

SERVICE PLAN 2
The Meaning of Life: A Gift from God
Second Sunday: Life Is a Gift to Be Respected As God Is Taking It
“Is it OK to pull the plug? What about advanced medical directives?”

Last week we talked about how important it is to defend life as the gift of God that it is: the blood-bought value it has. Today, we see that respecting God as the Author and Controller of life means not trying to prevent Him from doing what He does – not thinking ourselves above Him – but being willing to let go.

Service Plan:

Hymn Suggestions: CW 417, *I'm But a Stranger Here*

427 – *We Are the Lord's*

439 – *Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me*

231 – *Now the Silence*

218 – *Then the Glory*

The Nunc Dimittis (*Song of Simeon*) – various locations – CW, CWOS, CWNSS, etc.

Opening Hymn: 231 *Now the Silence* – or – CW 417, *I'm But a Stranger Here*

Invocation:

P: In the name of the Father

C: Who gave us life

P: In the name of the Son (+)

C: Who purchased our life with His blood.

P: In the name of the Holy Spirit

C: Who makes new life ours through faith. Amen.

The Confession and Absolution:

P: As we consider the gift of life that is ours, God brings us to the realization that our sins, in fact, deserve death. But our God is a merciful God who wants to declare all of our sins forgiven and gives us new life. Therefore let us confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful, and that I have disobeyed You in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve Your punishment, both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

P: God our heavenly Father has been merciful to us and has given His only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Jesus came to pay for your sins and buy back your life with His holy precious blood and His innocent sufferings and death. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord

Gloria suggestion:

Glory to God by David Haas, GIA Publications, G-3109 Melodic

Gloria by James Chepponis, GIA Publications, G-2955 CW, Hymns

262-264

The First Lesson: 1 Kings 2:1-4

(Introduction ideas) David knew that God would soon take his life, but he didn't fight it. He knew that he was in God's hands, so his concern was not for himself but for his family and his people. He wanted to make sure that God was given honor and respect in everything, even after he was gone.

1 Kings 2:1-4 When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son. "I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, show yourself a man, and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in his ways, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go, and that the LORD may keep his promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.' "

The Psalm of the Day: Psalm 31, pg. 77 CW

The Second Lesson – 2 Timothy 4:6-13

(Introduction ideas) As Paul is approaching the end of his life, notice his view of life. He has fought the good fight and heaven is waiting for him. But as long as he is here, he longs for Christian fellowship, and he longs for God's Word.

2 Timothy 4:6-13 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. Do your best to come to me quickly, for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.

Optional other 2nd reading: **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

(Introduction ideas) Paul reminds the believer that death is not an end, but God has a glorious future in store for us on the other side of death.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

The Verse of the Day. Alleluia. Alleluia. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Alleluia. (Philippians 1:21)

The Gospel Lesson: Luke 2:25-32

(Introduction ideas) Simeon was ready to go home. God's promises were fulfilled, and Simeon was content that his times were in God's hands.

Luke 2:25-32 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Hymn of the Day: 427 – *We Are the Lord's*

Sermon Text: 2 Timothy 4:6-13

Sermon Theme:

The Right Way To Die (or – Let's Learn From Paul the Right Way To Die)

- I. Having Finished the Race
- II. Having Your Needs Met

The Confession of Faith: *As our confession of faith on this Celebration of Life Sunday, we use the words of Martin Luther's Explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed to confess God as the Giver of our faith and the Guarantor of our future glory.*

I believe that I cannot by my own thinking or choosing believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him.

But the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian church he daily and fully forgives all sins to me and all believers.

On the Last Day he will raise me and all the dead and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ

This is most certainly true.

The Prayer of the Church

P: LORD God, heavenly Father, You are the Giver of life and the One who controls life, death and everything in between. We glorify You and thank You for the gift of life You have given to each of us. We ask that You be with us as we go about our lives, help us to remember that our times are in Your hands and You control it all for our good. Teach us to number our days aright that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Lord, in Your mercy...

C: Hear our prayer.

P: Forgive us, Savior of all, for the times when we fail to trust Your will for our lives. Give us the strength to live with You as Lord of our lives and help us to act in a way that clearly demonstrates our trust in You. Lord, in your mercy...

C: Hear our prayer.

P: God who wounds and God who heals, we do not always understand why you do what you do, but help us to accept it as it truly is – good. Now we ask that You be with all those who are faced with difficult decisions about their health. Comfort them with Your promises and keep those promises, that not even questions of life and death can pluck them out of Your hands. Lord, in Your mercy..

C: Hear our prayer.

P: We especially ask that You be with those who can not help themselves because of their weakness or disease. Allow them the peace of knowing that You will do with them exactly as You wish according to their good, and strengthen their families to be able to say with confidence: My life is the LORD's. Lord, in Your mercy...

C: Hear our prayer.

At this point specific prayers for local issues may be highlighted

P: Now hear us, LORD, as we bring You our private petitions.

P: In Jesus' name, we pray all these things, in whose name we also pray:

C: Our Father... THE LORD'S PRAYER

Closing Hymn: CW 417, *I'm But a Stranger Here* – or – 218, *Then the Glory*

Nunc Dimittis – (Consider version in CW – Occasional Services, Prayer at the Close of Day II)