

The Keys Of Hell And Of Death

The greater our thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sweeter will be our blessings by Him. The more we see and understand the glory, majesty, and dominion of our Saviour, the richer will be our peace, comfort and confidence in Him in this world and for the world to come. A great Saviour inspires great security and great joy.

Christ the First and Last

Jesus Christ is the Lord of Glory. When John in his vision of Revelation heard the words of the Voice that spoke to him on the Isle of Patmos, he turned to see the Lord Jesus Christ, glorified in the midst of His people, the church. The Lord declared, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.'

Growing in grace

These were the words of the risen, reigning Christ, and if we grasp what they mean we shall expand our own knowledge of Christ, and enlarge our appreciation of His greatness, glory, power, majesty, holiness, and authority. Enlarging our view of the Saviour will always be a blessing to our souls as well as a fresh opportunity to praise and thank our God. Spiritual growth is directly related to increased knowledge and deeper experience of Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ our God

When our Saviour says He is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, He is telling us of His primacy and immutability. This title itself is a testimony to the Saviour's divinity and self-existence. Our Lord Jesus Christ is God over all and blessed for ever. Alpha is the first letter, and Omega the last in the Greek alphabet, and signifies that Christ is the first and the last word in all matters of life and death, and in the creation and consummation of all things.

Creator and Judge

As creator of all things, He is the first cause. Nothing exists outside of His will and purpose. In Him is all perfection, completeness, fulness and excellence; all knowledge, all beauty and all truth. He transcends time and fills eternity, being ever-present in all places at all times as the eternal Spirit. Yet He sits victoriously upon the Throne of God whence He shall come to judge the world in righteousness.

Christ stooped to save

But though our Lord is first and greatest, He is also last and lowest. Our Saviour humbled Himself. He was made lower than the angels, and as man He was despised among men and rejected of men. He was made a curse, first by hanging on the cross, then in submitting to death under the Law. He gave His life a ransom for many.

The Person and work of Christ

The Person of the Lord Jesus Christ is the great object of our faith, but we do not understand His Person outside of His work. We know Him only because of what He has done for us. The Lord's words to John, that He is first and last, lead us to discover His mighty work of redemption. Our Saviour has secured full and free salvation for His chosen people, the elect of God.

The keys of death and hell

This work of salvation is indicated also by the Saviour's statement that He holds the keys of hell and death. These keys are the keys of authority and power. He opens and none can shut, He shuts and none can open. The existence of all life and the precise duration of all life and the exact moment of death and every person's eternal destination is under Christ's authority. He delivers some, and destroys others, according to His own good will, and by whatever means He chooses.

If you are saved you are safe

There is no war, no disease, no act of violence, no virus, no accident and no random circumstance that is outside of the Saviour's control and power. It is our lack of faith that we fear the future and spend our lives dreading death. Our Lord Jesus Christ has proved His power over death and hell by raising the dead; such as Lazarus, Jairus' daughter and the

widow of Nain's son, and by personally defeating both death and hell at the cross, then rising victoriously from the grave. The redeemed of the Lord need have no fear, we are safe and secure because all power in heaven and earth belongs to our Saviour.

A measure of blessing

Our flesh, being weak, hinders our faith and causes us to forget or diminish our security in Christ. That is why it is important to regularly and repeatedly return in our thoughts and in our soul to dwell upon the greatness of the Saviour and the great value of His work. The greater our thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, the more blest and contented will be our time here on earth, regardless of our trials and troubles.

Amen

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