

## HIS APPROACHING DEATH

Have you, or has a loved one of yours ever been told that you have a limited time to live? How do you react to hearing something like that? Jesus knew, even before He came to this earth in the flesh, that He would die, and He knew that He had just a few years to prepare this earth for His death. When Jesus died on the cross, it wasn't a last minute thought. It had been well thought out and planned. Many of you may think, "Well, it was easy for Jesus to face death. He was God." I will be the first to disagree with you, because the Bible says that Jesus faced every temptation you and I face. His pain was just as severe.

For Jesus, death would be temporary, and Jesus made it pretty clear to His followers. Mark 9:31-32, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.' But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it." Why were they afraid? It didn't fit into their plans for Jesus' life. They really did not comprehend it all until after He died and arose from the dead.

When a person faces death with courage, does that mean they are not afraid? No! My father was prepared for death, but there were times he cried, and he often cried hard. The last time we saw him and prayed with him, he cried and he cried hard. Afterwards he apologized for his crying, but I told him he did not have to apologize. The act of dying is a scary thing to face, and it was for Jesus too.

Parents love their children so much that they are willing to die for them. God, who so much does not want to see His children lost forever in Hell, literally died for them. The purpose behind Jesus' death is simple, but our ignorance makes it so difficult to understand.

Are you prepared for your death? It will happen. When John Owen, the great Puritan, lay on his deathbed his secretary wrote (in his name) to a friend, "I am still in the land of the living." "Stop," said Owen. "Change that and say, I am yet in the land of the dying, but I hope soon to be in the land of the living." Heaven is about living, not dying. And death does not need to be scary. Dying and the pain that accompanies it are, but death does not need to be.

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