

Genesis 5:1-32 – Life is Short

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Main Point – Walk with God now, through Christ, so you will live even though you die.

Maybe reading ch5 bored you to death.

And you're thinking, "Why am I here, why am I wasting my time listening to this, when it's so irrelevant?"-----

But I really encourage you to listen, because it does matter.-----

Death is all around us. Death awaits us.

Our pets die. Our loved ones die.-----

(SLIDE) That's my brother Garreth, and the family grave where my grandmother, and my father's ashes lay; with my great, great, great grandfather's remains.-----

Our loved ones die, sometimes too young.

And yet most of us try to avoid thinking about it.

Even at funeral's these days, most Aussies prefer to celebrate a person's life, rather than grieve their death.-----

And after someone has died we can struggle to talk about them, even with their family members.-----

But God gives us passages like this, to confront us with our mortality.-----

Have you thought much about your death? And what awaits you after death?-----

I hope you won't leave today feeling depressed.

I pray you'll leave filled with hope, because of some wonderful news.-----

But first, a quick **recap**. **(SLIDE)**-----

To help us understand Gen chapter 5, let's quickly **review chapters 1-4**.-----

Genesis 1&2 taught us that God made the world, and everything in it.

He made it good, including the first man and woman.

And ch1 **v26**, **(SLIDE)** says they were made in God's image and likeness.-----

Remember that was about ruling the world under God, and being like God in our love and Christ-like relationships.-----

And human beings are still made in God's image.

For as **Gen 5 vv1-3** say, not only were Adam n' Eve in God's likeness, but Adam, had a son in his likeness.-----

Adam in God's likeness, Seth in Adam's likeness.

Therefore, all Adam's descendants, so all people who've ever lived, including you & I, were made in God's image and likeness too.-----

The trouble is, as **Gen3** said, Adam & Eve chose to reject God's rule over them.

They disobeyed their Maker.-----

And consequences came from this sin.-----

The image of God in us hasn't gone, but it's tarnished, muddled, damaged. **(SLIDE)**-----

We don't rule the world in righteousness, or love in relationships, like God does.-----

And like Adam and Eve, we've all rejected God's rule over us.

We ignore God, and run our lives as if we're in charge.

And as Gen 3 taught us, our relationships with God, each other and the world all got broken.

Then things go from bad to worse in **ch4**, with Cain murdering his brother in anger.

But we heard last week, selfishness drives our anger too.-----

More than brokenness though, the ultimate consequence for sin is death.

(SLIDE, Gen3.19) For dust you are, and to dust you will return.

Death comes to all people, because all people sin [Rom5.12], and reject the God who gives life.

This reality is rammed home to us over and over and over in ch5.

What's humanity's reality?----- (SLIDE) To Live, and then Die.-----

That's what we see here in Gen 5, from v3.

At 130yrs, Adam had a son, named Seth; then he lived another 800 years, and had other sons and daughters.

'So Adam's life Adam lasted 930 years; then... he died'.-----

10 generations are mentioned in this family tree.

And the same pattern is used to describe each, isn't it?-----

V6, Seth lived X years, he became the father of so and so (the eldest son). Then Seth lived this many more years, he had other children, and 'then he died'.

What did you notice about it all?-----

The **first** thing I noticed is **how long all these people lived**.

Adam 930 years, Seth 912. All of them over 700.

I just can't fathom that. Who knows at what age they went through puberty?-----

Let alone having your first son, at 105, like Seth did.

Imagine having your first child at 105!!!!!!!!!!!!-----

All these guys, all these descendants of Adam and Eve lived for centuries.

Not until chapter 6v3, would God begin to limit people's life spans to under 120.-----

Our lives are so short in comparison, aren't they?

The human being to ever live the longest was **Methuselah, v27**.

969 years.-----

Two comments about this:

Ps 90(v4) and **2Pet 3** tell us, **(SLIDE)** to the Lord 'a thousand years is like a day.'---

It's not literal, for God is eternal.

He never had a beginning, he will never have an end, but a thousand years are like a day to God.

And the longest-lived human being didn't even last a day in God's calendar.-----

We are a moment, God is forever.-----That should humble us.-----

My second comment is, Methuselah died at 969, but if you do the maths you'll discover he died in the year of the flood.

We'll look at Noah's ark and the flood next Sunday.

And that flood likely killed Methuselah.

Along with nearly everyone else, all these people.

Except **Noah, v29-32**.-----

The passage hints that with Noah something different will happen.

In **v32** the usual description isn't used.

And Noah didn't have children till after he was 500, and unlike all the others he had no daughters.----- His story won't end in death, until chapter 9.-----

Despite all this, the most significant thing in the chapter is said over & over:

These people lived for a while, had kids, they lived longer and then they died.---

Their situation, their lot in life was to live, have children, and die.

I personally don't know the **grief of those unable to have children**, whether you're single, or a couple without kids.

Or others grieve not having more children, or the loss of children.

So many causes of grief in our fallen world.-----

And if you know this grief I pray God comforts you, and helps you find peace, hope and your identity in Christ.

Because for all of us, kids won't give us true purpose or fulfilment, only Jesus can.---

But in Genesis, the theme of filling the earth with people; and challenge of family lines continuing is an important one.-----

And for all those in Gen 5, their lot in life was to live, have children, and die.-----

That's certainly our ancestors' story too.-----

Looking at **my family tree**, (SLIDE) I learn this...

In 1833 Thomas Le Page was born on the English Channel island of Guernsey.

When he was 20 he came to Australia.

Thomas was 68 years old when he fathered James.

He had other sons and daughters, and had 3 wives die.

So Thomas lasted 79 years and then he died.-----

James was 22 when he fathered Tom. So James lasted 73 years and then he died.

Tom was 26 when he fathered Russell.

Tom, my grandfather was a horrible man. He lasted 73 years and then he died.-----

Russell, my Dad, was 27 when he fathered me. He had other sons.

He lasted 76 years, and then he died. Last year.-----

It's sobering and sad when we recount our death-ridden family history like this, isn't it?---

But I want us all to be clear on the **take-away message** from chapter 5:

Adam lived, and then he died, Seth lived and then he died. (SLIDE)

They lived and then they died.-----

Live, and then die, is a tolling bell, a clanging gong, a haunting refrain, repeated over and over and over. We're not meant to miss it!

God calls out to you through this passage, "You will live, and then you will die."-----

I live now, and unless the Lord Jesus returns first, I will die.-----

Someone once wrote....

***There is a preacher** of the old school, but he speaks as boldly as ever.*

He is not popular, though the world is his parish, and he travels every part of the globe and speaks every language. He visits the poor, calls upon the rich, preaches to people of every religion and no religion, and the subject of his sermon is always the same.

He is an eloquent preacher, often stirring feelings which no other preacher could, and bringing tears to eyes that never weep.

His arguments none are able to refute, nor is there any heart that has remained unmoved by the force of his appeals.

He shatters life with his message. Most people hate him. His name?-----

Yes, death.-----

Every tombstone is his pulpit, every newspaper prints his text, and someday every one of you will be his sermon.-----

We don't want to be confronted with our own mortality do we?

Most of us don't want to think about death.

We want to be young, look young, be fit, energetic, enjoy life.-----

For some though, if life is really hard, or one of great pain, loneliness, deep depression; maybe death seems like a way out.

Whether we are avoiding death, or wishing it would come, we need to prepare now and get ready for it.

Because, after death you will meet your Maker.-----

The Bible says in **Heb 9:27** (SLIDE) 'it is appointed for people to die once, and after this, [face] judgment'.-----

The Bible, the word of the God who made us, teaches, not reincarnation, not rebirth; not even that everyone who dies goes to a better place, n' be with their relatives.

Not everyone who dies goes to heaven. No.-----
 After we die, we will all face the judgement of God.-----
 Sin brings death. And death for most people won't bring peace.-----

Revelation describes the judgement day, which will take place when Jesus, who died & rose again, comes back from heaven as Judge.-----[Jn 5.26f; Mt 24.30; **Rev 19.15**]
(SLIDE) And it says, **Rev 20:13**

'death and Hades [the realm of the dead] gave up the dead that were in them; each one was judged according to their works. ¹⁴ Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.-----

We will all die, all die physically, and likely have our bodies buried or cremated. But without Christ the death we should fear is this second death.

The second death for people's souls, is hell.

Jesus describes it as **(SLIDE)** a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth.-----
(Mt 13.49-50; 22.13; 25.30, 46)

An eternity without God, in torment, and friendless, loveless isolation.-----
 When Christ returns he will bring judgement.
 That's God's just consequence for those who've rejected & disobeyed the perfectly good God, the God we are responsible to.-----
 That's an eternity I don't want.----- Do you?-----
 And I don't want you to go there.-----
 I know this is confronting and hard.
 But as we'll see consider next week, we don't grasp how bad our sin is, and how holy God is.-----

The question we need to ask is, how do we escape this second death judgement?----
(SLIDE) Is there any hope?-----

Yes there is. Hope can be found in Jesus.-----

While we cannot escape our physical death, we can escape the second and more terrifying eternal death, through Jesus.-----

Do you remember the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead?-----

In **John 11**, Lazarus had been dead n' buried in a tomb for four days.

And Jesus brought him back to life. **(SLIDE)**

People today might be brought back to life after 4 minutes, but not four days.-----

And when Jesus says to Lazarus' sister Martha, in **John 11.23**, **(SLIDE)** "Your brother will rise again".

Martha replies: "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live. ²⁶ Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

²⁷ "Yes, Lord," she told him

Jesus tells us that in him we gain resurrection and life.-----

As **Hebrews 9** said **(SLIDE)**, straight after saying we'll all die once then face judgement: Christ, sacrificed 'once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but ^[9] to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.'-----

Remember, death is the consequence for sin.

And on the cross Jesus endured our consequence and judgement for us-----

He died, in our place.

There Jesus was relationally separated from God, so that we can escape that and be saved.-----

But he didn't stay dead. He rose up, defeating death, never to die again.

So that all who trust in him can share in the life Jesus now has.

This life Jesus gives through his death & resurrection is no temporary resuscitation.

The resurrection life he gives is eternal; for-ever.

Yes, even though you die physically, whoever trusts in Jesus will live.-----

That'll be Only joy and peace and fulfillment for all eternity, in the loving and glorious presence of God.-----

Life better than we've ever known it.-----

If you trust in Jesus you will never experience the second death that is hell.

And isn't that the best news?-----

Don't you want this life?-----

Back in Gen 5 there was one special man we skipped over.

Enoch.----- Do you remember what was said of Enoch?-----

Gen 5v22,(SLIDE) 'Enoch was 65 years old when he fathered Methuselah.

After that 'Enoch walked with God 300 years and fathered other sons and daughters.

²³ So Enoch's life lasted 365 years.(**SLIDE**)

²⁴ Enoch walked with God; then he was not there because God took him.

It's reminiscent of Elijah who was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind.(2Kin 2.11)

They're the only known people in history who didn't die.-----

For 300 years Enoch walked with God.

That means he shared an intimate relationship with God.[cf Noah 6.9]

Enoch trusted in the Lord. And he lived God's way, under God's rule.----

And one day, he went for a walk, and he never came back.-----

God took him, to enjoy God's presence and heaven forever.-----

A father was at the beach with his kids, When his four-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand, and led him to the shore, where a seagull lay dead in the sand.

'Daddy, what happened to him?' the son asked.-----

'He died and went to heaven,' the Dad replied.

The boy thought for a moment and then said, 'Did God throw him back down?'-----

God took Enoch to heaven, and he didn't throw him back down.----

I can't promise you that animals go to heaven. But...

If you trust in Jesus, God will take you to heaven, and he won't throw you back down.

God won't throw you out, but welcome you in love, and embrace you as his child.-----

I'm not promising that if you trust the Lord you will cheat death like Enoch.

But God promises that 'Whoever believes in Jesus will live, even though they die'.----

So will you entrust your life and your future to Jesus?-----

Maybe some of you are thinking, How do I know if I have trusted?-----

Well, one possible way to tell, is to ask yourself this:

If you died and you stood before God and He were to ask you,(**SLIDE**)

'Why should I let you into my Heaven?'---- What would you say?-----

Would you answer, Well I've been a pretty good person; I've tried to obey your commands; I attended church for years?-----

Or will you rely not on yourself, or your religion, but rely upon Jesus and cry,

"I don't deserve Heaven but Christ died for me,; he paid for my sins, he gave me life, and I come relying on Him."-----

You can't delay making this decision until later, or you're older.

Because life is short, and the matter is urgent.

Jesus once told this story,(SLIDE) "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

¹⁸ "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"

²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' **(Luke 12:16-20)**

If tonight, your life is demanded of you, are you prepared to meet your God?-----

Are you walking with God now?-----

Trusting in Him and living his way?-----

For when you die it's too late.-----

Friends, we don't get to live 900 years. **Life is short.** Life is short.-----

(SLIDE) Maybe you have an 'eat, drink and be merry' attitude to life?-----

That's what all these posts online tell us to do.-----

Live that way you want, whatever makes you happy.

But this advice**(SLIDE)** would be more wise n' better to follow.-----

[Life is short, eternity is long. Put your trust in Jesus today]

Even the majority of us who rely on Jesus and walk with God, we need to guard our hearts.-----

Are you taking life easy?-----

Focused on money or things, more pleasures now or pleasing people?

If so, death will catch us unawares.

We must not let**(SLIDE)** 'the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the Gospel, so that it fails to bear fruit in us.---[Mark 4.19]

So are there the bigger barns in your life, that are distracting you from relying on Christ, and looking to the future life he gives?-----

What's distracting you or blinding you to the return of Jesus, and your appointment with God?-----

Instead, let Jesus' victory over sin and death, encourage you to stand firm in faith, and hope.

Let nothing move you brothers and sisters.-----

My son Josiah, his 21 year old friend **Jude**, has been diagnosed with terminal cancer. He doesn't know how long he'll have.-----

But he has peace, real peace, because his faith and hope**(SLIDE)** are in the Lord.---

Rely upon Jesus and walk with God now, so that you can have the sure hope that even though you die, you will live.-----

Let's pray.