

## BE YE FAITHFUL

### I. Various Scriptures

**A. Psalm 103:13-19 (NLT) reminds us what is temporary and what is everlasting: 13** *The LORD is like a Father to His children, tender and compassionate to those who fear Him. 14* *For He knows how weak we are; He remembers we are only dust. 15* *Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. 16* *The wind blows, and we are gone-- as though we had never been here. 17* *But the love of the LORD remains forever with those who fear Him. His salvation extends to the children's children 18* *of those who are faithful to His covenant, of those who obey His commandments! 19* *The LORD has made the heavens His throne; from there He rules over everything.*

**B. This past year we've lost many dear loved ones. As we turn our attention towards 2019, it's good that we remember the folks who have passed. My list includes:** Max Anderson; Mary Taylor; Brenda Karr; Dr. Ed Jones; Norma Nisly; Pastor Rocky Brown; Shirley Fox; Mike Thomas; Joy Taylor; Alpha Starr-Hill; Paul Geiger; George Pettet; Steve Sparks; Theresa Allen; Ginny Ruppensburg; Pete Buoni; Sue Tarbutton; Bobby Murphy; Rosemarie Wood; Rosa Nisly; Lenny Popo; Sam Schilling; Jeremy Bishop; Jeri Jewell; John Price; Sue Mann; Kathleen Miller; Aaron Madinger; Kim Terry; Dick Harlow; Rita Starr; Gary Hanby; Pam Shover; Rick Sharp; Mark Fleming; Leanne Snyder; Elizabeth Barrett; Steve Mohler; Clarence Stutzman; Joan Benson; Dr. Ann Whetstone; Mark Waibel; Sylvia Thogmartin; John Glaize; Amy Rush Gemienhardt; Jeff Neff; Walt Knox...

**C. Suffice it to say, none of you are planning to have your name on next year's list. And yet I suspect most of you know that we are all given an allotment of days before we slip into our Lord's presence. For those of you who like planning things to the T, James 4:13-15 (NKJV) is a good reminder: 13** *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14* *whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15* *Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." Repeat after me: "If the Lord wills we will do this or that."*

**D. Here's some Scriptures that juxtapose God's sovereignty with the brevity of our earthbound days. Please take note. Job 14:1-2 (NLT) says: 1** *How frail is humanity! How short is life, how full of trouble! 2* *We blossom like a flower and then wither. Like a passing shadow, we quickly disappear. Job 9:25-26 (NIV) echoes: 25* *My days are swifter than a runner; they fly away without a glimpse of joy. 26* *They skim past like boats of papyrus, like eagles swooping down on their prey. Psalm 39:4-5 (NLT) says: 4* *LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered--how fleeting my life is. 5* *You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to You; at best, each of us is but a breath.*

**E. At breakfast this past Thursday, Pete Hoover & Gene Lane mused aloud: "Since we're still alive, God must have things for us to do; we just don't know what those things are." I said a good start is to just be faithful; be faithful husbands, faithful fathers, faithful grandparents, great-grandparents, coworkers and classmates, neighbors and strangers...**

**F. Faithfulness in the smallest of things honors God. When you're faithful in little things, God tends to bring about bigger things for you to be faithful in. Micah 6:6-8 (NKJV) may also resonate as you press on: 6** *With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7* *Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (God's answer) 8* *He has shown you, O man, what is good; and (Question) what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God? (Some refer to that as the Micah Mandate.)*

**G. Some of you have lost loved ones or have loved ones needing lots of care; this Scripture applies to you. Some of you are Snowbirds getting ready to head south; this Scripture applies to you. Kelsey's moving to Missouri to start college and this Scripture certainly applies to her. Others of you merely have to go back to work or school after a busy Christmas break but this is a good verse to launch your restart.**

**H. May God bless you to have a Latin New Year: Carpe Diem-Soli Deo Gloria: Seize the day and to God alone be the glory! Seize each new day by collecting God's fresh mercies and His daily bread and let them sustain, nourish, and enable you to do His will and accomplish His work, in the smallest of things (and even big things if He so grants) and do this for the glory and honor of His name and for the building up and edification of your brothers and sisters in Christ.**

**I. Faithfulness is fitting for us because we serve a faithful God. "His mercy and steadfast love are from of old." (Ps. 25:6) "His steadfast love and faithfulness are from everlasting to everlasting." (Ps. 103:17) "By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for..." (Prov. 16:6) No more was this ever exemplified than Jesus' dying for our sins. He**

died to make us His own. He died that we might live for Him. He died that we might know Him, love Him, and serve Him. Therefore: Love God and one another. Be thankful. Be humble. Be generous. Obey Him from the heart. Do what is right in His eyes. Be ye faithful! And see what God does with the days you are given...

**J. Adoniram Judson (Missionary to Burma) wrote:** "You have but one life to live in which to prepare for eternity. If you had four or five lives, two or three of them might be spent in carelessness. But you have one only. Every action of that one life gives coloring to your eternity. How important, then, that you spend that life so as to please the Saviour, the blessed Saviour, who has done everything for you!"

**K. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV) takes us out the door, down the street, and all the way to next year:**  
*16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles (afflictions, sufferings, challenges, obstacles) are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

\* Close with Prayer...

### Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

**Psalm 103:13-19 (NLT) 13** The Lord is like a Father to His children, tender and compassionate to those who fear Him. **14** For He knows how weak we are; He remembers we are only dust. **15** Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. **16** The wind blows, and we are gone--as though we had never been here. **17** But the love of the Lord remains forever with those who fear Him. His salvation extends to the children's children **18** of those who are faithful to His covenant, of those who obey His commandments! **19** The Lord has made the heavens His throne; from there He rules over everything.

#### James 4:13-15 (NKJV)

**13** Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; **14** whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. **15** Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

#### Job 14:1-2 (NLT)

**1** How frail is humanity! How short is life, how full of trouble! **2** We blossom like a flower and then wither. Like a passing shadow, we quickly disappear.

#### Job 9:25-26 (NIV)

**25** My days are swifter than a runner; they fly away without a glimpse of joy. **26** They skim past like boats of papyrus, like eagles swooping down on their prey.

#### Psalm 39:4-5 (NLT)

**4** Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered--how fleeting my life is. **5** You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to You; at best, each of us is but a breath.

#### Micah 6:6-8 (NKJV)

**6** With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? **7** Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? **8** He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

#### 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV)

**16** Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. **17** For our light and momentary troubles (afflictions, sufferings) are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. **18** So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

### **Quote by Adoniram Judson (Baptist Missionary to Burma)**

"You have but one life to live in which to prepare for eternity. If you had four or five lives, two or three of them might be spent in carelessness. But you have one only. Every action of that one life gives coloring to your eternity. How important, then, that you spend that life so as to please the Saviour, the blessed Saviour, who has done everything for you!"

- Adoniram Judson, from *The Life of Adoniram Judson-Volume 3*, by Edward Judson, pg. 473.

### **Film Clips & Article Links**

"Counting Every Blessing" - Rend Collective

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6Y91axwxfI>

The Brevity of Life - Billy Graham

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-92ErT3iIUQ>

"Even Unto Death" - Audrey Assad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAfp8vg4Jz8>

"When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder" - Twila Paris

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Bk3gwyw5ps>

### **Bonus Stuff**

#### **Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV)**

**22** The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; **23** they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

#### **Proverbs 3:3 (ESV)**

**3** Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

#### **Psalms 25:1-22 (ESV)**

*Of David.*

**1** To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. **2** O my God, in You I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me. **3** Indeed, none who wait for You shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. **4** Make me to know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. **5** Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; for You I wait all the day long. **6** Remember Your mercy, O LORD, and Your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. **7** Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to Your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of Your goodness, O LORD! **8** Good and upright is the LORD; therefore He instructs sinners in the way. **9** He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble His way. **10** All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies. **11** For Your name's sake, O LORD, pardon my guilt, for it is great. **12** Who is the man who fears the LORD? Him will He instruct in the way that he should choose. **13** His soul shall abide in well-being, and his offspring shall inherit the land. **14** The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear Him, and He makes known to them His covenant. **15** My eyes are ever toward the LORD, for He will pluck my feet out of the net. **16** Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. **17** The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. **18** Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins. **19** Consider how many are my foes, and with what violent hatred they hate me. **20** Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me! Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in You. **21** May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for You. **22** Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

#### **Psalms 103:1-22 (ESV)**

*Of David.*

**1** Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! **2** Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, **3** who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, **4** who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, **5** who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. **6** The LORD works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. **7** He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the people of Israel. **8** The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. **9** He will not always chide, nor will He keep His anger forever. **10** He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. **11** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His steadfast love

toward those who fear Him; **12** as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us. **13** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear Him. **14** For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. **15** As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; **16** for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. **17** But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, **18** to those who keep His covenant and remember to do His commandments. **19** The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all. **20** Bless the LORD, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His word, obeying the voice of His word! **21** Bless the LORD, all His hosts, His ministers, who do His will! **22** Bless the LORD, all His works, in all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!

#### **Quote by St. Ignatius**

"Realize that illness and other temporal setbacks often come to us from the hand of God our Lord, and are sent to help us know ourselves better, to free ourselves of the love of created things, and to reflect on the brevity of this life and, thus, to prepare ourselves for the life which is without end."

#### **Quote by Billy Graham**

"What is the greatest surprise you have found about life?" a university student asked me several years ago. "The brevity of it," I replied without hesitation. ... Time moves so quickly, and no matter who we are or what we have done, the time will come when our lives will be over. As Jesus said, "As long as it is day, we must do the work of Him who sent Me. Night is coming, when no one can work" (John 9:4)

#### **Quote by Augustine**

"They, then, who are destined to die, need not be careful to inquire what death they are to die, but into what place death will usher them."

#### **Quote by John Calvin**

"Let us consider this settled, that no one has made progress in the school of Christ who does not joyfully await the day of death and final resurrection."

#### **Quote by Charles H. Spurgeon**

"Depend upon it, your dying hour will be the best hour you have ever known! Your last moment will be your richest moment, better than the day of your birth will be the day of your death. It shall be the beginning of heaven, the rising of a sun that shall go no more down forever!"

#### **Quote by George Whitefield**

"How sweet is rest after fatigue! How sweet will heaven be when our journey is ended."

#### **Quote by John Wesley**

"This earthly body is slow and heavy in all its motions, listless and soon tired with action. But our heavenly bodies shall be as fire; as active and as nimble as our thoughts are."

#### **Quotes by Randy Alcorn**

"Many Christians dread the thought of leaving this world. Why? Because so many have stored up their treasures on earth, not in heaven. Each day brings us closer to death. If your treasures are on earth, that means each day brings you closer to losing your treasures... He who lays up treasures on earth spends his life backing away from his treasures. To him, death is loss. He who lays up treasures in heaven looks forward to eternity; he's moving daily toward his treasures. To him, death is gain. He who spends his life moving toward his treasures has reason to rejoice. Are you despairing or rejoicing?"

#### **Why is Soli Deo Gloria Important?**

By S. Michael Houdmann

<https://www.gotquestions.org/soli-Deo-gloria.html>

Question: "*Why is soli Deo gloria important?*"

Answer: Soli Deo gloria is one of the important doctrines emphasized during the [Protestant Reformation](#). Soli Deo gloria, along with the other four [solas](#) of the Reformers, separates the biblical gospel from false beliefs. The Latin word

soli means “alone” or “only” (soli is the root of our English word solitary); and the phrase Deo gloria means “the glory of God.” So, soli Deo gloria means “to the glory of God alone.”

Soli Deo gloria has reference to our salvation in Christ. When the Reformers spoke of our salvation “to the glory of God alone,” they emphasized the grace of God. Salvation is all of grace, not of our works ([Ephesians 2:8–9](#)). A key phrase in [Ephesians 2:9](#) is “so that no one can boast”; that is, God’s grace in providing salvation excludes all human pride and boasting. In making his case for justification by faith, apart from the Law, Paul writes, “Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith” ([Romans 3:27, NLT](#)).

There is no room for the glory of man in God’s plan for salvation. The glory is God’s alone. Jesus said, “Apart from me you can do nothing” ([John 15:5](#)). If it were possible for someone to attain salvation through the works of the Law, then he would have something to boast of ([Romans 4:2](#)); but it is impossible. We cannot save ourselves. We who were dead in our sins ([Ephesians 2:1](#)) could do nothing to help ourselves toward life. But, praise the Lord, “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” ([Romans 6:23](#)). The glory is God’s, not ours. Soli Deo gloria.

The salvation of sinners was God’s idea, the accomplishing of that salvation was God’s work, the granting of that salvation is God’s grace, and the fulfillment of that salvation is God’s promise. From beginning to end, “Salvation belongs to the LORD” ([Psalm 3:8, ESV](#); cf. [Revelation 7:10](#)). Jesus likened salvation to a new birth ([John 3:3](#)); as an infant can take no credit for his own birth, so we can take no credit for our being “born again.” King Hezekiah was not credited with saving Jerusalem from the Assyrians ([2 Kings 19](#)); God was the One who defeated the enemy. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not credited with saving themselves in the fiery furnace ([Daniel 3](#)); God preserved them in the flame. The glory belongs to God alone. Soli Deo gloria.

In Reformed theology, the doctrine of soli Deo gloria is closely related to the doctrine of [irresistible grace](#). God’s grace drew us to salvation and even enabled us to believe. Yes, we repented of our sin, but only because God’s grace enabled us to repent. We placed our faith in Christ, but only because God’s grace enabled us to have faith. There is no work that we can do to in any way earn our salvation or help secure it for ourselves. We are called and kept by the power of God alone, “in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus” ([Ephesians 2:7](#)). Soli Deo gloria.

The German composer Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) understood that music was a gift from God to be used for the glory of God. Beneath all of his compositions of sacred music, Bach penned the initials SDG, soli Deo gloria. In his vision of heaven, the apostle John saw “the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: ‘You are worthy, our Lord and God, / to receive glory and honor and power’” ([Revelation 4:10–11](#)). Even the elders of heaven do not keep their crowns; they give glory where glory is due—to God alone.

Recommended Resource: [Faith Alone, The Doctrine of Justification: What the Reformers Taught...and Why It Still Matters by Thomas Schreiner](#)

- While he is not the author of every article on [GotQuestions.org](#), for citation purposes, you may reference our CEO, S. Michael Houdmann.

### **What Happens When We Die? - From the Westminster Confession**

“The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption: but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them: the souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. And the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Beside these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledges none.”

- [The Westminster Confession](#), (Chapter XXXII), 1646.