

It Would Be Far Better for me if I Died Right Now!

I have noticed that many people seem to put much emphasis on being healthy and living a long life. I can understand unbelievers thinking this way. I am not sure how appropriate it is for Christians to think this way. It seems to me that many Christians seem to be greatly attached to life in this world rather than desiring to leave it.

Nearing the end of his life, Paul was imprisoned at Rome. While imprisoned, he wrote the following words: *“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you”* (Philippians 1:21-24).

Peter echoed similar sentiments:

*“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in **holy conduct and godliness**, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells”* (2 Peter 3:10-13).

Their teaching focused primarily on living godly lives. They taught us to not set our hearts on money and they warned us to make sure that the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of this world do not choke out the fruit of Christ-life in us. They healed people but the main focus even on that was the glory of God rather than the well-being of the person being healed. Hebrews 2 says that the main reason for the healings and miracles was so unbelievers would know that God was bearing witness to His message spoken through His servants. Jesus and His apostles taught that we would have trials and suffering in this life. Their focus was not on escaping the discomfort of suffering, but rather, looking forward to being with Him after we die. The emphasis of the New Testament seems to be in contrast with the focus of many who claim to be Christian these days. It just appears that most seem too attached to this world. In contrast, John said the following: *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him”* (1 John 2:15).

Jesus said, *“Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness.”* This should be our number one focus rather than having a comfortable life. *“Therefore, we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad”* (II Corinthians 5:9-10).

What if a Christian had this view?

Pretend an unusual looking blemish or mole appeared suddenly and remained on the Christian's body. Should he go to the doctor to have it biopsied? Should he pray about that blemish? What if he simply prayed every day, thanking God for the health that had that day. Let us assume that his life is fully dedicated to advance God's interests and that he had no other ambition. Say he figures that if a blemish was cancer, God will either take him home (which is the best thing possible) or He will enable him to continue serving Him, advancing His interests. If God wants him to continue advancing His interests, it is up to Him to keep him physically able to do so. If God would rather take him home, why would that Christian try to postpone that event? Is this an unbiblical point of view or is it like Paul's way of living?

Note: I do not consider it a sin to go to the doctor or seek healing! I am merely suggesting that if a Christian has a view like the one above, he may have Paul's perspective. Also, I am quite sure that if I suddenly had a very painful sickness, I would probably go to the hospital if I thought the healthcare professionals could help me.