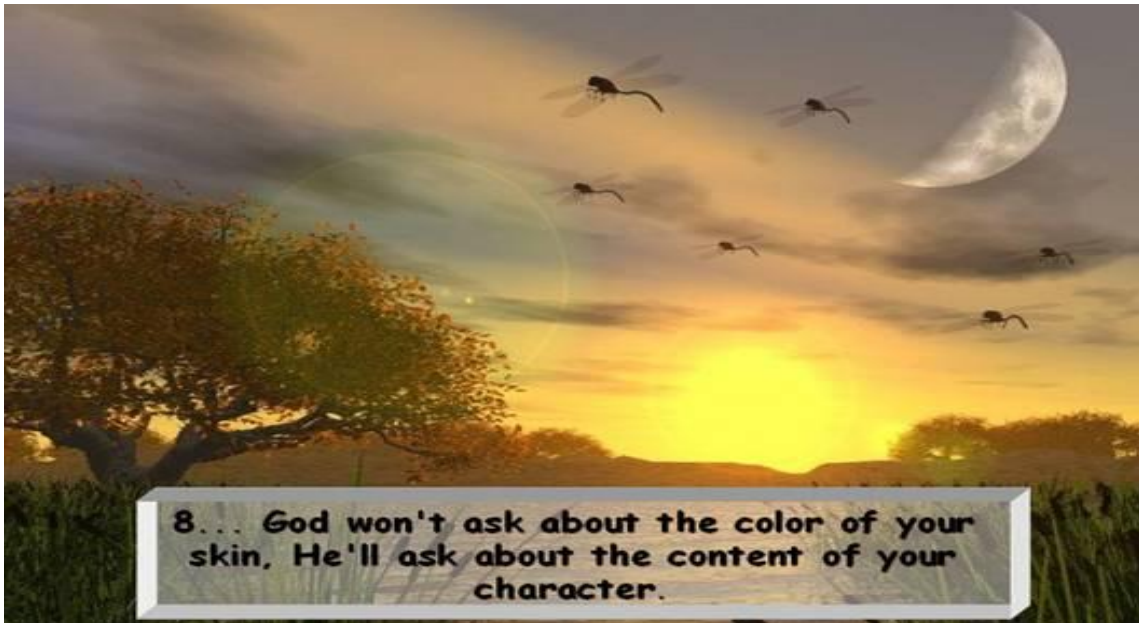


1

# Coping with Death and Dying



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3

4 **Jean Ross, Betty Worthy & Graham F. Watts, Sr.**

5

6 **VISION:** To hear the midnight cry, "The bridegroom comes, go out to meet  
7 Him" (Matthew 25:6) and become like Him when I see Him as He is (1  
8 John 3:2).

9

10 **MISSION:** Purify myself even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3) to be glad,  
11 to rejoice, give honor to Christ and be ready for the marriage of the  
12 Lamb (Revelation 19:7).

13

14 **VALUES:** Follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Revelation 14:4), be without  
15 fault before God (Revelation 14:5), be perfect even as my Father in  
16 heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48), wear the Lamb's fine, clean and  
17 white linen (Revelation 19:8) do righteously (1 John 3:10) and walk  
18 humbly with God (Micah 6:8).

19

20 **OVERALL AIM:** Studies presented here unveil Bible knowledge to  
21 inquiring minds to prompt the following inquiries: "Are our feet on  
22 the rock of ages? Are we one with Christ as He is one with the  
23 Father" (John 10:30 in Evangelism, {Ev} 199.1)? Am I crucified with  
24 Christ (Galatians 2:20)?

25

26 **PURPOSE/REASON FOR/WHY**

27  
28 This study brings Bible believers in touch with the reality of death.

29  
30

31 **OBJECTIVES/WHAT WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH/THESIS**

32  
33 At the end of this study, Bible believers receive encouragement for  
34 dealing with loss of life that occurs every second of every day.

35  
36

37 **SIGNIFICANCE: SO WHAT**

38  
39 "For I know that my redeemer lives, and He shall stand at the latter  
40 day upon the earth; and... after... worms destroy this body, yet in my  
41 flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25-26). Job's example of confidence  
42 amid despair says to us who deal with the trauma of death: "Say to  
43 them that are of a fearful heart: 'Be strong, fear not! Behold, your  
44 God will come... with recompense (i.e., reward, payment and  
45 compensation); He will come and save you'" (Isaiah 35:4 & Revelation  
46 22:12). This assurance brings hope that will not lead to  
47 disappointment (Romans 5:5, New Living Translation {NLT}), hope that  
48 we can renew each time we share in the death experience.

49

50 **BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

51  
52 Some contemporary Christians will not talk about death and dying. In  
53 fact, every vestige of the death reality is suppressed so that places  
54 such as hospitals, mortuaries and cemeteries are intentionally  
55 avoided to escape the harsh trauma of end of physical life. But try  
56 as you may, in this mortal life, loss of breath, i.e., spirit in the  
57 nostrils comes to every living being (Genesis 2:7; Job 27:3 &  
58 Zechariah 12:1) and temporarily separates people. And physical  
59 separation can be emotionally painful for the living at death. This  
60 background provided the impetus for the study question that follows.

61 **STUDY QUESTION**

62

63 What does the Bible offer to help the bereft cope with death?

64

65 **ANSWER SOURCE: HOLY BIBLE**

66

67 **"The living knows that they will die..."** (Ecclesiastes 9:5). "Is there  
 68 not an appointed time to man upon the earth? Are not his days also  
 69 like the days of a hireling" (Job 7:1)? "What man [or woman] is he  
 70 [or she] that lives and shall not see death..." (Psalm 89:48)? "Seventy  
 71 years are given to us! Some even live to eighty. But even the best  
 72 years are filled with pain and trouble; soon they disappear and we  
 73 fly away" (Psalm 90:10, New Living Translation, NLT). "For we [who]  
 74 live are always delivered unto death..." (2 Corinthians 4:11). "There  
 75 is no man that has power over the spirit to retain the spirit;  
 76 neither has [the] power in the day of death; and there is no  
 77 discharge in that war..." (Ecclesiastes 8:8). Job testified of this  
 78 reality saying: "For I know that thou will bring me to death and to  
 79 the house appointed for all living" (Job 30:23). But the Psalmist  
 80 offered encouragement with this testimony: God guides the meek in  
 81 judgment and He is our guide even unto death (Psalm 25:9 & 48:14);  
 82 "...and unto God, the Lord, belong the issues from death" (Psalm  
 83 68:20). Fellow believers, the Lord, who is our high priest, is  
 84 touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15) and His  
 85 grace is sufficient, i.e., adequate, for us; His strength is made  
 86 perfect in our weaknesses (2 Corinthians 12:9).

87

88 **But the question that weighs heavy on all of us is this: "If a man**  
 89 **[or woman] dies, shall he [or she] live again..."** (Job 14:14)? The  
 90 answer to this question is important because if death is only  
 91 temporary separation, then we have hope beyond the tomb; the sting of  
 92 death is blunted and our grief is tolerable! Let us begin by warming  
 93 our hearts with a few divine promises: "Precious in the sight of the  
 94 Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15). "...Blessed are the  
 95 dead, which die in the Lord...; they... rest from their labors and their

96 works do follow them" (Revelation 14:13). "For if we believe that  
 97 Jesus **died** and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus  
 98 **will** God bring with him [at His return]" (1 Thessalonians 4:14). "If  
 99 Christ [was] not... raised, then our preaching is vain [and] your faith  
 100 also is vain" (1 Corinthians 15:14). "But now is Christ risen from  
 101 the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept" (1  
 102 Corinthians 15:20); therefore, know this: "...We which are alive and  
 103 remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are  
 104 asleep [in Jesus]" (1 Thessalonians 4:15). Therefore, all who mourn  
 105 the loss of loved ones can be encouraged by God's promises for "...The  
 106 Lord thy God... is... the faithful God, which keep covenant and mercy  
 107 with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand  
 108 generations" (Deuteronomy 7:9). You will see your love ones again!

109  
 110 **Can God be trusted to keep His covenant with the righteous dead?** "God  
 111 is faithful, by whom [we] were called unto the fellowship of His Son,  
 112 Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9). "...**Christ**... died; rose and  
 113 revived that He might be Lord... of the **dead** and living" (Romans 14:9).  
 114 So we can say with Naomi: "Blessed be... the Lord who [has] not left  
 115 off His kindness to the living and to the dead..." (Ruth 2:20). We  
 116 have already quoted the promise: "...Christ rose from the dead and  
 117 [became] the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20).  
 118 Even in life, we taste death by being "...**dead** to sin (Romans 6:2, 7 &  
 119 11; 8:10), [when our] life... [is] hid with **Christ** in God" (Colossians  
 120 3:3). "Now if we [are] **dead [to sin]** with **Christ**, we believe that we  
 121 shall also live with him" (Romans 6:8). Then let us also believe  
 122 that "...There is an order to [the] resurrection! Christ was raised as  
 123 the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ, [including  
 124 them that sleep in Jesus] will be raised when He comes back" (1  
 125 Corinthians 15:23, NLT; 1 Thessalonians 4:14 & John 11:13).  
 126 Therefore, we can have this resolve: "O Lord, thou art my God! I  
 127 will exalt thee; I will praise thy name for [you have] done wonderful  
 128 things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth" (Isaiah 25:1)  
 129 and by these counsels, "...The faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians  
 130 1:1) [is] "...Blessed... with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places  
 131 in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

132 **Our earthly journey is temporary (Job 14:1, NLT). "...Time is short..."**  
 133 **(1 Corinthians 7:29) and our time on earth is short** (Psalm 89:47).  
 134 "[God has] decided the length of our lives. [He] knows how many  
 135 months we will live and we are **NOT** given a minute longer" (Job 14:5,  
 136 NLT). Therefore, this present world is not our resting place; we are  
 137 bound "...For new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells  
 138 righteousness" (read 2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17 & 66:22; Revelation  
 139 21:1). Here we have no abiding city; ...we look for a city that has  
 140 foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:10). "...[The]  
 141 new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from... God... [is our  
 142 final abiding place]" (Revelation 3:12); that place, where "...The  
 143 tabernacle of God [will be] with men [and women], and He will dwell  
 144 with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be  
 145 with them and be their God" (Revelation 21:3). Therefore, "...if our  
 146 **earthly** house of this **tabernacle** were dissolved: [that is, if the  
 147 physical body dies], we have a building of God; a house not made with  
 148 hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1). "For in this we  
 149 groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed... with our house which is from  
 150 heaven" (2 Corinthians 5:2), "...[and] being clothed we shall not be  
 151 found naked" (2 Corinthians 5:3). It is against this background that  
 152 we can cling to the promise: "The dead [people] shall live; together  
 153 with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing [you] that dwell  
 154 in dust, for... the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isaiah 26:19),  
 155 fulfilling the Psalmist's assurance: "...Weeping may endure for a  
 156 night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5).

157  
 158 **The death experience ought to be a positive reminder of the return of**  
 159 **Jesus Christ!** Christ's return brings these assurances: "...By man came  
 160 death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians  
 161 15:21). "For the bread of God is He [that] comes down from heaven  
 162 and gives life unto the world" (John 6:33)! Before Jesus returns,  
 163 some will die in the Lord, but "...We shall not all sleep; but we shall  
 164 **ALL** be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51). Dear reader, the first death,  
 165 according to Jesus is a sleep (John 11:11-13) and all who experience  
 166 the first death will awake: "...Some to everlasting life and some to  
 167 shame and everlasting disgrace" (Daniel 12:2 NLT & Matthew 25:46).  
 168 Make no mistake about this fact: "Those who live to satisfy their own

169 sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature;  
 170 but those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life  
 171 from the Spirit" (Galatians 6:8, NLT). Therefore, let us remind  
 172 ourselves that "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the **last**  
 173 **trump, [when]** the **trumpet** shall sound, the dead shall be raised  
 174 incorruptible and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:52). "For  
 175 the Lord... shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of  
 176 the archangel and with the trump of God and the **dead in Christ** shall  
 177 rise first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16). "This is the first  
 178 resurrection..." (read Revelation 20:4-6). "For this corruptible must  
 179 put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1  
 180 Corinthians 15:53). "When this corruptible shall have put on  
 181 incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then  
 182 shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is  
 183 swallowed up in victory" (1 Corinthians 15:54). "O death, where is  
 184 thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory" (1 Corinthians 15:55)?  
 185 "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with  
 186 them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever  
 187 be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

188  
 189 SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS: In this study, we examined what the Bible  
 190 offers to help the bereft cope with death. As we embarked on this  
 191 journey, we dealt with the following issues: 1) The living knows that  
 192 they will die; 2) If a person dies, shall s/he live again? 3) Can God  
 193 be trusted to keep His covenant with the righteous dead? 4) Our  
 194 earthly journey is temporary and 5) The death experience ought to be  
 195 a positive reminder of the return of Jesus Christ. From the  
 196 foregoing we demonstrated that immunization by a study of death and  
 197 dying does not have to be a gloomy, saddening, depressing adventure.  
 198 Because it is of little redeeming value to engage in Bible Study  
 199 merely for information, subsequent paragraphs follow that make a  
 200 practical application of the issues set forth here.

201

202

## 203 DISCUSSION: WHAT DO THESE THINGS MEAN?

204

205 **There is going to be a meeting in the air!** The redeemed of all ages  
 206 will unite for celestial travel. Therefore, [when life ceases  
 207 temporarily] we do not sorrow like those who have no hope (1  
 208 Thessalonians 4:13). That does NOT mean that we do not experience  
 209 and show grief at our loss, when death occurs! What it does mean is:  
 210 "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing..." (2 Corinthians 6:10);  
 211 "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation; continuing instant in  
 212 prayer" (Romans 12:12)! How can we do this? We can have this joy  
 213 because we know that the grave cannot hold those whose earthly life  
 214 was hid with Christ in God because all who heard God's word and  
 215 believed that He sent Jesus received everlasting life and has passed  
 216 from [the second] death unto life (John 5:24). In fact, those who  
 217 were "...planted together in the likeness of [Christ's] death... shall be  
 218 also in the likeness of His resurrection" (Romans 6:5). In other  
 219 words, all who kept Jesus' sayings shall not be hurt by the second  
 220 death (John 8:51 & Revelation 2:11).

221

## 222 CONCLUSIONS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

223

224 **"[Our] days are swifter than a runner; they flee away..."** (Job 9:25,  
 225 New American Standard Bible, NASB). Let us then be frugal and  
 226 faithful to our God with time management! "We are laborers together  
 227 with God...; [we] are God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9),  
 228 "...[assembled]... for an habitation of God through the Spirit"  
 229 (Ephesians 2:22). "...[Our] body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who  
 230 is in [us], whom [we] have received from God..." (1 Corinthians 6:19).  
 231 "God has committed to... each [of us] sacred trusts for which he holds  
 232 us accountable (read Matthew 25:14-29). It is [God's] purpose that  
 233 we so educate the mind as to enable us to bring into exercise the  
 234 talents he has given us... [so that we] will accomplish the greatest  
 235 good and reflect back the glory to the Giver (read 1 Chronicles  
 236 16:29; Psalm 29:1 & 2; 96:7 & 8; Isaiah 42:12 & 43:7; Jeremiah 13:16;

237 2 Peter 1:3; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 4:11 & 14:7) [because] we are  
 238 indebted to God for all the qualities of the mind (read Romans 3:27).  
 239 These powers can be cultivated and so discreetly directed and  
 240 controlled as to accomplish the purpose for which God gave them" (2  
 241 Timothy 4:7 & John 17:4 in Pamphlets {PH159} 1.1). Considering that  
 242 "...We are on the very borders of the eternal world...; God intends that  
 243 we shall have an experimental knowledge of Christ... [that] we can be  
 244 faithful witnesses for God (read Isaiah 43:10 & 12), testifying of  
 245 the grace of Christ in words and actions, by conscious and  
 246 unconscious influences" (This Day with God, {TDG} 117.1).

247

248 **Let us not waste time in meaningless conversations, including**  
 249 **lifestyles that do not help us live a life of faith in God** (1 Timothy  
 250 1:4-6, NLT). "...In order to obtain the immortal inheritance and the  
 251 eternal substance, [we] must be overcomers in this probationary life.  
 252 Everything that blots and stains the soul must be removed, must be  
 253 cleansed from the heart. We must know what it means to be a partaker  
 254 of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the  
 255 world through lust. [Am I] willing to wage war against the lusts of  
 256 the flesh? [Am I] ready to battle against the enemy of God and man"  
 257 (TDG 175.2)? "...By infinite love and mercy, the plan of redemption  
 258 [Revelation 13:8 & John 3:16] had been devised and a life of  
 259 probation was granted to restore in [humanity] the image of [God 2  
 260 Corinthians 5:17; Matthew 5:48; Psalm 51:10-11; Ezekiel 36:26-27 &  
 261 11:19-20 AND 1 Peter 2:9], to bring [us] back to the perfection in  
 262 which [Adam and Eve were] created, to promote the development of  
 263 body, mind and soul" (God's Amazing Grace, {AG}, 246.3). Then, let  
 264 us live fruitfully; giving glory to God during this probationary life  
 265 because it does not lasts forever.

266

267 **"The end of all things is at hand; be... sober and watch unto prayer"**  
 268 **(1 Peter 4:7)**! "Our God shall come and not keep silence..." (Psalm  
 269 50:3). God promises to find joy in His people and the voice of  
 270 weeping shall be no more heard..." (Isaiah 65:19). When resurrection  
 271 morning arrives, "[God] will swallow up death in victory; and the  
 272 Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of  
 273 His people shall he take away from off all the earth..." (Isaiah 25:8).  
 274 The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), but at the first  
 275 resurrection (Revelation 20:5-6), the "...covenant with death shall be  
 276 disannulled..." (Isaiah 28:18). "The last enemy that shall be  
 277 destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26). "[God] will ransom [His  
 278 children] from the power of the grave; [He] will redeem them from  
 279 death..." (Hosea 13:14). "God shall wipe away all tears from their  
 280 eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying,  
 281 neither shall there be any more pain..." (Revelation 21:4). What a day  
 282 of rejoicing that will be when all of God's children are gathered  
 283 together in Christ!

284

### 285 **CALL TO ACTION: WHAT SHALL WE DO?**

286

287 **We who are alive and remain must "not be weary in well doing for in**  
 288 **due season we shall reap, if we faint not"** (Galatians 6:9 & 2  
 289 Thessalonians 3:13). We do that by continuing to "fight the good  
 290 fight of faith [that we might] lay hold on eternal life, whereunto  
 291 [we are] called..." (1 Timothy 6:12). Let us "...die daily" (1  
 292 Corinthians 15:31) for "...There is laid up for [us] a crown of  
 293 righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give [us]  
 294 at that day... [of] His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:8). "While  
 295 probationary time... [lasts], we [are to] put our faculties to the very  
 296 highest use that we may make of ourselves all that is possible...  
 297 through the grace of Christ..." (This Day with God, {TDG}, 175.1).

298 "Comfort... [God's] people..." (Isaiah 40:1). Encourage them to repeat  
299 the promise: "...neither death nor life, nor angels, nor  
300 principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,  
301 nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to  
302 separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"  
303 (Romans 8:38-39). Then, "Break forth into joy, sing together..., for  
304 the Lord has comforted His people..." (Isaiah 52:9).

305

306 "[Let] the voice of rejoicing and salvation [be] in the tabernacle of  
307 the righteous..." (Psalm 118:15). "[God will] open... the gates of  
308 righteousness... into which the righteous shall enter" (Psalm 118:19-  
309 20). Therefore, know this: as you abide in Christ (John 15:3-4) by  
310 keeping His word (John 14:23 & 6:63), if you become captive to the  
311 grave, it will have no choice but to let you go at the call of our  
312 Lord, Jesus Christ (John 5:28-29) because "...your life is hid with  
313 Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). Very shortly, "...The ransomed of the  
314 Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, everlasting joy [shall  
315 be] upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow  
316 and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:10). "Let the redeemed of  
317 the Lord say so, whom He [has] redeemed from the hand of the enemy  
318 [of death (1 Corinthians 15:26)] and gathered them out of the lands,  
319 from the east, ...the west, ...the north and... the south" (Psalm 107:2-3).