in the kingdom to obey. It is everlasting destruction to disobey, keep in the broad way (Matt. 7:13, 14; 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:7-10).

Now, my friends, as I bid you farewell, may I express the hope that you will give heed to the message and that we may meet in God's kingdom?

I feel that now I am clear in God's sight, and I wish to close the service with Paul's words in Acts 20:25-27. "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Father, in Christ's name we ask Thee to bless this message to Thy glory. Amen.

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