

# Christmas and the End-of-Life Question: Will I Make it Home Safely?

John Knox Presbyterian Church, 109 SW Normandy Road, Seattle, Washington 98166

Sunday 6 January 2013

Epiphany Sunday

Dr. Robert Bayley

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

Text: *"And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route."* Matthew 2:12

## Question number one: Where can I find eternal life?

*"Now this is eternal life: that they may **know you**, the one true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."* Jesus – John 17:3

**Q:** Have you found eternal life through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

## Question number two: When does eternal life begin?

*"And this is the testimony: God **has** given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who **has** the Son **has** life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."* 1 John 5:13

*"Whoever believes in the Son **has** eternal life."* John 3:36

**Q:** Do you have an assurance deep within that you have eternal life now?

## Question number three: If I have eternal life now, can I ever lose it?

*"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand."* John 10:27-29

**Q:** Do you have a peaceful assurance deep within that your eternal life in Christ is secure?

## Question number four: If I have eternal life now, what will happen at the end of my life when my body dies?

*"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me, that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" John 14:1-6*

**Q:** Are you anxious about what will happen to you when you die or do you know where you are going?

**Q: So what can we say to our Christmas question: Will I make it home safely?**

*“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

*“Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5*

*“I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed – in a flash, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’ ‘Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?’ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

1 Corinthians 15:50-57

**Q: On Whom does the responsibility for getting us home safely rest?**

*“...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6*

*"And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish." New Living Translation*

*“To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.”*

Jude 24-25

**EPIPHANY PRAYER**

Holy Jesus, every day, keep us in the narrow way;  
and when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need to star to guide, where no clouds Thy glory hide. Amen.

William Dix (1837-1898) – “As With Gladness Men of Old”