

Hear now the Word of the Lord as it is written in ...

First Lesson:

Psa 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. {2} He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. {3} He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. {4} Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. {5} You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. {6} Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Psa 121

I will lift up my eyes to the hills; From whence comes my help? {2} My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth. {3} He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. {4} Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep. {5} The LORD is your keeper; The LORD is your shade at your right hand. {6} The sun shall not strike you by day, Nor the moon by night. {7} The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. {8} The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore.

Second Lesson:

Mat 5:1-12

And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. {2} Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: {3} **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. {4} Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted. {5}**

Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. {6}
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. {7} Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. {8} Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God. {9} Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God. {10} Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. {11} "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. {12} "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

John 14:1-7

"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. {2} "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. {3} "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. {4} "And where I go you know, and the way you know." {5} Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" {6} Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. {7} "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

Third Lesson:

Charity 165. (VI.) Charity in the Officers under the Commander of an army.

Everyone of them may become charity, that is, an angel of heaven, if he looks to the Lord and shuns evils as sins, and sincerely, justly, and faithfully performs the duty of his office. For thus they too do goods of use perpetually, which are of charity; for their minds are in them, and when the mind is perpetually

in goods of use it becomes a form of charity. His country is his neighbor; in the spiritual idea, he is its defense and security from invasion and destruction. He does not falsely exult in what is of no merit; nor does he exult even in what is deserving. This he thinks ought to be; which makes him of contented mind, and not vainglorious. In war he loves the soldiers under him, according to their valor, sincerity, and obedience; is thoughtful for them, and desires their good as he does his own; for they are victims to the glory of his use. For officers have the glory of the use and the glory of the honor; the soldiers who are charities have the glory of the use, and not the glory of the honor.

HH 414

Those who are in heaven are continually advancing towards the spring of life, with a greater advance towards a more joyful and happy spring the more thousands of years they live; and this to eternity, with increase according to the growth and degree of their love, charity, and faith. [Those] who have died old and worn out with age, if they have lived in faith in the Lord, in charity to the neighbour, and in happy conjugal love with a [partner], advance with the succession of years more and more in the flower of youth [and into a beauty or handsomeness] that transcends every conception of any such beauty as is seen on the earth. Goodness and charity is what gives this form and thus manifests its own likeness, causing the joy and beauty of charity to shine forth from every least particular of the face, and causing them to be the very forms of charity.

Some who beheld this were struck with amazement. When this form is beheld it is beauty unspeakable, affecting with charity the very inmost life of the mind. In a word, to grow old in heaven is to grow young. Such forms or such beauties do those who have lived in love to the Lord and in charity towards the neighbour become in the other life. All angels are such forms in endless variety; and of these heaven is constituted.

**Here end the lessons. Blessed are they who hear the
Word of God and keep it. *Amen.***

Sydney Richard Parker

A Memorial Address by the Rev. James P. Cooper

October 8, 2005

It seems to us that death is the end of life. When the spirit leaves the body, we are no longer able to see, speak to, or be with the person we have loved. But this is nothing but an appearance, for everyone's spirit lives eternally. This is what the Lord taught when He said to Nicodemus,

(John 3:6-8) “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. {7} “Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ {8} “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

In other words, the essential person is not the body which is born of the flesh, but it is the mind which is born of the spirit.

Unlike the body, which must return to the natural substances from which it was formed, the mind and spirit survive the fall of the body because they are not material creations. The essential human spirit is a living thing formed and fashioned by the Lord Himself from spiritual substances in such a way that it is beyond the reach of death.

It is death in the sense that the person is no longer conscious of the world of nature. There is no longer any need to be conscious of natural world, because the spirit has been awakened into the world of the spirit. Once the earthly body is removed, the way is opened for the ascent of the spirit into a world of its own proper life and use. This is a marvelous thing, and yet it is in a sense, perfectly “natural” for it is in the order of the Creator's own plan for us, that there shall be a heaven from the human race, a heaven full of people who have freely chosen to live their lives in the Lord's own order and so have

freely returned His love. The great marvel is that we have all been created to live to eternity in heaven: our time in the natural world, which we love and hold on to so dearly, is actually only a period of preparation for the true life which is to come.

With this in mind, it is then evident that death is not a thing to be feared. It is nothing more than the normal process by means of which the Divine purpose in creation is brought to its fulfillment. Like a door, death is the gateway to life, the life which was planned for us from the very beginning of Creation. Everyone must eventually pass through this door, each in the Lord's own time. So, we can see that death is not what the appearances of the world of nature would have us believe. It is not the end of life, but the true beginning!

Since we have all been created for the spiritual world, it must be true that the transition from earthly to spiritual life will involve no sudden changes, no rude awakenings into alien surroundings. The Lord has provided that the change be made so gently that the person himself may not even be conscious of it. The changes from natural to spiritual life all take place while the spirit sleeps. A new body is given, and the plane of consciousness shifts from the natural world to the spiritual world. When he awakens, all things appear to him even as they appeared in this world. It is as if he had fallen into a healing slumber and awakened again, refreshed.

When we think of those who have left us, we must not think of them in the light of meaningless superstitions, but to think of them as we knew them here on earth, as living human beings who enjoyed life. Everything that was part of the person on earth is with him in the life after death – his loves, his hopes, his sense of humour, his pleasures; nothing about his essential character has changed. There he will live as he lived here, serving the neighbour in his daily activities, enjoying recreations of all kinds, living as he wants to live, except now with far greater freedom, and far greater delight.

We should not think of death as some dark force which takes away the flame of life. Our Heavenly Father does not create life only to destroy it. With infinite love which exceeds human understanding, He gently draws all people to Himself, as He Himself said in John:– “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me” (12:32). This is the destiny of all God’s children.

The truth is that death is an act of Divine mercy, the way that the spirit is released from its earthly bonds in order that it might enter its true home. This mercy is especially evident with those who have been burdened with grave illnesses, or great pain. With such people, further days on earth mean only continued suffering and mental strain for both themselves and those who love them and care for them. Life becomes for them a heavy burden, a dead weight on the spirit. But, by means of death, new life is given, and in this renewal, a person enters into a life in harmony with his true, internal character.

Sydney Parker was born in Deale, Kent, GB on Jan. 25, 1910. He left school at 15 to enter the new field of “wireless” communications. After completing the school he joined the Merchant Marine and went to sea as the wireless operator on a ship. He celebrated his 16th birthday on the Falkland Islands, thousands of miles away from home.

At 19 he immigrated to Canada, working first for Standard Radio (which later became Rogers Communications), then moving to Air Canada (known then as Trans Canada Airlines)

Sydney and Mary’s 50 years of marriage began in 1936, and produced 5 daughters: Joan, Ruth, Mary, Susan, and Peggy. Two world events had a significant impact on their marriage. The Depression delayed the date of their marriage and established a pattern of necessary frugality. The other was World War II. Sydney joined the RCAF as an officer and worked in the field of radios and radar in England. When the war ended in Europe, he volunteered for additional work in

India and Burma. His sense of duty, honour, and country was an inspiration to many.

After 4 years overseas, like so many others of his generation, he quietly returned home to his wife and two children and resumed his job at Air Canada.

After the war, there were three more children and a close association with Olivet Church – first in Parkdale and later after the move to Etobicoke. He and Mary shared the principle of volunteerism so Mary taught Kindergarten at ODS and regularly played the organ as a volunteer. Sydney served as Society Treasurer for many years, took a turn as Editor of the Son's Bulletin, chaired the Executive Board, and enjoyed taking part in various work parties.

Their home was open to support the work of a series of Olivet Pastors, and lots of regular people came for Sunday lunch, too! He had a dry sense of humour and loved to read funny stories to his guests, sometimes picking favourites from Reader's Digest and dramatically reading them. And Mary, bless her heart, laughed every time. Many people have mentioned the story about the "Anti-Lion Powder" as one of his favourites, and he really enjoyed using his "electric carving fork" when serving the roast to guests on Sunday.

Living at home with a wife and five daughters he felt the need for refuge, and so had a workshop that the envy of all the men who visited it, either just to look, or to get some help fixing something. Everyone agrees that his work was ingenious and of the highest quality, but he saw flaws invisible to others and thought that his handwork was a "botch."

This is perhaps more a sign of his humility than his handiwork. He was a humble man, and a man of integrity. He measured himself by very high standards. But if he did not measure up to his own standards he did not, as some do, just give up. He kept working at it, seeking to be guided by the Lord in His Word, seeking always to be useful.

His devotion to the concept of use shows in every aspect of his life, whether it be his serving the uses of the Lord's kingdom through the church, serving his country honorably and well, the lovely, gentle, funny letters he wrote to his daughters, or the furniture he built out of various scraps of wood and then painted so it would all look the same.

Today we are all here to remember the many ways that he touched our lives, and to celebrate the fact that he is even now awakening into the life of heaven and being reunited with his beloved wife Mary, whom he has not seen in 19 years.

HH 494. The state of man's spirit that immediately follows his life in the world being such, he is then recognized by his friends and by those he had known in the world; So all, as soon as they enter the other life, are recognized by their friends, their relatives, and those in any way known to them; and they talk with one another, and afterward associate in accordance with their friendships in the world. ... husband and wife come together and congratulate each other, and continue together....

We are grateful that the Lord has taken him into the spiritual world. He will be deeply missed by his family and many friends, but it should not be otherwise. We know that there is a God, that He is good, and that His mercy is forever. The death of the body is not the end of human existence, but the gateway to spiritual life. As the Lord said, **“Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.** (LUK 12:32)

AMEN.

Sentence of Scripture

(John 14:21) “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

Closing Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, our Heavenly Father, when someone we know and love passes into the spiritual world we are filled with many thoughts and questions. Why now and not some other time? How did this serve Your Divine Providence? We feel happiness because he has been released from his pain, and we feel sadness because he is no longer with us. O Lord, as we open our minds to thoughts of You and Your government of the natural and spiritual worlds, we pray that You will give us comfort, hope, and peace. *Amen.*

