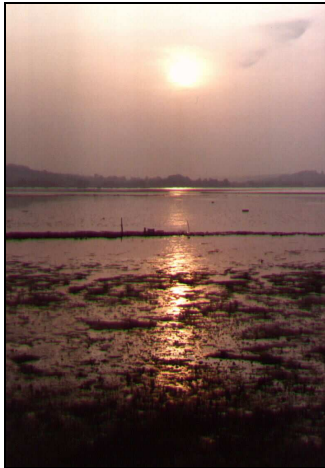


## Planning For The Future



Most people make plans for their future. They plan to do this or that, to go here and there. They plan what to do, what to buy and where to visit. As they get older they may go to great lengths to plan for their retirement, investing in pensions and planning what they will do with their time.

But whereas most will spend much time planning for something which is not certain to come about, few give much thought to that event which *is* certain - their *death*.

Yes, death is something which affects us all. We can't escape it. Time rolls on towards our life's conclusion. The Word of God, the Bible, tells us that "*...it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*" (Hebrews 9:27).

So, it is certain that we will die. But why? Why do we die? It is because of our sin, because of our rebellion against the God who made us and placed us upon this earth. We have all ignored God, we have all lived our lives for our own desires, indeed most live as though God doesn't even exist. Turning our backs upon God we sin, and the ultimate consequence of

sin, which we see all about in the world around us is death.

The Bible tells us that there is therefore a day coming when we will all stand before our Maker and be judged according to our deeds - good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10). And who among us can claim to be truly good in all things? None of us. We all deserve God's anger for our enmity towards Him, for our pride, for our selfishness, for our *sin*. God is just and sin does not go unnoticed - it results in death, both physically and spiritually.

So if death affects us all, if we are all to die, then ought we not to give our eternal destiny some thought? Ought we not to be prepared?

Well, thankfully, what men and women fail to plan for God has already determined. The Bible tells us that God knows the end from the beginning. He already knows the eternal destiny of every one of us and He has already prepared for eternity to come.

Indeed such was God's love for His creation that before ever He brought this world into existence He chose a people unto whom He

would give everlasting life. Despite the fall of mankind into sin and rebellion against its Maker, in time God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, into this world to save sinners, to save a people, to deliver them from death and from the consequences of their own sin.

When men took Jesus Christ and nailed Him to a cross to crucify Him they knew not what they did. They knew not just what they were doing. But in their desire to slay this Man who troubled them, this worker of miracles, this Man who declared Himself to be the Son of God, they unknowingly fulfilled the plan of God to save His people from their sins. In death Jesus Christ performed His greatest work - He wrought everlasting salvation for all His blood-bought people.

On the cross Christ died for the ungodly whilst they were yet in their sins. He died that they might live. He took the punishment due to all His people upon Himself, that they might be delivered from death and have everlasting life. That's right, *everlasting life*.

Christ paid the price for sin that His people deserved to pay. As a result they receive a gift

more precious than anything which money can buy - eternal life; salvation from sin; deliverance from death and eternal judgement.

Whereas we may fail to plan for our eternal future God planned to save His people before they were ever born and by dying in their place Jesus Christ, the Son of God, saved each and every one of them... *for ever*.

Yes, Jesus Christ gave Himself for those He loved that they might live forever. By His death He brought in righteousness and everlasting life for all those who believe in Him and in His blood shed to wash them from their sins. The life which Christ brought in for all those who have faith in Him is *eternal life*, and it is a *gift* (*Romans 6:23*). It is *given* freely. There is nothing to do to earn this life, nothing to pay because Christ has already paid for it (*Isaiah 55:1*). No, there is nothing to do but *believe*.

Reader, I ask you, what do you know of salvation by the death of Jesus Christ? Are you one of His people for whom He died? One of those people who, repenting of their sin have fled from the wrath to come unto Christ their refuge; one of those who believe in Him, His

mercy and His sacrifice upon the cross, freely made for them to give them eternal life? Are you one who has believed on Jesus Christ and His salvation?

Those who *have* fled to Christ are secure in Him - they are freed from death and everlasting judgement, they have a sure and a certain future. They have *eternal life*.

But what of you? Are you Christ's? What does your future hold?

*"...Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."*

*1 Corinthians 2:9*

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