

SERMON FOR NOVEMBER 11, 2018  
TEXT: HEBREWS 9: 24-28  
THEME: THIS IS YOUR LIFE

<sup>24</sup> For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. <sup>25</sup> Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, <sup>26</sup> for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.<sup>27</sup> And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment,<sup>28</sup> so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

In the name of Jesus:

Reality shows are the “thing” now. Television that deals with the reality of everyday life. They run the gamut from live shows watching policemen do their duty, to shows trying to survive the elements of nature. Reality television is not really new at all, for one of the first reality television shows to be telecast was aired back during the early days of television. It was a show called “This is Your Life.”

For those who haven’t seen the show, Ralph Edwards hosted it. It originally aired on NBC radio in the late 40’s and the television version was shown from 1952-1961. The concept was simple: the host would surprise guests and then take them through a retrospective of their lives in front of an audience, which would include appearances by colleagues, friends, and family. Essentially, it was a replay of your life on the big screen for all to see.

How would you like your life replayed for all to see? All of the cross words you have said, the untold thoughts you have thought, your sinful desires, your failures, your foibles, everything all there out in the open? Not just the things you remember, I mean everything would be out there, including all of the stuff you have

forgotten about, even the things that you thought turned out one way but in reality turned out quite a bit differently than what you remembered. It wouldn't be a pretty picture would it?

I was reminded of that show last week when Charles and I went to the football game in Cleveland. On our way into the stadium, on the outside perimeter, stood men and women with signs, some had bullhorns in their hands, shouting into the microphone for all to hear: "You need to repent, or you are going to Hell." They were passing out tracts, pamphlets, urging people to change their lives, for their lives of sin would earn them eternal Hellfire and damnation.

As I passed by them, I was reminded of a pamphlet I saw a number of years ago, in the 70's that became popular and was passed out during similar events. It was a Chick tract. A Chick Tract was a little booklet, with cartoonish characters inside, telling the story of why people need to prepare for the eventuality of death. And one of the tracts that was popular was one called, you guessed it, "This is Your Life." It told a story of a man who had lived an ungodly life and rejected God. At his death, his life was replayed on the big screen, for all to see. This is Your Life, John Doe, and as the film rolled to show the documentary of his life, he was embarrassed and ashamed, and at the conclusion of the "show", the man went to Hell. The conclusion of the tract, as I recall, urged the reader to repent, or the same would happen to them.

As I read that as a young man, and as I consider it today, I would have to agree, that yes, the Bible says that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And yes, unless a person believes in Jesus Christ as Savior, that person will be

damned eternally. But consider what the writer to the Hebrews has to say to us in our text for today. The Bible paints a different picture, and gives you and all people hope.

Our text tells us that Christ entered heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. God appointed His Son, Jesus, to be your Priest, to stand in your behalf before the throne of God. If you or I were to even attempt to stand before God in His holiness on His throne in heaven, not one of us could stand. We would be like all those who have gone before us, Moses, Isaiah, and others, who, when standing before the throne of God and confronted with their sin when compared with the holiness of God, they trembled and shook in their boots. No one can stand before God and live, for He is holy, perfect, and unlike anyone that we can imagine or encounter. Just listen to Isaiah as he described what it was like to encounter the Holy God: "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup> And one called to another and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"<sup>4</sup> And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup> And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!"

Isaiah's reaction is just like what the Psalmist records when he writes: Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord! <sup>2</sup> O Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy! <sup>3</sup> If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord,

who could stand? “ No one can stand before God because each and everyone of us have sinned. In our pride and arrogance we think we know more than God that we can question God and stand toe to toe with God, but we can't. We are a people with unclean lips and lives. We need Someone to stand in our place and speak on our behalf. And we have such a One, Jesus, for the Psalmist writes:

<sup>4</sup>But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.” (Psalm 130).

This is why the writer to the Hebrews writes that Jesus: “<sup>24</sup> For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. “ Jesus entered into the Holy Place to offer Himself up as the sinless Sacrifice for sin, for your sin, for my sin, for the sin of the whole world. In the Old Testament, the High Priest was given the duty to go into the Holy Place and offer sacrifices to God for all of the sins of the people. Animals would be slaughtered and their blood shed to reveal to the people the costliness of their sinfulness. But Jesus didn't offer any animal sacrifice, He offered Himself on Calvary's cross, the very Lamb of God, shedding His blood for the forgiveness of all sin. And Jesus did this only once, for once was enough, for Jesus appeared once and died and rose again once and for all for to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

And so Jesus, just as He was appointed once to die for the sins of the world, will come again in judgment. Once He came as Savior, the next time He comes as Judge, first time Jesus came He came to offer Himself for the sins of the world. The next time Jesus appears He will judge both the living and the dead. But note what

the writer to the Hebrews says, that Jesus comes, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

Who are those who are eagerly waiting for Him, and why are they eagerly waiting for Him? Those who eagerly wait for Jesus are those whose sins have been washed away in the blood of the Lamb. You are I and all who believe in Jesus have had our sins washed away in the blood of the Lamb of God. In the waters of Baptism our sins have been washed away, our consciences cleansed by Jesus. Today in the Lord's Supper we come forward to receive the True Body and Blood of Jesus, for the forgiveness of all of our sins. Christ has taken residence in your heart and life, for if anyone is in Christ that person is a new creation, Christ lives in and through His children, who have been recreated in Jesus to live for Jesus.

We eagerly wait for Jesus to return, for we know that He who has promised is faithful to His own, Jesus promises to come quickly to take us to the place that He has prepared for His own. Jesus says: "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. <sup>4</sup> And you know the way to where I am going." <sup>5</sup> Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

On that Day when Jesus takes you home, you won't have to worry about seeing this is your life on the big screen. Why? Because Jesus has covered your sin and your sinful life has been turned into a life of praise of Jesus. You have been baptized into Christ. You have been saved by a free gift of His love. You are God's

new creation. It is no longer you who live, but Christ who lives in you, the life you live by faith in the Son of God. On that day all who believe in Jesus will hear Him say: 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? <sup>38</sup> And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' <sup>40</sup> And Jesus will answer saying, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."

So may you be found faithful to Christ unto death, so that you will receive the crown of everlasting life. In thanks to Him who gives you life, live your life to the glory of God, walking in the newness of life that God has given to you in Jesus, for your life is all about Christ.

Amen