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If you have an extra \$200,000 lying around, do you know what you can buy? Immortality. At least, that's what some people believe. Through a process called cryonics, after you die, your body will be placed inside a large metal tank filled with liquid nitrogen at -320° F, effectively freezing your body to preserve it for decades, centuries, maybe even millennia. Since the late 60s, around 300 people have had their bodies cryonically frozen after death, and about 1,500 more living people have arranged for it. Why would anyone want to do this?

Basically, cryonics is a \$200,000 bet that someday, scientists will discover how to eradicate death. Cryonics supposedly will preserve people's bodies until that day, when their bodies will be thawed, resurrected, and upgraded to immortal.

There's a couple of interesting thoughts there. First, you can't cryonically freeze a living person. So, for cryonics to enable a person to live forever, they first have to...die. Second, that means there are at least 1,800 people, and certainly there are many more, who desire to live forever in this world.

What's interesting is that those two thoughts about cryonics closely tie in to the two main worldviews about destiny—where we go after we die. One worldview believes that after death, a person enters an eternal afterlife. The other believes that there is no afterlife, so our earthly lives are it. Your worldview obviously changes the way you think about death.

The Biblical Christian worldview about destiny might sound paradoxical. Like the first thought of cryonics, Christians are also **Dying to Live**. But not because of science. We are dying to live because of Jesus!

Last Sunday, we answered the question of morality. Thinking they knew better than God what was good, Adam and Eve plunged themselves and God's perfect creation into the reality of sin.

In love, God called them to repent of their sin, and promised to send a Savior to destroy sin. But the fact remained, everything had changed in a world marred by sin. And mankind would have to deal with the consequences.

God tells Eve, ***"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe."*** Moms, you know that's no joke! God also told Eve, ***"Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."***

To Adam, God said, ***"Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it...It will produce thorns and thistles for you...by the sweat of your brow you will eat your food."***

What's interesting about the consequences of sin God describes, is that none of the things Adam and Eve would now do were anything new. Even before the fall into sin, God had told Adam and Eve, ***"Be fruitful and increase in number."*** Childbearing was always part of God's plan. But sin now made childbearing severely painful. Even before the fall into sin, God gave marriage roles to Adam and Eve—Adam as the head, and Eve as the ***"suitable helper."*** But sin meant they'd still carry out those roles, but now they'd do so with selfish, instead of selfless hearts. Even before the fall into sin, God had given Adam the task to ***"work and take care of (the ground)."*** But sin meant working the ground would require sweat and toil and produce frustration and pain.

Sin made all of those previous tasks way more difficult, and painful, and sad, and frustrating. Sin always makes life in a sinful world difficult, and painful, and sad, and frustrating.

And we see that in our lives too. As we carry out the different vocations God has given us—spouse or single; parent or child; employer or employee; teacher or student; pastor or parishioner—because we’re sinners in a sinful world, those tasks will be difficult, painful, sad, and frustrating too. As we seek to follow God’s law, we’ll struggle against Satan, this sinful world, and our own sinful nature. Obeying God will be difficult, painful, sad, frustrating, and full of failures. Sometimes that difficulty is the result of our own sinful actions; sometimes they’re the result of others’ sins; sometimes they’re the result of living in a world broken by sin. But no matter the cause, everything we do in this life is exponentially more difficult because of sin.

But there was one consequence that was never part of God’s plan from the beginning. God told Adam, **“By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”** It wasn’t like sin made death more difficult or painful. Death was a completely foreign concept. When God formed Adam from the dust of the ground, and breathed the breath of life into him, God never intended that breath of life to vacate his lungs, or that body to turn back to dust.

But as Scripture teaches, **“The wages of sin is death.”** Because of Adam’s sin, the man God brought forth from the ground, would spend a painful, toilsome life eating food from the ground, until he would return to the ground in death. And because death is the wages of sin, and all people are sinners, that’s the reality for all people. But because God never intended people to die, it’s a scary, ugly, unnatural reality.

Christian author C.S. Lewis once wrote, **“There are only three things we can do about death: to desire it, to fear it, or to ignore it.”** Many people fear death. That’s why some people breath their last in terror. That’s why thousands of people spend a small fortune on cryonics, hoping that someday they’ll come back to life and never die again. Understandably, people fear death because death is scary, ugly, and unnatural. It’s even more understandable if people have a worldview that this life is all there is. They’re afraid to fade into nothing.

Others try to ignore death. They live as if they’ll have as much time on earth as they want. Until the unexpected accident, or the terminal disease no one saw coming. Ignoring death works about as well as ignoring the fact that you’re in a lion’s cage. You might delay the inevitable, but it won’t stop the beast from eventually devouring you.

But desiring death? That sounds so morbid; so cynical; so suicidal! And yet, as a Christian, it’s possible to be content and thankful for your life, and still view death as a blessing. How can we view something so ugly, scary, and unnatural as a blessing? How can the wages of sin be a reward of God’s grace?

One of the others consequences of sin was that God drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, and placed angel guards and a flaming sword to keep everyone out, explaining that mankind **“must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and live forever.”** Why would God want to prevent people from living forever? Because God knew, now that mankind had fallen into sin, that living for eternity as a sinner, in a sinful world, would be the worst thing for them. For their good, and so Adam and Eve could live, they needed to die.

An eternity of sorrow and sadness; fear and frustration; shame and guilt; hatred and hostility? An eternity where everything we carry out is extremely difficult and filled with pain and suffering? Now, don’t misunderstand, God gives us wonderful blessings in our earthly lives too, so we can be content and joyful in our earthly lives. But in heaven, God makes those earthly blessings exponentially greater by removing the consequences of sin from them. Eternal life is a return to the perfect paradise of Eden God created mankind to enjoy. We need to die to truly live in the joys of eternity.

In fact, even the difficulties we struggle through in life, which are the results of sin, can be viewed as blessings from God. The difficulties of life in this sinful world point our eyes towards the joys of heaven, where ***“there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”***

On Friday, my family and I spent the day at Disney World. We had a fantastic time together, but after a full day of fun in the hot Florida sun, the 2.5 hour nighttime drive back home was...rough. I was tired. Worn out. So finally getting home and crawling into bed was the best feeling in the world! Likewise, the difficulties of our earthly lives make us look forward to arriving home in heaven that much more!

I think a big reason that people fear death is because it's unknown. What will it feel like? Is there really an afterlife? Or is this life all there is? However, the antidote to fight the fear of death because it's unknown, is to know! To know the truth that gives life!

Right after God tells Adam and Eve that they would die and return to the ground, we're told, ***“Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.”*** Fresh off the news of impending death, Adam named his wife, Eve, which means “Life.” Why? Not just because future generations of life would come from her womb. But because through those future generations would one day come the Savior God had promised—the one who would crush the Serpent's head, and save the world from death and sin. Because through that same painful process of childbirth would come the one who called himself ***“The way, the truth, and the life.”*** Jesus!

Jesus allows us to stare death in the face without fear. Jesus allows us to live our lives looking ahead to our eternal destiny with joy, because as the Apostle Paul writes, ***“Death has been swallowed up in victory...thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*** Because Jesus took the deathly wages of our sin on himself, and because he broke the chains of death when he rose victorious on Easter, through faith in him, we don't have to fear death. Anyone terrified to crawl into bed at night? No way! That's one of my favorite parts of the day! When you know your eternal destiny has been made certain in Jesus, death is like falling asleep on earth, and waking up at Jesus' side in Heaven.

Earlier, I quoted C.S. Lewis about the three ways people can react to death—desire it, fear it, or ignore it. Lewis also said in that quote, ***“If we really believe...that home is elsewhere and that this life is a “wandering to find home,” why should we not look forward to the arrival?”***

If you've arranged for cryonics, get your \$200,000 back. Science will never eradicate death. God wouldn't be so unloving as to make us live forever on this earth, because he has something far better! You don't have to get frozen to live forever. You just have to trust in the one who swallowed up death in victory! Dying in faith, we will live forever, because in dying, Jesus has won eternal life for you.

