

*Hello! This is Dorothy -*

There is a subject which every one of us has to face sometime or other. Perhaps it is because of loved ones or perhaps in our own life, but it is the subject of death. We have a wonderful neighbor and only yesterday, this lovely man explained to us that they have just diagnosed cancer. That is a word that is so dreaded by so many. Unfortunately, it sounds, in many ways, as if this case is quite far advanced. I remember at the time of my father's death that the doctor said, "I never told you, but I realized he must have been riddled with cancer." So many of us do not realize there is a death process going on within. We do not like to face this word, *death*. We like to dress ourselves up and think, "No, I have a way of fighting this. I will just put on another layer of makeup or coloring or do something with my hair. People then will not realize this decay is on, and I am facing death." Death is something we all have to face. **It is appointed unto man once to die, and after this, the judgment. (Hebrews 9:27).**

Death is a picture of a condition and the condition is separation. There are two deaths in this world. One is the *physical death*, which separates us from our loved ones in this world. The other is the *spiritual death*, which separates us from the presence of God. Jesus

experienced both of these deaths on the Cross. They were not the payment of our sins, but the experiences of identification with our condition. When Jesus shouted forth, **It is finished**, He did not have to hang around any more, but He identified with us. He knew what it was to come to His beloved friends, when they grieved over Lazarus at his death. He was the one who called him forth from the grave. But He also knows what it is to have been with the heart of a Mary and a Martha, and to weep with them and to mourn with them. Most of us at some time in our life have either seen death or have been with those who are experiencing this separation.

The reason for the agony of the Garden that Jesus went through — this dreadful, dreadful time when He cried to the Father to release Him — was because He knew there would be a separation from Himself. That cost that our Lord was willing to face for you and me caused, as it were, great drops of blood to be sweat. The Trinity was separated. And who did it? You and me! Have you ever thought about this? We are the ones who caused this to happen! God the Son was separated from God the Father, because it was our sin that was laid on our Messiah, Jesus. The Son was separated from the presence of the Father, just as we are separated in our fallen condition. Jesus physically died, because we needed to see Him come out of the grave and give us the foundation for believing in the resurrection of the human body after death.

Oh, it is a glorious thing that Jesus did in what He accomplished in what we call the Passion Week and in what He brought forth when He rose from the dead. Glory of glories! You know, when He rose from the death, others came, too; He brought them up with Him. He was One who was seen by over five hundred people, we are told in Scripture. His resurrection power proved to people He was alive ! You see, that is the hope for you and me. It is the hope for our neighbor. It is the hope for the person who only sees more pain, more suffering, more difficulty, and then death. But death is a glorious door for those who love and know Jesus Christ. Death is a door that we can anticipate with joy in His perfect timing.

But in the meantime, perhaps some of us do not realize that we are separated by a death, a death which has separated us from knowing Jesus, knowing His voice, being in communion with Him, realizing why we are here on planet earth, getting involved with all kinds of things. We are born in that death. It is as if because of our sin, we are born dead! Now isn't that strange? But that is just about describing our condition before God: we are spiritually dead. Therefore, we do not hear; we do not see, we do not feel the things that are going on in the things of the Spirit. We do not understand the love of God. We look out and say, "Why is God allowing this? Isn't that terrible that that happened? Why would that child have to die? Why would those people suffer? Why this persecution? Why would those people be in power?"

All the time, we wag the finger at a Holy God and we do not realize that we do not understand, because we are spiritually dead to understand.

But when we come to understand the work of the Cross, when we see this great prize; when we see that it was I who put Christ in that position to be separated from His Holy Father; and when I realize it was my sin that He bore; when I see that the Blood to be shed was representative of my sin - at that point, I say, *Jesus, please forgive me. I repent before You. I do not want to pretend any more to be what I am not. I turn to You with all my heart and I ask that Your Spirit will come on me and cleanse me.*

*In Jesus' Name. Amen.*