



BIBLE STUDY

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Sermon: Death Along the Road: The Journey Back Home

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Introduction:

The Temporary Nature of Our Earthly Existence

Most of us, when we contemplate life, often make the mistake of viewing it solely from a physical perspective. We confine ourselves to the limitations of our senses and, in doing so, we limit God, the *divine architect of our temporary dwelling*—what we call the *physical body*.

Our body is, in essence, a temporary structure:

- a tent housing a permanent and eternal soul.

The scriptures are replete with this imagery, reminding us of the transient nature of our earthly existence

.2 Corinthians 5:1 (NKJV): "For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Analysis on the Scriptures :

[1]This passage beautifully compares our earthly body to a **temporary "tent,"** a fragile and portable dwelling, which will one day **be replaced by an eternal, permanent building crafted by God Himself.**

This theme is echoed in other parts of the Bible:
•Job 4:19
refers to people dwelling in "houses of clay," emphasizing human frailty and mortality.

[3]**The saddest thing is to forget that we are on a mission.** Imagine being deployed to another country on a secret mission to collect vital data. The government sending you would take specific measures to ensure your success and safety. They would, most importantly, protect and hide your true identity. The name and surname you use on your mission are not your real ones; your true name will be given back to you only when you have successfully completed your mission.^{II}.

The Spy on a Mission: Our Heavenly Identity
This analogy of a spy on a mission is a powerful metaphor for our spiritual journey on Earth. We are sent from our true home, heaven, on a mission. Our earthly

identity, the name and life we know here, is temporary. Our true, eternal identity is waiting for us upon our return. The Bible speaks of this new, true name that will be revealed to us

Revelation 2:17 (NKJV): "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it." [4]**This new name signifies a new relationship with God**, a new character, and a new destiny. It is a name that reflects our true, transformed self in Christ. But what happens to the old name? The old name, the old identity, must "die" for the new one to be born.

This brings us to the story of Jacob.III. J

Jacob's Story: A Case Study in Identity Transformation

Jacob's life is a profound case study in this principle of identity transformation.

His very name, Jacob, means "heel-catcher" or "supplanter," reflecting his character as a deceiver and manipulator.

His life was a constant struggle, marked by fear and anxiety, culminating in his terrified flight from his brother Esau

But then, on a dark night by the River Jabbok, Jacob has a life-altering encounter.

He wrestles with a mysterious man until daybreak. This was no ordinary man; this was God Himself.

In what the writer Frederick Buechner called the "magnificent defeat of the human soul at the hands of God," Jacob is crippled, yet he clings on, demanding a blessing.

[5]It is in this moment of weakness, of complete surrender, that Jacob "dies." The old, self-reliant, deceptive Jacob is broken. And from that brokenness, a new man is born.

The angel gives him a new name:Old NameNew

NameJacobIsrael"Heel-catcher," "Deceiver""

He struggles with God"Jacob's name change was not merely a new title; it was a new identity.

He was no longer the deceiver but a prince of God who had struggled with God and prevailed.

He named the place Peniel, meaning "face of God," for he had seen God face to face and his life was preserved. The limp he carried for the rest of his life was a permanent reminder of this transformative encounter—a reminder that his strength came not from himself, but from his weakness and dependence on God.IV. Christ Jesus:

The Ultimate Example of Name and MissionThis principle of a name change reflecting a mission and identity finds its ultimate expression in the person of Jesus Christ.

Have you ever wondered why the Apostle Paul, in his epistles, often uses the term "Christ Jesus" instead of "Jesus Christ"? The order is theologically significant. •Christ Jesus: When the divine title, "Christ"

(the Anointed One, the Messiah), comes first, it emphasizes His heavenly origin and His divine mission to Earth.

This is the divine Son of God coming down, taking on human form—the kenosis or self-emptying described in Philippians 2. [6]•Jesus Christ:

When the human name, "Jesus," comes first, it emphasizes His earthly life, His humanity, and His subsequent exaltation and glorification. This is the man, Jesus, who has completed His mission and is now exalted as the Christ. This distinction perfectly aligns with our own spiritual journey. We are sent into this world with a temporary identity, like "Christ Jesus" coming to Earth. We live out our mission in these fragile "jars of clay." And when our mission is complete, we are called back home, and our true, eternal identity is revealed, just as "Jesus Christ" is now glorified in heaven.V.

Conclusion:

The Journey Home and the New Name Brothers and sisters, we are all on a journey back home. This life is the "death along the road"—the death of our old, sinful nature, the death of our temporary, earthly identity. Like Jacob, we must all have our Peniel experience, that moment where we wrestle with God, where we are broken and

remade in His image. It is in that struggle, in that surrender, that we find our true strength and our true identity

Do not be afraid of this "death." Do not cling to the temporary tent of this body or the fleeting identity of this world. Embrace the journey, embrace the struggle, for it is the path to our true home. We are all on a mission, and when that mission is complete, we will be called home. And on that day, we will be given a white stone, a symbol of our victory and our acceptance into the eternal celebration. And on that stone will be a new name, a name that reflects our true, eternal self, a name known only to us and to the One who created us. Let us, therefore, live not for the temporary, but for the eternal. Let us live as spies on a mission, with our eyes fixed on our true home. Let us embrace the struggles that shape us into the image of Christ. And let us look forward with hope to the day when we will hear our new name called, and we will be home at last.