

CHOOSING
THE
TIME AND PLACE
TO DEFEAT
OUR
LAST ENEMY
CALLED DEATH

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Published by the Sound Of Liberty
7286 Hwy 53W, Dawsonville, Georgia 30534 U.S.A.

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*Thought for the book taken from the message
delivered on November 1, 2015
Dawsonville, Georgia U.S.A.*

*We've traveled many miles in this life,
God's Word being our guiding light.
Arriving home in the body of Christ, joined together,
Seeing further with our hearts than with our eyes.*

*And a heart is a house for love.
And we've moved into our home from above.
Where joy and peace forever reign,
As we've entered into eternity.*

*We're inside this house with saints gone on,
Made perfect by our marriage of flesh and bone.
Now, O death where is your sting?
O grave where is your victory?
Rejoicing as we take our heavenly flight,
Meeting Jesus in the air as His glorified wife.*

*And a heart is a house for love.
And we've moved into our home from above,
With the King of Peace, we'll forever reign,
As we've entered into eternity,
As this mortal takes on immortality,
We'll be together for eternity.*

*With love,
The Wife of the Lamb*

CHOOSING THE TIME AND PLACE TO DEFEAT OUR LAST ENEMY CALLED DEATH

Good morning to each of you. I'm glad to see you rejoicing in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior, who has redeemed our mortal bodies, as well as our souls. He does all of this by making us part of the manifested Word, and by confirming unto us that we are His wife, the manifested Word made flesh. And now it is with us as it was with Jesus, who was the first one to be born of a woman and become manifested Word in human flesh. This is very important, as we will see as we read in the written Word of God today. For it's the inspiration that quickens the scriptures of the written Word; thus transforming us into spoken Word made flesh, just like Jesus was. But this was not available, and therefore was not *obtainable*, until now.

I remember several years ago, when in Zimbabwe, I traveled quite a distance to a small village in the backwoods and preached to the people a message entitled, *Obtaining That Which Was Previously Unobtainable*. And one of the brothers got up and said, "I believe that heaven has come down." And it sure felt like it; I bear witness to that fact. Heaven certainly did come down in that service. That was what Paul was talking about in Hebrews 12:22-24, which shows us that heaven has come down and we've come right into it, where the spirits of just men are made perfect and where the angels dwell. In other words, we came into a spiritual environment and were made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians, Chapter One) He made this possible by coming down to us as shown in Revelation, Chapter 10, making Himself known to us, which has baptized us into His body.

So having said that, I want to take a thought today, *Choosing the Time and Place to Defeat Our Last Enemy Called Death*. Now the

time and place is shown to us in the Word of God. The timing is revealed unto us as we see this message for our day. Now let's pray before reading. *Heavenly Father, Lord, we come unto you at the opening of thy Word. And, Lord, I love what your great servant, Paul, said, "Our sufficiency is of thee." May we always look to you, Lord, always realizing that anything we say to benefit your people—the sufficiency, the ability, the anointing—comes from thee. We give you all the glory. I pray now as we commit ourselves to you, that you will help us to do all thy bidding. In Jesus Christ's name we pray. Amen.*

All right, I'm going to begin reading today in 1 Corinthians 15:26. I want to start there just to get the word *death*. And after this, I want to read in Philippians 1:20-26 to get the word *choosing*. This word may seem like a strange word to be using, but we will see as we read that God gave Paul a choice on what to do about going to the place where the departed saints were waiting for him. But God knew by His foreknowledge what this man that was in Christ would do for the benefit of the espoused virgin that would become a part of the wife of the Lamb.

But before we go any further into the message, I want to mention something that happened with Brother William Branham, who was the messenger to the Laodicea church age. The story goes that once a lady came to him that had a vision or dream, and she said to him, "Brother Branham, I saw a dark shadow following you." And Brother Branham said, "I know it, Sister. I know he's there. But he can't touch me until that time comes." This shows us that God lets us know some of the things that is about to happen to us.

Now let's read 1 Corinthians 15:26. It says, "*The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*" Paul is writing here concerning death, calling death an enemy which is to be destroyed permanently before eternity begins. But I want to deal with death as it relates to the wife of the Lamb, which are those that are baptized into the body of Christ. For after we ate the little book, the law of life

freed us from the law of sin and death. For other people, the death sentence is in effect all the way through the millennium. But not for the wife; for we are the people that 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 applies to. We are the *which are alive and remain*, who overcome death.

Let's go to Philippians, Chapter One, because it is here where Paul begins to say some of the things that I want to bring to you this morning. Some people think that Paul contradicted himself because he was preparing to die, and yet he was saying, "We which are alive and remain." But let's look at what he was saying in *this* light—one part of what he said was prophecy, and the other part was for that present time and was being applied in the day he was living in. So there is no contradiction. There's nothing out of line. He wasn't speaking out of both sides of his mouth. He was speaking Word for that time period, while at the same time he was laying a prophecy in for our day.

So I'm reading here in the Book of Philippians. And the reason I want to read this is that Paul is talking about going on and choosing. I want to show you that he chose to stay rather than to go on and get his reward at that particular time. In other words, he was choosing the time. He saw a need and it was as though he was saying, "It wouldn't be good if I just left the people right now. So it's better for me to abide." It seems that God had brought him into a place where he could see what was on the other side. He was caught up into the third heaven, so he knew a bit more about what was in the heavenly realm than most of us know. He wanted to bring the people up with him, but he saw they weren't quite ready for what he had in mind.

So I'm going to pick up in Verse 20 of Philippians, Chapter One. It says, "*According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed* (If you're on the Word, you don't have to be ashamed. I thank God for that.), *but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.*" "Christ is magnified in my

body," he said. In other words, Christ is going to be glorified in our bodies. And we want to do our part in this arrangement. That's why we bring our minds into captivity to the law of Christ (love of Christ). That's why we present our body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable service that Christ may be magnified in our mortal body.

Verse 21, "*For me to live is Christ* ('I'm going to magnify Christ.' He stood in Christ's stead.), *and to die is gain.*" Now here he is talking about dying. In that hour, yes, "To die is gain." I'm sure that many times Paul got homesick for heaven after seeing what it is like over there. And since that time, the saints that came before us sang, *I'm homesick for heaven, I'm longing to go.* They were singing about going by the way of death, and that was appropriate for their time period. But right here at the end time He is giving us a different promise. He is bringing the promise up to the time that we are living in. And by His Word He has made it clear to us that we are the people that are alive and have remained until He came. He has revealed to us that we are the ones that are not going to die.

Continuing on with Verse 22, "*But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour* (He was bearing fruit.); *yet what I shall choose I wot not.*" Now I want you to notice that word *choose*; ***yet what I shall choose.*** At that time, very few people could even think about being in that position or even being given a chance to choose. But God knew Paul would make the right choice. Just as God knew His Son, Jesus Christ, would make the right choice when He was in the Garden of Gethsemane. Matthew 26:39 says, "*And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:* (Notice this next word.) ***nevertheless*** *not as I will, but as thou wilt.*" Then in Verses 42-53 (after a great multitude with swords and staves had come to take Him), He said unto them, "*Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be*

fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Also, in John 10:18, we hear Jesus saying, "No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." What we are reading here has, 'having a choice' written all over it—thus, the title of this message!

So God knew that Paul, like Jesus Christ, would make a choice based upon the will of God and the present need, and based upon his love for the espoused virgin. Paul saw the people growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. The fact is, he said, "Your faith groweth exceedingly." (2 Thessalonians 1:3) So Paul didn't choose 'to die is gain' at that time. He felt that for the espoused virgin's sake it was better that he abide with them. Paul knew the will of God concerning the necessity of the virgin coming to full age or maturity. He knew that Christ Jesus could not marry her in this adolescent state, which would be like pulling unripe fruit. It wasn't time for the rapture, having not reached the fullness of Christ.

So Paul was looking at the situation with his understanding of what the wife had to be. But seeing she was still just a young virgin and not yet ready to be the wife of the Lamb, he had to move according to the dispensation of time they were in. And that's where we're getting our thought, *Choosing the Time and Place to Defeat Our Last Enemy Called Death*.

I'm going to tell a dream that I had in just a moment, and it will help us put this into perspective. But the first thing that I want to do is get right into this and show that Paul was given a choice. Because he said, "I don't know what I should choose; I wot not." But watch what he said after this verse of scripture. Verse 23, he says, "*For I am in a strait betwixt two,*" And there are times, I suppose, in our lives when we are in a strait betwixt two. As with Paul, we could look back and say, "Oh, the battle has been rough. The battle has been hard. And I'm worn quite a bit. But I know there is something wonderful over on the other

side.” See, Paul knew what was over on the other side. It was something in the Spirit and it had a great impact on Paul and was drawing him. That’s when he began to compare this life with what he saw beyond the curtain of time. And his conclusion was that there was nothing here that could compare to it, because it was so great.

Here in Verse 23, he was looking at the espoused virgin, saying, *“For I am in a strait betwixt two; having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ (in a literal sense); which is far better:”* See, for him it is far better. But watch his choosing. Sometimes God gives us a choice because He knows that we will make the right choice. Oh, to see what Paul saw on the other side and compare it with the struggles we face here in this world of pain and frustration and aggravation. It makes us want to sing, “Down here there’s nothing that can compare!” Most of us have experienced some pain and frustrations and struggles in this life. We face those things along the way. So naturally we would have a tendency to look for something over on the other side. It’s not that we’re not enjoying Christ Jesus in the present, but God allowed us to see another promise.

So as we’ve experienced some of our own trials and discomforts of this life, we can understand how our brother, Paul, who suffered much in his body for the gospel’s sake in his day, would have a desire to go on to be with the Lord. But he made the right choice for his situation. Yes, he made the right decision; he was looking at the right thing. And we hear him saying, “I am in a strait.” I’m going to read that Verse 23 again. *“For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:”* Now watch. Verse 24, *“Nevertheless”* (I love that word *nevertheless*.) In other words, “Now that’s what’s good for me. It would be better for me if I could lay down all my burdens and I could get out from under all of this load.” He was carrying a big burden in doing the great work that he was called to do. So God just let him make the

choice here. At that time, he had the feeling that he could go or he could stay. And that feeling doesn't come to very many of us. My thought is this, "If I can be of service to the saints of God who are moving toward translation and rapture, then I want to stay with the wife for her edification so that we will all be raptured together—both the living and the dead members of the wife." We are raptured as a many member body all at the same time. And as Paul made the right choice for the virgin in his day, let us make the right choice for the wife in our day.

When we read about some of the things that Paul went through, we can see more clearly and understand why he would speak like this and look at things like he did. He was whipped many times, forty times save one (as the Jews prefer to say). And once he was cast out of the city and stoned and left for dead. But when the saints prayed, he got up and continued his preaching. And he went to one place where he said, "No man stood with me. Only the Lord stood with me." Then in another place he named two or three brethren, saying "only they were with me." And it was quite a struggle but it was ordained of God to be thus.

So here he got to the place where God evidently felt that he had the ability to make the choice. Again, Verse 24, "*Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*" Is more needful for who? You. He was saying, "To me, if I go on, that would get rid of all my burdens. That would give me that crown of life that is laid up for me. That would give me everything that mankind has ever desired. *But nevertheless.*" In other words, he wasn't putting himself first. That is a good thing about a Christian, they don't normally put themselves first. And they don't usually do what is best for them, unless it is best for the body of Christ, also. He said, "*Nevertheless, it is more needful for you that I stay.*" Now that settles his reasoning right there. He didn't have to think about it anymore. That's a real preacher. You talk about a preacher. You talk about somebody presenting Christ. He said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet it is not

me living, but Christ living in me." And this is nothing more than Christ talking through Paul, saying, "Yes, I'd love to go. I've been there." There's a saying, "I was there when it happened, so I guess I ought to know." He said, "I've been over there," and he told us some of these things that he received while over on the other side of the curtain of time. But some of the other things he saw he couldn't tell. He said, "I am not permitted to tell you. It wouldn't be profitable (or lawful) at this time." But whatever he saw, it was so good that he never could stop thinking about it. Yes, he just kept thinking about what was over on the other side. But then he looked around and thought, "I don't want to go and enjoy all these good things without this beautiful virgin that I have espoused to Christ being able to enjoy all of this glory with me."

That is Christ talking through Paul. The Bible says that Jesus Christ overcame death there in the garden when He prayed until His sweat became as great drops of blood. But He didn't want to have this victory and leave us unable to overcome death while He enjoyed His glorified new body; so He tasted death for us all by dying on the cross for us. He didn't have to die. But He died that we could live, and now we die out to the things of the world that are not profitable. We can look at death and know that it can't get power over us, that we can overcome death. That's the promise for the wife in this hour that we are in now. And it could not happen until we arrived here at this time, in this season. So, let's say together, "Jesus, we love you!"

So Paul, as he was looking at death, his thought was, "If I go on, what's going to happen to the little ones? What's going to happen to the espoused virgin? This brings to remembrance the concern that Jesus Christ had for His mother. He would not give up His Spirit when He was on the cross until He had made provision for her welfare first. Then, He said, "All things are now accomplished." We find this in John 19:25-28. We can see

by reading this where Paul received his inspiration. O what a Savior we have!

Paul said over in the Book of 2 Corinthians, Chapter 11, "I've espoused you that I may present you to one husband." But then he said this, "But I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve, your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ." In other words, there are those that want to complicate this gospel for you. He said, "These things that I preach are in simplicity." And that is what the gospel is now and always has been. The theologians are the ones who make it complicated. What is simpler than what we are reading today? It is simple, because He is the revealer of His Word.

Again, Paul said, "Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Verse 25 says, "*And having this confidence (See, he knew what he was doing. He wasn't guessing here.), I know that I shall abide and continue with you all **for your furtherance and joy of faith**; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.*" Here he is saying, "Having confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you for *your* furtherance and faith." Here was a man, born of a woman, born in sin and shaped in iniquity, but had a new birth from a new gene pool. From henceforth, you couldn't trace his genes back to his father or mother. Because by the new birth and from a new gene pool, in the spiritual realm he was without father or mother. And even in the natural realm, he didn't say much about his lineage, because now his lineage was from Christ.

After Paul's new birth, he got a new start, he was born not of the corruptible seed but of the incorruptible Word of God. He got a new set of genes and he got a blood purifier in him, the Spirit of God, to purify and breed out all the fallen nature, the serpent nature, the carnal thinking. And he had to do it himself so that he could tell us how it is done. That's why he said, 'cast down imaginations, bring your mind into captivity to the law

(love) of Christ,' and that is a must for us as long as we are in this human flesh.

So here, Paul chose to stay and show us the way to Christ. And that was the proper decision in every way for that time period. And now as we have arrived here at the end of the age, we see that Christ has come back to this earth in His fullness to activate and bring life into Paul's prophetic Word of 'we which are alive and remain shall be changed' as this last trumpet is sounding.

When Paul entered into the part of his message which was becoming a prophetic utterance, he prayed that this prophetic utterance would be given to us. And when I get a good look at it from the scripture, I can only say (as it was said about Jesus Christ), "He doeth all things well."

Now we must look to the Spirit to reveal the Word unto us, as the scripture says in 1 Corinthians 2:14, *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* This scripture is very needful as we begin to talk about overcoming our last enemy. There is a prophecy of the spiritual coming of Christ that says, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." And two parts of this prophecy (this prophetic message) have already come and gone. And now the Spirit of Christ tells us by revelation what time it is, by letting us know that what we are hearing is the last trumpet sounding and that it will bring forth the dead and change the living. So now we can release our faith to believe God that we will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

We choose the time at the sounding of this last trumpet, this being the message that gives us all that we need for the changing of our mortal body. So when we see what's going on, what God has fulfilled, where God has brought us, it gives us a faith that is sure and steadfast and unmovable. Paul said we are to be

“steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.” So the point is, *there comes a time when there is a basis for our faith*, for everything that God has promised in the day and hour that we are living in. There was a basis for what Paul said. I am sure glad that Paul didn’t decide to go on to heaven before he left us the contents of the *little book* in his prophetic writing, which has been given to us in this present day.

Now we’ve got solid Word—“On Christ the solid rock we stand, all other ground is sinking sand. And when all around us gives way, He is still our hope and stay.” See, He put us in the Word and made us part of it. The reason we can know what took place way back there is because we are part of it. So Paul, by the Spirit of God, brought all that he needed to bring for the virgin to get her prepared for a marriage in this day. And now the prophetic part of the Word has come. What we are saying now would have been out of season in the days of Paul concerning our translation and the rapture.

In the days of Paul, he said, “Wash the spots out of your garments.” (Ephesians 5:26-27) He was speaking to the young virgin. But John saw a people in the Book of Revelation 19:7-8 that didn’t have to wash spots out; for they were clothed in fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the Lord, which came by our fullness of the baptism into the body of Christ as the wife of the Lamb. (Jesus Christ was without sin and no guile was found in His mouth, who had no spots or blemishes, but had perfect righteousness.) And John calls this people, the Lamb’s wife. He said, “The Lamb’s wife hath made herself ready; and to her, and to her alone, it is granted that she should be clothed in fine linen.” That’s His righteousness, which is now our righteousness. So in Christ, we can no longer say, “Our righteousness is as filthy rags;” for now we have become Christ the wife, and that would be saying that the righteousness of Christ is as filthy rags, and that’s kin to blasphemy. We are a very part of Him—those that have eaten the little book and have

become a part of it as shown in Revelation, Chapter 10, and Ephesians 4:13-16.

So as we believe with a surety that He has come to this earth and made us His very own wife, and that we are part of Him, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, then we should have no reservations believing that He has overcome death for us. For when He died on the cross, we were with Him; therefore we, too, have overcome death.

Let's look at what we have in Christ now. Through Christ we have the perfect righteousness of God, because He has made us free from the law of sin and death, just as God's Son is free from these laws. The Word tells us that He died once and that death has no more dominion over Him. In Romans 6:7-10 it says, *"For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."* Also, Hebrews 2:9, *"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."* Then Verses 14-15 says, *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, 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."* After reading these scriptures we would be hard-pressed to make a case against this revelation of overcoming death after we have heard this trumpet sounding for this hour and choose to believe the Word by revelation.

Now I want us to notice in our reading that there are two main things the trumpet message brings. One of them is the resurrection of the dead, and the other is the changing of the living. When the trumpet message is on the scene, then that's the time that the dead will raise and the living will be changed

into glorified bodies. And I'm not talking about some crazy stuff here, like I witnessed when a man came by my house a few months back. I heard a knock on my door and I went to answer it. I knew him. He had changed some since I saw him last. (His hair had turned greyer than the last time I saw him.) I opened the door, and said, "Yes?" He said, "I thought I'd come by and see how you are doing." I said, "Well, I'm doing fine." So I asked him if he wanted to come in. He came in and sat down. And as he sat there for a while, I knew he was going to try to talk to me about something because he seemed to be a little bit nervous. And finally he began to talk to me about some people that had died that he believed were lost. He said, "I've been out in the spirit getting them and bringing them back to God. I want to get those that died that didn't accept the Lord." He named one woman in particular that had already passed on, he said that this person was very hard-hearted, and he wanted to bring her to God for a second chance. He said, "An old Indian chief came to me and said, 'I will always be near you; and if you ever need anything just let me know and I will give it to you.'" And he kept on talking like this. I didn't say a word, but just sat there and listened to him. Then he said, "The reason I am here, I go where the spirit says go and I do what it says do." (The reason I'm telling this is in hopes that this may help others to keep their head on straight if they ever have to deal with such nonsense. But we don't have to listen to nonsense! This trumpet message contains all that we need as members of the wife of the Lamb. Satan likes to throw things out there, but truth always stops the mouth of the gainsayers.) Well, as he continued talking, he said, "Joyce sent me by to ask you how you are doing." See, Joyce was my first wife that had passed on to be with the departed saints in 1995. I simply looked at him and said, "I'm doing fine." At first, I thought he was just trying to joke around with me a little bit. Then I thought, "This is not something to joke about." And then I realized, "This man is serious." Then he said again,

“Joyce wants to know how you are getting along.” Again, I said, “I’m doing pretty well.” I didn’t say I believed him or disbelieved him. And then he went on his way. I’m saying this to show you, the enemy is still alive and well. But he is powerless.

I told you earlier that I would tell a dream that I had, and I think right here may be just the right time to tell it. In this dream I was on a motorbike. And here came a man on a bigger motorbike. He had on a black trench coat and a black hood that covered much of his face. He came riding up the road and he tried to knock me out of the road. Well, I had no reaction; I just got my motorbike straightened up and went on. Well, he turned around and came back around behind me, revving his motor up as if he wanted to try to knock me down. And when I didn’t react, he went on by me. And then I woke up. That could be none other than Mr. Death—a powerful creature in his own right. But not when he comes against the power of God! He can’t succeed in his evil ways then. So he tried to knock me over, but I didn’t fight with him. I didn’t choose at that time to fight. And although, in the dream, I knew pretty much what was taking place, what was going on, I didn’t panic. Here we see the title of this message.

See, Paul chose to stay here instead of getting many goodies heaped up on his head and living the life of tranquility in the new kingdom without any problems or burdens. He said, “It would be better for me personally if I went on; but nevertheless for your sake I’m going to stay. It’s better for me to stay for the furtherance of your joy and your faith.” So, the thing is, the death angel tried to get me to fight with him. And I chose not to fight with him at that time, not wanting to lend my mind to the wiles of this defeated being. Jesus Christ has given us power over all the power of our enemies, and we never want to tolerate something that would hinder our contentment in fulfilling the words of Jesus Christ when He said, “My joy I leave with you.”

So the one on our side is the one that overcame death in the Garden of Gethsemane (meaning the olive press), but then gave His life so that we could have power to overcome death, too.

In the Book of Hebrews, which we have just read, it says that Jesus Christ tasted death for every man, so that we wouldn't have to taste death. So what I am saying is that there are great promises laying before us. And sometimes when great promises are laying before us it is also a time of danger, too. So it's time to be sane, sober, and sensible and not lose our head over something. God wants us to stay steady and watch the Word as it unfolds itself.

Now the Word is unfolding itself to the point where we've come through two stages (or parts) of the spiritual coming of Christ, which is the *shout* and the *voice of the archangel*. And it's only in the third part that Paul writes about this last trumpet message in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. This is because the first and second parts have already happened at the fulfilling of the third part. So Paul only deals with the third part, which is the trumpet or *the last trump*. Keep in mind that this last trump is the same trumpet that Paul wrote about in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 which says, "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel." These are the things that we have come through. And since then this last trumpet has begun to sound, as the third part of the message of the spiritual coming of the Lord has brought us into Ephesians 4:13-16 and is bringing us into the rapture. And we chose to come into this part of the message by our baptism into the body of Christ in this final hour.

In Revelation, Chapter 5, we see the Book of Redemption, which the Lamb opened in heaven, but He didn't bring it all down to us, because all of it is not for our part of the redemption plan. There are certain things in the Book of Redemption that the Father keeps in His own power and is revealed in His own time frame as He has ordained it. So God sent down to earth the

wife's part of the Book of Redemption, now known as the little book, which also was opened in heaven. He sent this down by Christ shown as the Mighty Angel. It was during this time period that the Voice of Authorization spoke and said, "Now all things are ready; go and take the little book and eat it up," which we fulfilled in this present day. And now it is with the wife as it was with Jesus. The Word says in John 5:25-26, *"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. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;"* And now the Father has given unto us, the Son's wife, to have life in herself. He did this when He spoke from heaven and authorized us to take the little book and eat it up. And since this has taken place, we have that same life in us and we are speaking the Word of life by prophesying again. (Ephesians 4:13-16)

That's why there was no way we could preach a message of overcoming death as long as 'time-wise' God's plan was still in the first two parts of the message of the spiritual coming of Christ, because the redemption of our mortal bodies comes in this trumpet part of the message. Paul said that this part of God's plan, which is called the last trump, would be at the last part of this message before the catching away. (1 Corinthians 15:51-53) That's when the dead members of the body of Christ rise and the living are changed! That's Christ the wife who has received this little book of Revelation, Chapter 10, and has eaten it up.

In Thessalonians 4:13-17, the Word says, "God will send (Christ) Jesus and He will bring with Him those that are asleep in the Lord." Those that are dead in Christ, He brings with Him. That's the spiritual coming that is seen in its fullness in Revelation, Chapter 10. Now who does He bring with Him? He brings those theophanies that have gone to heaven; all those that are part of the wife of the Lamb since the days of Paul. Paul said,

"If this earthly tabernacle were dissolved (and get that word if), those that have gone on before us have a building already reserved in heaven." Well, he said that Christ brought those theophanies down with Him when He came. And that is where Paul prophesied and showed us that we come among them—the spirits of just men made perfect. That is where we are now; we're in heavenly Jerusalem, as seen in Hebrews 12:22-24.

Now that we have come into heavenly Jerusalem, this is the time and the place for us. And we have chosen to come into this city of our own free will as God foresaw we would. And to go into this city means that the time has come for our complete redemption, and we can see everything falling into place. And now our prayer is, *"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* We don't want to change His will, we just want to get in time with it, fulfilling our part of the Word. And now we know that this is timely, it is in season, and we are receiving what Christ is saying by the anointing of God for our time.

See, we choose to believe this, because it is our part of the Word. And the dream that I made known to you showed someone with a black trench coat coming at me with a black hood over his face while he was trying to knock me out of the road. And by inspiration, I just let him go. See, I was choosing the time, choosing the time and place to defeat death, our last enemy. It has to be just the right time. It has to be when God says, *"Now!"* And that is what God is doing now; He is bringing us into the revelation of when to do this. He is getting our minds geared into it. Paul said, *"I could go now, nevertheless, I choose to stay with you for the furtherance of your joy and faith."*

See, God is not going to let one man get out here and be translated ahead of the rest of the body of Christ; we are all changed together. Those that are baptized into the body all have one faith, with the mind of the Lord, though we are many members. And together we have one name, the Christ part of the name of Jesus Christ, which was given unto us upon our

marriage to Him. Yes, that's right, He gave us the Christ part of His name. This began to come into being when He came back to earth in His fullness in Revelation, Chapter 10; not as a person, but the Christ anointing part of the Lord Jesus Christ. So when I say, "Christ came," I'm not talking about Jesus coming; He's not going to come back to this earth until after the tribulation to begin the millennium in Revelation 19:11-14. But by being baptized into that body, we have become His Christ, His anointed wife. And we have submitted totally unto Him and are praying this prayer, "Lord, help me above all things to do thy bidding." It was only at this time that we passed Ephesians 4:13 where it says *till* we come to the fullness of the stature of the man Christ Jesus. And then it says right then and there in those scriptures that we can be no longer tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. And now we are speaking the truth in love and our thinking is that we have chosen to live. We see our part of the Word, and we are fulfilling it by believing for the resurrection of the dead members of the body and the translation of our mortal bodies without going through the channel of death. And now the Bible tells us to edify one another in love. That's the body of Christ. That's the one that is not going to die.

Let's go to a scripture in the Book of Romans, Chapter 6. I want to bring something in about baptism and what it is for. Verse 3 says, "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*" Now I want you to associate two words together here—baptism and death, which (for the saints that have already gone on before) shows the importance of baptism and how it has to do with the resurrection. And *we which are alive and remain* are rejoicing with confidence in our full redemption as we eagerly wait for their appearing among us to complete our joy as the wife of the Lamb.

Let's go to Romans 6:4. It says, "*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead*

by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here Paul is putting this scripture in its proper place in the spiritual realm. Verse 5, *"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:"* When we talk about the baptism and resurrection, that's speaking here in the natural realm. But the sounding of the trumpet puts us beyond water baptism and dying. It brings on both the resurrection and our translation. So we thank you, Paul, for being obedient to Christ and boldly bringing out of God's treasures this great revelation concerning the trumpet as seen in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, for the last enemy, death, is destroyed in the wife of the Lamb because of the sounding of this last trumpet. And now there's a people that will see the dead rise and will be changed at that time!

Let's get Verse 5 again, *"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:"* Verse 6, *"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin."* (That's natural; but it's showing it is the same in the spiritual realm.). Now the verse I really want you to notice here is Verse 5, *"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death,"* That's why in the past we took saints to the water and planted them in the name of the Lord. And the Word says, *"We shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection."* Well, when we see what Paul preached about *we which are alive and remain*, the burial and resurrection fits into a time just before we reach this translation time frame. And this time frame is brought on by the sounding of the trumpet which puts us beyond the death sentence. You might say, "Brother Howard, I'm not willing to go there." Well, the thing is, you can't go unless God leads you by His Spirit and gives you revelation.

Let's go back to 1 Corinthians 15:29. I'll read this scripture and also answer a sister's question, who had written and asked me

about it. She was working at a café that was owned by a man who was a Mormon. The Mormon's teach that if you have loved ones that have died and weren't baptized then you should be baptized for them, because they need that baptism. He told her that she could do that for them and they would be all right. Well, sometimes people take a scripture and isolate it from the other scriptures which deal with the same subject, and they try to interpret it before God's time comes to make it known. But they will always come up short, as far as the understanding of it goes. She asked about a scripture that Paul wrote, concerning being baptized for the dead. It's in 1 Corinthians 15:29, *"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"* Now I want you to notice, it's talking about baptism, death, and being raised from the dead. Now when you take the Word and look at it right, as God makes this scripture known, it is as simple as it can be. For here Paul was telling the saints what water baptism is conducive of. That's the truth in that scripture—death, burial, resurrection, these three things. That was the reason for water baptism. But Paul was not telling the saints of his day that they could be baptized for someone who had passed on. He was only expressing the fact that water baptism had to do with death, burial, and resurrection. This is easy to understand by the spiritual revelation of the wife of the Lamb in this day of translation.

Now that we have reached this place where the last trumpet is sounding, we know what Paul meant when he said, "leaving the doctrines of baptisms, let us go on to perfection." I love one scripture in 1 Corinthians 1:17 (Paul is writing); he says, *"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with the wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."*

I want to pick up with 1 Corinthians 15:42. Then I want to read down to Verse 51. And then a prophetic Word is going to strike Paul like a lightning bolt. It changes his thoughts altogether and he begins to talk about something else that has nothing to do

with death, has nothing to do with burial, and has nothing to do with resurrection. And the Word says this will take place when the last trumpet is sounding. Now the question is, what is the last trumpet and is it sounding? A man called me from Texas the other day and he said, "Ben, when do you think the trumpet is going to sound?" I said, "What you are hearing right now is the trumpet sounding." He didn't have any comment.

Now notice my title, *Choosing the Time and Place to Defeat Our Last Enemy Called Death*. Verse 42, "*So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:*" Now that is a good thing to think about. This message shows that death purifies the body. Sometimes we hear the Pentecostal folks say things on this order, "This fellow, he smoked." Or, "This fellow would have a drink every now and then." Or, "This lady, she was a good woman, but she sure did like to use snuff." Well, I tell you this, if you lived in the mountains (and I'm not talking too many years ago, maybe fifty or sixty years back), you know that almost every farmer chewed tobacco. And usually, once a young lady got married she started using snuff. But if they were born again, the tobacco or occasional drink of alcoholic beverage didn't cause them to be lost. If their temple was defiled, then death purified the child of God.

Verse 43 says, "*It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*" I'm talking about the body of those that had a pure soul, that loved the Word as God revealed it unto them, and had a heart toward God within them. Those that died that way are going to come up! And that body is going to come up in perfection and in power, not in weakness.

And then Verse 44, "*It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body* (It will be one just like Jesus' resurrected body; for John said we would have a body like unto His own glorious body.). *There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*" We've got both—the natural is what we see, and the spiritual body is within us at the same time. So when Christ came back to 'we

which are alive and remain,' He didn't bring our theophanies back with Him, because we that are alive have our theophanies in us now. But make no mistake here—Christ's coming quickens our inner man to the point that it changes this mortal body into a glorious body like unto His own glorified body, along with all the glory of the saints that were resurrected at this time. So He did not bring ours back, because it was here within us.

Verses 45-46, *"And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit (This is comparing the Lord and Adam; the natural man and the spiritual). Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."* And it also fits exactly within the framework of what we are saying. Verse 47, *"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven."* Paul did well in explaining all of this. Verse 48, *"As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy (that's what we are doing now), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."* Paul is saying, "What you are seeing is only half the picture. There is a heavenly body. And just as you are bearing the image of this earthy, you are also bearing the image of the heavenly." Then in Verse 50 he writes, *"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (meaning there has to be a change); neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."* See, in other words, that corruption will all go away completely through the decaying of the body in the grave or by whatever means the body is dissolved. So flesh and blood is not going to inherit the Kingdom of God; not this sinful flesh. That's why we've got to be changed. He said you'll be changed.

Now, when we get to the next verse, Verse 51, suddenly he changes completely, totally, and absolutely. He changes and starts talking about something else. He brings us to the time that the last trumpet begins to sound. *Choosing the time and place to*

defeat our last enemy called death—now is the time; and the place is this message of the last trump sounding. Here is where death is completely and totally defeated; even for those that left this earth by the way of death, because this message brings them up from the grave. Yes, Christ will even bring up the dead by this Word of God we're hearing.

Watch Verse 51, Paul starts dealing with something entirely different from what he was dealing with up to this point, which was death, burial, and resurrection of the body. But now Paul begins to deal with the living—'we which are alive and remain.' He says, "*Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all (members of the wife) be changed,*" Now, watch. This is a totally new working of God. The old rule says that it is appointed unto men to die (Hebrews 9:27). But that no longer applies to the wife as we are under a different covenant, we're at the beginning of a new day, a totally new thing. The trumpet is sounding. There's a message coming forth and it fits exactly with what Paul said—"We will be changed." That's the new law of love. And not only does he tell us that, but he tells us how and he tells when.

So upon arriving at Verse 51, we're not talking about death, burial, resurrection, and keeping church rules or communion or foot washing or anything of that nature any longer. No. Paul said, "Go on! There is perfection for you." All right, he says, we'll be changed, "*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,*" Then he tells us when it is going to happen—"at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Do you see it now? This is where the death angel has no power. He is defeated. And now is the time. We are building up our spiritual faith muscles by the Word that is now sounding forth.

Verse 53 says, "*For this corruptible (the body we are living in) must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*" Now here the Word is not saying anything about being baptized.

It's not saying, "You go be baptized for some of your dead relatives," as taught by the Mormons, which is a misunderstanding of the scripture. Now watch what he says in Verse 54, "*So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then (that then is now) shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*" So now we are not talking about going to the grave. We are not talking about going to the river to get baptized for the resurrection. We are saying, "Death has now been swallowed up in victory!" In other words, it has no power over us.

Notice, death is swallowed up in victory. Then here's what those who have gone before us that are in the grave are saying as they hear me preach today, "O death, where is your sting now? O grave, where is your victory?" A similar thing happens in Israel, as seen in the Book of Ezekiel, Chapter 37. Here God tells Ezekiel to prophesy to the valley of dry bones, and they began to move when they heard the Word. They began to move around, and finally they stood up on their feet as an army! That's the restoration of Israel (Ezekiel, Chapter 37). But this is not the restoration of Israel, this is the bringing forth of the part of the wife of the Lamb who went to the grave. Verses 55-58, "*O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (The grave doesn't have any victory.) The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.*" (We're not under the law of sin and death, but we are under the law of eternal life.) "*But thanks be to God, which giveth us **the victory** through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*"

That's my message for today. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come to you now, I pray, God, that you will take these words and use them for your glory. And may they go to the places that you have ordained, and may they just settle down into the hearts of the people

that they'll have new hope, that they'll have new zeal, that they'll have a new vision; and they'll say, "This thing is happening! This is real. This is not fanaticism. This is the Word of God." As this trumpet sounds, it is coming into being. Oh, God, I pray that you will bless each one, bless your wife. We thank you for clothing us in fine linen, clean and white, by giving us a revelation of the righteousness of God, revealing that it is not our righteousness but it is your righteousness, which you have given to us. We ask this in the precious name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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