A TRINFINITY MINI BOOK

# Facing Death with Hope

*Grief, heaven, and the promise of eternal life*

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# About this book

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# Contents

Introduction 3

1 The question no one can avoid 3

2 Jesus at a graveside 3

3 Grieving with hope 4

4 What happens when a believer dies 4

5 What heaven is like 5

6 What your salvation depends on 5

# Introduction

Every one of us will face death, first in the people we love and then for ourselves. Most of us would rather not think about it. But sooner or later the phone rings, or the doctor sits down, and the question cannot be avoided anymore.

This book is for anyone who is grieving, anyone who is afraid of dying, and anyone who wants to know what happens next. The Bible does not give easy answers, but it gives real hope.

# 1 The question no one can avoid

The Bible is honest about death.

*And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,*

**Hebrews 9:27 (NASB)**

Death is not the end of a person. After it comes judgment, a meeting with God. That sounds frightening, and it should get our attention. But Jesus came so that the meeting does not have to be one we dread. He said that whoever hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life (John 5:24, NASB).

# 2 Jesus at a graveside

When Jesus' friend Lazarus died, Jesus went to the family. Martha met Him on the road, hurting and a little upset that He had not come sooner. Jesus gave her a promise.

*I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?*

**John 11:25-26 (NASB)**

Then He went to the tomb, and the shortest verse in the Bible tells us what He did. Jesus wept (John 11:35, NASB). He knew He was about to raise Lazarus, and He still wept. Grief is not a lack of faith. The Son of God cried at a funeral.

The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit (Psalm 34:18, NASB). If you are grieving, He is not standing far off. He is near.

# 3 Grieving with hope

Paul wrote to believers who had lost loved ones and were worried about them.

*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NASB)**

Paul did not say do not grieve. He said do not grieve without hope. There is a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance (Ecclesiastes 3:4, NASB). Tears are part of love.

What do you say to a friend whose parent just died? The Sunday Forum questions in my files ask exactly that. Most of the time the best answer is very little. Sit with them. Cry with them. Bring a meal. God is the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, NASB). When they ask why God allowed it, it is all right to say, I do not know, but I know He is good and He is here.

# 4 What happens when a believer dies

Jesus told the thief on the cross, today you shall be with Me in Paradise (Luke 23:43, NASB). Not someday. Today. Paul said that to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8, NASB), and that to depart and be with Christ is very much better (Philippians 1:23, NASB).

That is not the end of the story. When Christ comes for His church, the dead in Christ will rise first, and those who are alive will be caught up with them (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, NASB). Our bodies will be raised and changed. Paul then says, Therefore comfort one another with these words (1 Thessalonians 4:18, NASB).

*But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?*

**1 Corinthians 15:54-55 (NASB)**

# 5 What heaven is like

Heaven is not floating on a cloud forever. Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for us (John 14:2, NASB). The risen Jesus had a real body that could be touched, and He ate with His disciples. The Bible ends with a new heaven and a new earth, a real place where God lives with His people.

*Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.*

**Revelation 21:3-4 (NASB)**

The best thing about heaven is not the streets or the gates. It is that God is there. Every tear you have cried will be wiped away by His own hand.

The Bible is also honest that not everyone will be there. Jesus spoke of eternal punishment and eternal life (Matthew 25:46, NASB). That is why the next chapter matters more than anything else in this book.

# 6 What your salvation depends on

Whether you face death with hope depends on one thing: whether you belong to Jesus Christ. Not on how good your life was, how many people come to your funeral, or what you hope is true. On Him.

*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*

**John 3:16 (NASB)**

Jesus died for our sins and was raised on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, NASB). He went through death and came out the other side, and He offers to take you through it too. Salvation is not something you

get after you die. You receive it here, while you are alive. Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13, NASB).

If you have never trusted Him, do not wait for a better time. Tell Him you know you have sinned. Tell Him you believe Jesus died for you and rose again. Ask Him to save you. Then you can say with David, Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me (Psalm 23:4, NASB).

# Facing Death with Hope

Every one of us will face death. This book looks at Jesus at a graveside, how to grieve with hope, what happens when a believer dies, what heaven is like, and the one thing your hope depends on.

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*I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies.*

**John 11:25 (NASB)**

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