

It's just a phase

We are people who are obsessed with life because from our youth we are taught that it is the most precious gift of all. We are trained by nature and nurture to protect our life and to try to live as long as we can. If you look at our medicine cabinets, shelves at our pharmacies you will find plenty of anti-aging creams and youth enhancers. Prolonging our lives, as we know and love it, is our real national pastime and addiction. Plastic surgeons are making money hand over fist making grandmothers look like Britney Spears and giving old men abs like the captain of the football team they were on 35 years ago. Our vanity is making the medical industry rich while we are still trying to outpace the boogeyman called death. Death is as much apart of our lives as our breath and is as important as life itself. **1st Corinthians 15:31 says... I die daily.** This is not taken out of context. While we are yet living we are also dying every single day of our lives. We live in earthen vessels that are made from dust which at some point must wither away. Our eyes eventually dim to the point that glasses and contact lenses are expected at a certain phase of our lives. Nobody expects seniors to run and play all day and we have learned to live with certain aches and pains that are symbols of bodily deterioration. The truth of death is that it is another stage in the plan of God to get us to his expected end. We all were children once but at some point that stage of our lives had to die and pass away. Yes the ending of our youth was a death.

1st Corinthians 13:11-12 states, “when I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away CHILDISH things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” Paul was saying that the doorway to the next stage of growth would only be open if the childhood door was closed and literally passed away. No person can be a baby and a man at the same time. Playing house and pretend with dolls was wonderful for a time but to enter into the richness of independent adulthood with a real house and a family of your own (instead of make believe) then death of your fantasy world was the friend used to get you there. It was through the death of one stage that caused the birth of the next stage. God is not killing the child but literally shedding the child, like a caterpillar must do with its cocoon, to become a butterfly. The man or woman is hidden in the child and is limited by the child's mind and ways just as the true believer lies hidden in the sinner before salvation. Think of it this way. The only way to get to a peanut is to crack the shell. The shell uses the name peanut but it is not what it seems. The outer coating is simply a shell and nothing more. It is not about the shell but the fruit that lies inside hidden by the protective bulk of the shell. The true purpose for the peanut is not realized until its outer shell is crack and discarded. The moment the fruit is exposed and used, the months of slow growth, summer heat, destructive bugs, dirt and rough people, makes it all worth while. The true value was inside the shell that had to perish. The death of the shell was the liberation of the peanut.

If we stay where and how we are then we will have life on earth knowing the will and way of God in part. The mind eyes we possess are too dim to really see the true glory of the Lord. Our corruptible, needy, breakable, high maintenance bodies are made perfect for an earthly existence but have no place in a heaven that is perfect. Christ has a place prepared for us that our outer shell can't go because it, like the peanut shell, was meant to preserve our true self (the soul) for the ride. **John 14:2 says “in my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to PREPARE A PLACE for you”.** Death is not an ending of anything for the believer but is the beginning of a brand new life as perfect images of God as he intended from the beginning **Gen 1:26 “And God said, Let us make man in our IMAGE, after our likeness”.** We will no longer lack understanding and will see Jesus as He is. If perfection is our goal and simply being in Christ bodily presence is your desire then don't fear death. Death is like the summer sleep when you were a child. When you awoke and went back to school you were 2 inches taller and looking better than ever. You had filled out and maybe even have a mustache and muscles. Your voice wasn't cracking any more and you liked what you were seeing in the mirror. You could even wear some of mom and dad's clothes. You were not a kid anymore and you loved it. God is preparing us for that very same transition from death to eternal life with him. If you are facing death right now remember this. **When you awake from your sleep and you are present with your Lord, you will see that death was not an enemy but an elevator to your destiny of continual peace with God.**