**FUNERAL MESSAGE FOR A BELIEVER**

Scripture gives us insight into the amazing place of Heaven.

Gates of pearl. Streets of Gold. Crystal sea. Glorious mansions.

And when we think of the riches of Heaven, and how wonderful it is, we have the thought that Heaven could never be better.

But Heaven got richer Tuesday when \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ arrived.

When John Owen, the great Puritan, lay on his deathbed his secretary wrote a letter to a friend for him. His secretary wrote "I am still in the land of the living." "Stop," said Owen. "Change that and say, I am yet in the land of the dying, but I hope soon to be in the land of the living."

This morning \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can say along with John Owens that he has left the land of the dying and is now in the land of the living. He/She and the many saints that have gone on before him/her, are there worshiping at the feet of Jesus right now.

Today we've come here today to celebrate his/her life.

“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints” (Ps. 116:15).

A. That which is so difficult and heart-rending to us, in this case, is precious in God’s sight—one of His children has gone home.

B. A saint is not one who has inherent goodness or moral perfection—it is simply one who has been separated from sin by the gospel and cleansed in the precious blood of Christ.

C. When a faithful child of God dies, they are released from the pain, uncertainty and inequities of this life, and they are united with loved ones that have gone on before them, and most importantly, with Jesus.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ stepping from this world into eternity was his/her gain.

“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21).

A. Paul cherished this sentiment because he viewed death as a doorway to gaining more of Christ.

B. At the end of his life he wrote to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:6–8).

"For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. 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. (2 Timothy 4:6-8 NIV)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ fought the good fight and lead a great life in The Lord.

He/She remained faithful to God even unto death.

"Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown."(Revelation 2:10 NIV)

C. In every instance, when a faithful child of God departs this life for the next, they have a great gain.

We know for certain that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is better off now than he/she was on her greatest day here on earth.

"Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord.

We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. (2 Corinthians 5:6, 8 NIV)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is with the Lord.

But what about those who are still here on this side of eternity.

Let me encourage you with a couple of things today:

1. The Lord is With You

This is a time of celebration but it is also a difficult time.

"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” (Deuteronomy 31:8 NIV)

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9 NIV)

2. LIVE FOR JESUS

Living for God makes both life and death meaningful.

"To the righteous, death is a doorway leading to a crown." (2 Cor. 5:1–7)

For you here today, live in such a way to see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ again, and to live eternally with Christ.

During times like these we draw our strength from the Lord. Even when you feel as though you cannot make it, remember the words of Paul.

Philippians 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.”

Let’s pray.