

In today's world for some reason, perhaps fear, atheism or some central dogma that man is in control of everything, the world has forgotten the true concept of death.

Death in a true Orthodox understanding isn't the end of life it is the beginning of life. When God banished Adam & Eve from the Garden of Eden it wasn't for eternal condemnation it was for temporal retribution- Retribution for the sin that Adam dared to commit in paradise. Out of his love God did not entirely abandon us; he didn't leave us for broke, he put in place a system – life as we know it today.

In Gods master plan, earthly life did not exist for man; however he created it for us as a way of gaining a place back into his original master plan. For this very reason Death is not the end, it is the very conclusion that man should eagerly desire and be joyous about, for in death true believers do not die but rise in order to be counted amongst the heavenly to enjoy the heavenly treasures the Lord will bless them with.

Some argue and say if God loves us so much, why did he allow Adam & Eve to sin in the first place? Why did he even allow death to enter into the world?

The answer is simply love, in Gods master plan the Trinity desired to create man in the image and likeness of themselves. God has free will and out of his love he allowed man this wonderful gift as well. If he didn't allow man free will he couldn't have created man in the image and likeness of himself. We cannot blame God for death; we should thank him for he gave us a wonderful way to return back to him. He didn't abandon his creation instead he sent the corrupted creation his only Begotten Son to come down and die on the cross – indeed the cost of salvation was blood and the reward was the privilege of man to enter into paradise.

The two angels at the tomb of Christ remind us of the two cherubic angels the Lord put at the gates that led into the Garden of Eden. These two angels stood with fiery swords crossed – a foretelling sign of the things to come – that the swords will be removed when the Son is slain on the cross. At the resurrection however, the angels have parted, one is at the head and the other at the feet; it is only in the middle we find the resurrected lord with open hands welcoming us back into his heavenly kingdom.

My friends let us not fear death, let us prepare for it with it an open mind and an open heart, let us be ready to hear our Saviour say "Well done, good and faithful servant....Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Death indeed should be a true desire not a dreaded fear! A beginning not an End!

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