

Daily Devotional, February 22, 2021 Expiration or Regeneration?

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

How often do you take a gallon of milk or maybe a yogurt or carton of cottage cheese out of your refrigerator and scan for the “expiration dates”, not remembering when you purchased it? I suspect that you may have recently heard someone say “their milk had gone bad” or maybe you saw a news item on TV about someone becoming sick because of expired energy bars or fruit roll-ups. Regardless, it often can become phobic protocol for some of us to look for the expiration date on the packaging of nearly every item in the refrigerator.

Now, most of us know that the vast majority of food in America is safe today, and that often times these dates can be more of a suggestion or a warning that we really should think about eating this item next, rather than the one that is one week fresher, but they do serve as reminders that nothing lasts forever.

I believe that all of us, whether openly or not, wonder about when the time will come that we will die. Even though we as Christians know about the gift of eternal life and the promise of heaven, we still find the mysterious nature of death can consume our thoughts. We ponder how, where, why and when our own “expiration date” will come about. We do as much as we can to avoid death. We exercise, watch our diets, take lots and lots of vitamins and pharmaceuticals, all with the hopes that we can prolong the inevitable just a little while longer. We naturally grieve and mourn those who pass on, especially when it does not seem “fair” or “right” because of our own meager expectations.

The entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 15 is worth reading, however 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 are verses I have often read at funerals over the years, where I have officiated. The author, Paul talks about our perishability and mortality and the sting that death most often brings, but he ends the passage on a most positive note, reminding us of the victory that comes to us when we remain confident in Christ and are in the end raised up with Christ. I certainly do not understand or have all the answers of the details of resurrection or heaven, but I do know that both are true! I believe that God will fulfill God’s promises and we will understand all the details at the proper time. I have faith that God will continue to allow us to experience God’s love and, in doing so, we will gain a much deeper understanding to the answers of the questions we ask.

The next time you check the expiration date on your bread or juice, take a moment to give thanks to God that no matter when we die, we can know that God will reveal Himself to us and we will experience what it really means to live in the presence of the Almighty God.

Prayer: Thank you, God, for clearing a path so that we can experience life here and now and know that inevitably guides us to life eternal. We give you praise and thanks for giving us the victory over death through our Lord Jesus Christ! Amen.