

# Your Funeral Service

by Hans R. Waldvogel

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*The sermon emphasizes the significance of death for a child of God, the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the importance of hope and living for Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 35:38

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:1, 1 Corinthians 9:24, Hebrews 6:19

**Topics:** "Funeral"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by sharing how a large number of people initially attended their meetings, including many children who were later forbidden to attend by the priest. The preacher recounts an incident where a person cursed the priest and shortly after, died from touching an electric wire. The sermon then shifts to the topic of death, emphasizing its sudden and unexpected nature. The preacher urges the audience to focus on their relationship with God and not be attached to worldly pleasures, as the world is temporary. The sermon concludes with a reference to the parable of the ten virgins and the importance of being prepared for the judgment day.

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## Transcript

The following talk was inspired by someone's asking Pastor Hans Waldvogel to preach their funeral service. Well, others have said that I said, dear child, I'm afraid you won't be there. You may come to my funeral someday and I won't be there.

To be absent from the body is a wonderful, wonderful experience for a child of God. Very wonderful, that's why God says, precious in the sight of the Lord. In your sight, it's a corpse.

It's dust. Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. And they have a custom in Europe and among ungodly people in Yugoslavia.

When somebody's dead, then the relatives have to stand around the casket and I've seen them squeeze tears. It was a show. They were so glad he was dead because now they could inherit.

But it was a custom that they had to squeeze out tears and they wouldn't come. But you know, it's perfectly natural for us to sorrow over those that have left us. The sorrow of departure and of being absent from one another.

But in the sight of God, there is no death for a child of God. In the sight of God, it is entirely different. It's the victory of Calvary.

It is sown in weakness and it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body and it's raised a spiritual body. It's sown in corruption and it's raised in incorruption.

Here, a little candlelight is put out and there a blazing sun that's never been there begins to shine on the sky of eternity for the glory of God, knowing in the sight of God's presence. So when this woman said to me, I wish you would preach my funeral service, I made up my mind that I would preach to the people while they're alive. I want to preach yours tonight.

There was also in Germany a dear gentleman, a man, his trade was grave digger. A very honorable trade. That was his job.

And he had been married twice and his wife died, two wives died quite legally. I mean, he was separated from them legally. They died and he buried them.

And so he got his eyes on an old spinster lady that was very wealthy. And he sat down and he wrote her a nice letter. This letter wasn't real.

I read it. It was really, I read a copy of it. It was really a masterpiece.

He, of course, wanted to win her, propose to her. So he said, my dear lady, I trust that you will accept my poor petition, which is made with an honest heart. And it's quite a long spiel, but at least at the end he says, I've had the two very precious souls of wives and it's been my privilege to put them both to rest.

And my dear lady, I hope it shall be my privilege to to bless you likewise by taking your last resting place. Well, he was refused. But I like to be preaching every one of your funeral sermons, provided you live to be 100 years old.

That would provide for me an old age too, wouldn't it? But beloved, here is the God Almighty wants us to know that we have been raised together with him. Who? Who is he? God wants us to know that we have been raised with the Lord Jesus Christ who says, I am the resurrection and the life. And thank God he was crucified for us according to the scriptures.

Isn't it wonderful that Jesus Christ submitted himself to the command of God? And he says, I know that his commandment is everlasting life, not death, but life. And he, the prince of life, had to taste death for every man, for you and for me. Beloved, that means something.

It means that the gospel of Jesus Christ is a revelation of the life of the son of God. John says unto us, life was manifested and we have seen it and we bear witness unto you and these things rightly unto you that you might have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the father and with his son Jesus Christ our Lord. Oh what a glorious gospel is the gospel of the son of God.

It is indeed the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. And formerly, I learned that from Pastor Brown. At a funeral service, in opening the funeral service, we would read the prayer of Moses, the man of God.

You know where it's found? Psalm 90, where it says, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. That's a good prayer to pray. But that prayer is for people that are not saved, that

are looking forward to the time when it is appointed unto man, once to die and after this the judgment.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call upon him while he is near. And of course you're familiar with the story of Eulenspiegel, that most famous of all clowns, who was presented with a cane with a golden knob, one time because he had made a certain king, I think it was the king of Denmark, so very, very happy with his pranks.

Strauss has written his own poem, the merry pranks of Eulenspiegel. Anyway, they say that Eulenspiegel one time existed, and this story may, if it wasn't true of him, it may be true of you. Anyway, the king gave him a present.

It was a cane, a walking cane with a golden knob. And he said, now I give this to you as a present, and you can keep it until you find a fool, a worse fool than yourself. And so Eulenspiegel walked off with it, until one day he was told that the king was dying.

And all his generals and all his mighty servants were there bidding goodbye and weeping. And so Eulenspiegel was called also, and he came before the king. And the king said, well, I'm sorry, I have to say goodbye.

The time has come for us to say goodbye. Well, he said goodbye. Where are you going? He said to the king.

The king said, I'm going away into a far-off country. Well, I'd like to come along with you. I've liked your services.

We've always had a good time. Well, he said, I'm sorry, I can't take you along with me. How about your wife? Is she going with you and your servants? No, nobody's going with me.

This trip I've got to take all alone. Why, Eulenspiegel says, you never did that before. You've always had companions, and you've always had plenty of wine going with you and plenty to eat.

And now you're going into a foreign country. How long is it that you knew you had to take this trip? Well, he said, everybody's got to take this trip. It is appointed unto every man once to die.

And so he kept pressing him for questions and finally said, but are you going to have a beautiful palace to live in? The king said, no. Well, what kind of a country is it? He said, I don't know anything about it. Nobody's ever come back from that country to tell us what it's like.

And Eulenspiegel said, and did you send your servants over there to build you a palace and to fix things up for you so that you'd have a comfortable reception? He said, no, I didn't. Well, he said, excuse me a moment. And he went back and got that change.

He said, you remember you gave me this and you told me to give it to one that was a worse fool than I am. You better take this with you. Beloved, that prayer of Moses, the man of God, is an excellent prayer.

So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. When we were holding meetings in Austria, there was a young man about 20 years of age who kept persecuting us, cursing us, day after day. He was working around the barracks where we held meetings.

A thousand people came in the beginning to those meetings and about a thousand children charged on the school until the police were banned then. And frightened them with a whipping if they came again to that meeting. But anyway, this fellow cursed him.

And one night he was particularly virulent in his blasphemy. And just a few minutes after he had done that, he touched an electric wire and struck dead. And it grips you and doesn't ask permission at all.

It pulls you out of your present condition and commands you to go with him into the land of darkness, whether you like it or whether you don't. You'll have to stand before your judge. He cursed us to number our days.

The German Bible says, Golarion sedentis, that we are servile, listen, of that we are flue, virgin. How many a man, like the rich man, is pronounced a fool, he says. Bless your soul, you've got much good now, laid up for many years.

Now let's build houses, let's build barns, let's store our goods. And God said, this night thy soul shall be required of me, and whose shall it be? Beloved, that thing is true of every human being in all the world. When you read and you heard a while ago that Superman committed suicide, and he's not the only one.

There are many others of those so-called happy people and clowns that are thoroughly disgusted with this earthly life, because it's the life of a clown, the life of a fool, a limp. Oh, thank God for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank God for him of whom it is written, what is man that thou art mindful of him, for the son of man that thou, oh my father, what is man that thou art mindful of him? He took upon himself the form of man, that he might taste death for every man, and thus bring many sons unto glory.

And here's the New Testament prayer. Here's the New Testament funeral sermon. Praise God.

And it's for you and for me. And the Apostle Paul, the New Testament Moses, doesn't pray. Teach us to number our days.

It's later than you think. Our time is running out. But he says, flies, flies, flies.

I groan within this tabernacle of mine. The layer is nice because I know I've got a palanquin full of silver with diamonds over there. A house not made with hands.

This house squeaks and creaks. This is an earthly tabernacle. He says we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

That's the testimony of a New Testament Christian filled with the Holy Ghost. Are you there tonight? Oh beloved, we've been taken into the toy, haven't we? We've been searching our own hearts. God says examine yourself and see whether ye be in the faith and what is this faith? Oh this is the faith that kills me.

A king, a lord, a master, a savior, a bright groom, an indwelling fountain that bursts forth like fountains of living water. And his prayer is very different. He says we know, glory to God.

It's not a guesswork, but we know, thank God. Listen, do you know tonight that if this earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, a saint should come and claim this body of yours? Do you know that it is well with your soul as we sang a while ago? Does your spirit rise and lord hate today when the plague shall be sacked, the clouds be rolled back as it rose? The trump shall resound and the lord shall descend. Even so, it is well with my soul.

Oh here is the prayer of a man that's filled with the Holy Ghost. And it says in this week's earnest desire to be closed upon with our house which is from heaven. Beloved, I fear that many of us are coming up smitten.

Now abideth faith, hope, love, to present you all bliss before the presence of his glory. If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel. Oh how very tremendously important it is that that hope breaks.

That wonderful hope of the gospel, beloved, we're not only on a tread. Sometimes we think we're marching to Zion. Beautiful, beautiful Zion.

But the apostle Paul says, they all run but one receiveth the prize. So run that ye may obtain. And the Lord Jesus Christ tells us about the end and the goal that's set before us.

Which goal we have as an anchor of the soul. And he talks about that wonderful day when we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And he tells about foolish virgins that did not take oil in their vessels and they find themselves before a door that is locked.

And they hear the voice of the bright room they expected to receive saying I never knew you or rather I know you not. We ought to search our own hearts. We ought really to take inventory and see where we stand.

Because this wonderful chapter tells us what salvation means. Have you noticed at the end of the chapter he tells us how that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath established among us the word of reconciliation and now he says we consider that if one died for all then were all dead and that he died for all that they which live. They which live in this tabernacle should henceforth not live unto themselves but unto him who died for them and rose again.

Lord Jesus tell me what did you die for? Just to get me into heaven? Just to give me a comfortable Christian life here on earth? No he tells us that he is gone to prepare a place. And this precious Jesus who said the son of man must be lifted up and he must be crucified. The son of man had to die and enter into his glory.

He says I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also. Do you think Jesus Christ will be satisfied with you and with me if we fail to follow all the way until we're there in the mansions that he's gone to prepare? Oh that's what he chose us for before the foundation of the world when he says he saved us and he called us with a holy call. Not according to our work but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began and what is that call? That we should be like our great son Jesus Christ our God.

Oh beloved that's the call that comes to every human heart when you hear the gospel. It's the call of the bright truth. Will you go with this man? Will you be mine? He died for all not to make us wonderful people but that he might purchase us unto himself a glorious church not having spot nor wrinkle nor any such a thing but that it should be holy and without blame before him in love and every man that has this hope in him.

And so tonight we ought to search our hearts. Is that hope controlling by every action? Does it control every day? Does Jesus Christ take hold of my gift? Lord I'm not living unto myself anymore. The life that I now live in the place belongs to you because it's your life.

Thank God because you died for me that I might live for you. Glory to God and you've gone to prepare a place that you come again. You fill me with the holy spirit that I might no longer live in the flesh but in the spirit and that by the spirit I might mortify the deeds of the body.

Oh thank God and purify myself even as thou art pure. Oh precious people of God we need to ask God to quicken us to quicken in us this memory, this living hope, this understanding. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

For what communion has life with God and unrighteousness with Christ which has God hath wrought us? For what? Oh for the merit of the land. For this wonderful union with the son of God and he has sent the Holy Ghost down from heaven to work in us to will and to do according to his good pleasure. This is a strange funeral service.

It's a preparation for life. Glory to God. Life has been manifested unto us.

We have nothing to do with death. I said to an old saint the other day we have no business to look for death. Our business is to look for the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change this vile body and transform us into the likeness of his glorified body.

That's the hope and that's the power you feel tonight whether you know it or not. His resurrection. It is in his power.

That's why he says having therefore these promises dearly beloved let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God. What is your promise father? Why is this promise that he shall come again and change this body? The bible says this vile body understands from men that have studied greek that it doesn't mean the vile body but anyway this vile body of mine this body of my humiliation. Aren't you ashamed of what you used to do with your body? Aren't you ashamed of the thing that this body was defiled formerly and now it's become a temple of the holy spirit.

It's become a member of the body of Christ and now the spirit of God that raised him from the dead has come to reside in this body to give life to it. Praise God and as he works in me and as I work with him as I allow him daily by seeing as I wait upon the Lord to renew my strength. He gets me ready for that day when I shall mount up with witnesses of evil.

That's our call and the question is are you really living it? Has the holy spirit been able to make it so real to you that you're so grown within you. I always use this illustration at funeral services of a little eaglet ready to slip out of its egg shell. It is already hatched.

The mother eagle has sent a thousand powers through this age into this growing life and the only world and the only universe that little eaglet knows is the inside of the egg shell. It's an awfully cramped existence. He can't stretch his legs and he can't spread his wings and he can't use his feet and he doesn't see anything with his eyes and yet the mother's there taking care of him so carefully.

Day by day warming it with its own life warmth and isn't that what it means being in present in the body. We're absent from the Lord but we walk where the presence are absent to be accepted of him because he died for all that they which live should henceforth live unto him and that whether we wake or sleep we should live together with him. Do you know how near Jesus is to you? Do you know why he pours out the holy ghost? You're still in this shell.

You're still in this mortal house. It's given to you as a loan. It doesn't belong to you.

You cannot do what you please with it. Woe unto the people that take these members and let the devil use them as defiled by service of sin. Woe unto them.

They shall give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead but in this house the work of almighty God is completed. In this house he wants to prepare me to be spotless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. In this tabernacle thank God the holy ghost has descended to give life to strengthen me with might by his spirit in the inner man that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith and to prepare me for that day when the house of this tabernacle is broken through.

I like the the German interpretation. When Unterirdisches Haus zerbrochen ist, it's a picture of this little eaglet spreading his wings and breaking the eggshell. What do you do with the eggshell? You don't use it anymore.

You don't need it anymore. Now this eaglet becomes the monarch of the sky. He is king.

He rises up into the very region of the sun and he laughs at all the other creatures that crawl around on this earth. He has been delivered from his bondage and when this house of this tabernacle is dissolved we have a building of God. And in this he grows oh beloved you've got to know now this groaning the spirit that makes us intercession for the see a growing role in women as many as are led by the spirit of God they are sons of God.

He that has brought us for this victory is God who also has given unto us the earnest of the spirit. Beloved we've got something. What have we got? Why God.

Oh when you awaken to the fact that God has come to dwell in this body of yours to claim him to quickly to work mightily within this body to prepare you for habitations that are eternal that are your own. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Don't talk to me about a graveyard or about life insurers or about death.

It's all right if you want to take out life insurers. I had one policy one time but when God called me to live with Baptism I said no I can't trust the Lord for that. I can trust him for rapture.

I marvel at people. I marvel at the people of God. They expect that Jesus Christ will raise them out of the grave from the dead.

They expect that to happen. You better take a spring tablet with you just in case. We can't trust the Lord for a nickel.

For a four cent stamp and then we trust him for habitation. Oh the Lord. He that stares at his own son, glory to God, how shall he? That hope is dead.

That's what's the matter. Oh when that hope rips you, you will purify yourself even as he. You will submit yourself to Jesus Christ.

You will surrender yourself to the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God will not be slow to work in you. I know there are people in this meeting who can grasp this. I'm not talking to you at all.

I'm talking to those that have this living hope in them. Who have received and accepted this call. Who have forsaken the things that are behind and come to but refuse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

What have I got to do with this world? The world has grown old and her pleasures are vast. The world has grown old and her form cannot last. The world has grown old and it trembles for fear.

For sorrow abounds and the judgment is near. The world has grown old but ought we to complain who have tried her and know that her promise is vain. Our home is in heaven.

Our home is not here. We look for the crown while the judgment is near. Well the other night about Pegasus, a horse that had wings could fly like an eagle and the student who owned it was broke.

So he went to a farmer and asked him would he buy a horse. He had a seller for a few cents. The horse and the farmer said what can I do with a horse with wings.

So he took a pair of shears and he clipped the wings and he hitched that horse together with a cow and made that he to pull a plow and plow with a speed. He had to go day by day because that poor horse became consumptive. It wasn't built for that kind of work.

It wasn't made to be hitched together with a cow. It took a long time and one day this student came along and he had made some money. And when he saw his Pegasus his eyes glazed.

And he went to the farmer and said how much do you want for that horse. He said oh you can have it for just a few pennies. I can't use him anyway.

So he unhitched him and his wings had grown again and the student just put his hand on his mane and presently fire came out of his mouth. And this horse straightened up and life shot into his balls. And the student leaped on his back and out he was up beyond the cow.

Farmer stood there and his pipe fell out of his mouth. Good thing he didn't take my plow with him. Listen you were not made to be hitched together with a cow and to pull a plow.

What cow are you hitched together with? You're wasting your time. You're wasting your strength. You're losing your crown.

God has saved us and called us with a holy calling and it's high time for the saints of God to strip themselves of every human entanglement of everything that smells of this world and the flesh and the devil and to be ready for the call to trump it down. Praise God. He says at an hour when you think not the Son of Man cometh.

He's coming. He's coming for his prize. He's coming for those virgins who have taken oil in their vessels, who prepare themselves, who cleanse themselves even as he is pure.

That's what God has brought us for. Oh if Pentecostal people realized what God baptized them for. Today they play with the baptism like children play with rag dolls.

They play with the power of God. I tell you it's a dangerous thing. If the power of God doesn't come upon you to humble you, to get you down, to teach you to bear your cross daily and follow Jesus Christ and if it doesn't teach you to live a holy life.

Oh that's the privilege of God's Son. Hallelujah. The whole world greets with the stench of immorality and sin of every description and men and women follow around in it and they say they're having a good time because they're grunting in the night.

But a child of God that has seen the face of Jesus says don't tell me about it. I've heard the voice of Jesus. Oh my heart is filled with joy unspeakable and full of the Lord.

He lies first. You want this tabernacle to be dissolved. We grow waiting for our adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

But beloved there's another one that's waiting and that's your bright truth. That is your Jesus. He is waiting, waiting for you and me to get ready to speak a word of bringing back the King.

He cannot come to this earth. He cannot save this world until the face of God are ready to receive it. He's got to come by his face after all.

That's what the Bible teaches. He's coming to be glorified in his face and to be admired in all them that believe. So let's take Him to glory.

Let us not wait for the graveyard or a funeral service. But let us lift up our eyes and our heads and know that our redemption draws nigh. Let us even at the door.

The Holy Ghost is here and if you'll just give Him a chance, He'll do wonders in your soul. He'll enlighten your heart and make you understand His wonderful words. Make a knife sharper than a two-edged sword.

He'll make it pierce to the desire of the soul and spirit and join the battle. He'll give you that bread that comes down from heaven that a man may eat enough and not die. Oh dear Jesus, where are you? Jesus, Precious Lord, where are all these people in this meeting? We've heard these things a thousand times.

And what are we doing about it? Well, they began to make excuses.

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