

The Death Rate

By

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In the 1970s a newspaper caption read: "DROP IN DEATH RATE SHOWS WERE HANGING IN THERE." The report stated that it is good news that the mortality rate in America has declined to the lowest point in the nation's 200 plus history. For example, according to the article, in 1876 Massachusetts the death rate was 19.8 per thousand but by 1975 it had dropped to 8.9 deaths per thousand, the first time the rate has ever dropped below 9 deaths per thousand. Very encouraging indeed the article declared.

It is true that medical science has brought us a long way! That is good news but unfortunately there is also some bad news as well that must be considered. Though the death rate has been reduced, yet 100% of all those born will eventually die. Life may be extended a few years longer than 100 years ago, but that does not change the inevitability of death. The only possible exception will be those Saints living when Jesus returns to rapture the Church prior to the terrible 7 year Tribulation (1 Thes. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-53). The fact of death is just real today as it was 2000 years ago. This means, of course, the death rate will always be 1 thousand out of 1 thousand.

Those who fear God and know Him personally through the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ need not fear death. We may have a feeling of dread as we personally think about the discomforts and the pains that sometimes accompany dying but just one moment after we say our farewell to this world, we will be carried by the angels to the gates of Paradise (Lk. 16:22). Heaven is a wonderful place of light, peace, joy, and eternal happiness. Frances Havergal, a gifted hymn writer, on the last day of her life asked a friend to read for her the 42nd. Chapter of Isaiah. When the friend read, "I, the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and I will keep thee," Mrs. Havergal stopped her and said, "CALLED, HELD, KEPT." "That is enough. I'll go home to glory on those words." A few minutes later her soul entered into Heaven.

Yes dear friend, when our Lord rescues us out of the darkness of sin and brings us into his marvelous light, he leads and keeps us until we are safe in our everlasting mansion in heaven. I Thessalonians 4:13-18 declares that though we sorrow for fellow Saints when they die, yet we do not sorrow as those who have no hope. We have a hope which rests in the Lord who saves all who come to Him.

The early Christians, in the midst of broken hearts at the passing of those they loved, celebrated their death because they had a trust and confidence in the Lord and his promises. For the Lord promises that those who die in Him will someday be brought back from dead and reunited with their believing friends and family. Death for the Saint is only a temporary nuisance not a permanent condition. We have the joy and assurance of an eternal home and destiny.

Dear friend, do you have that assurance of heaven because of Christ's presence in your heart and life? Settle your eternal destiny right now, at this very moment, by inviting the Lord Jesus Christ into your heart and life today.