

Coping With Dying

- I. Until Christ returns, we must come to terms with death. **1CO 15:54.**
- A. The grave is man's *long home*. **ECC 12:5; JOB 17:13.**
 - B. We have no guarantee of tomorrow. **PRO 27:1.**
 - C. Fools assume too much about their prosperity and longevity. **LUK 12:19-21; JAM 4:13-14.**
 - D. Some in history have had a prescribed window of time to prepare for death (according to estimates of physicians, etc.) but only a few have had a prophetic word from God about their impending death, as Hezekiah. **ISA 38:1.**
 - 1. Hezekiah's response of effectual fervent prayer availed much: God extended his life accordingly. **ISA 38:2-4.**
 - 2. Hezekiah's desire for life to praise God in His house was foremost. **ISA 38:18-22.**
 - 3. **(PSA 119:175)** Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.
 - 4. We do well to pray for someone while they live, no further. **2SAM 12:22-23.**
 - E. The wise will consider the reality of death and the uncertainty of tomorrow, and act accordingly. **PSA 90:10-12; JOH 9:4; HEB 3:7-8.**
 - 1. Life in this world is more than preparation for a career, marriage, children, acquisitions or even death. It is a preparation to meet God. **HEB 9:27.**
 - 2. Being accepted of God should govern life or death. **2CO 5:8-10.**
 - F. Death and mourning are soberness that we need to consider. **ECC 7:1-4.**
 - G. "When you sweep death under the rug, you will likely sweep the afterlife under the rug with it. By hiding death, you hide the afterlife, and by hiding the afterlife, you hide any hope you have in it." (Ted Dekker, *The Slumber of Christianity*, p. 84.)
- II. There are things worse than death.
- A. The first thing that comes to mind is suffering but there is need for caution here.
 - 1. It is not a clear token of grace that one desires death to escape suffering. The wicked desire this. **JER 8:3; REV 9:6.**
 - 2. The righteous Job desired death to escape his misery and later realized he had misspoken. **JOB 3; 42:1-6.**
 - 3. "God teaches us, in the midst of our greatest comforts to be willing to die, and in the midst of our greatest crosses to be willing to live." (Matthew Henry)
 - B. Sometimes God in mercy shortens a life that a man not see the coming degeneracy, its fallout and its judgment. **2KI 22:19-20; ISA 57:1.**
- III. The gospel gives comfort and hope to believers and is the best way of preparing oneself or one's children for facing death. **ISA 61:1-3.**
- A. There is life after death. The righteous are instantly received into God's presence. **PSA 73:24; ISA 57:2; LUK 23:43; PHIL 1:20-24.**
 - B. Death for the believer is a gathering unto one's people. **GEN 49:33.**
 - C. The death of God's saints is precious in His sight. **PSA 116:15.**
 - D. The death of Christ secured our eternal inheritance. **HEB 9:15.**
 - E. The death of Christ made the new testament of mercy in force. **HEB 9:16; 8:12-13.**
 - F. The death of Christ will never be repeated. **HEB 9:25-28.**
 - G. The death of Christ was a necessary precursor to His resurrection which destroyed the devil and his power of death. **HEB 2:14.**

- H. Believers need not worry about an accuser in heaven (**REV 12:10**); they have instead an advocate Who is the Judge's Son. **1JO 2:1; ROM 8:1, 34.**
 - I. Christ has taken away the sting of death. **1CO 15:55.**
 - J. Christ has taken away the fear of death (**HEB 2:15**). Death is merely a shadow that need not be feared. **PSA 23:4.**
 - K. Christ's resurrection is the guarantee and firstfruit of Final Resurrection. **1CO 15:20-23.**
 - L. Christ's resurrection is the guarantee and firstfruit of our new bodies. **PHIL 3:20-21.**
 - M. Christ's resurrection shows us that burial is mere planting. **1CO 15:35-37.**
 - N. Christ's resurrection has rendered death little more than a sleep. **1CO 15:20.**
 - O. This hope makes our sorrow limited and bearable. **1TH 4:13-18.**
 - P. These precious promises should be reinforced to our souls regularly, taught to children, shared with the dying and mourners.
- IV. The aforementioned promises are particularly to believers in the Christ of the Bible, the successful Savior of all the Father gave Him and victor over death and the grave.
- A. What about errant faith or weak faith?
 - B. Suffice it to say that one's faith or flawed faith will not change the certainty of Christ's return, final resurrection and judgment or the names in the Lamb's Book of Life.
 - C. Faith and good works are fruits of everlasting life (**JAM 2:24**) of which some bring forth *thirtyfold, some sixty, some an hundred*. **MAR 4:20.**
 - D. Bless God that He knows His own and will not err. **2TI 2:19.**
- V. Old age and its proximity to death are teachable moments that believers should note. **ISA 46:4.**
- A. Grey hair is only a crown of glory according to righteousness. **PRO 16:31.**
 - B. The aged by knowledge and experience have great potential to guide others. **JOB 32:7.**
 - C. Those who love the Lord should in their old age be wanting to teach and set a good example. **PSA 92:13-15; 71:9, 17-18.**
 - D. Those who keep the faith leave a profound legacy of hope. **2TI 4:6-8.**
- VI. Charity is an overarching rule for all things, including death. **ROM 13:8-10; 1CO 16:14.**
- A. Charity will forbid abandonment and show compassion, for it "...suffereth long, and is kind..." (**1CO 13:4**). Thus, we "...weep with them that weep" (**ROM 12:15**).
 - B. Charity will keep one's spirit in check when death looms large, for it "...doth not behave itself unseemly...is not easily provoked..." (**1CO 13:5**).
 - C. Charity will consider the needs of others and the effects of one's attitudes and actions on others, for it "...seeketh not her own..." (**1CO 13:5**).
 - D. Charity will not distort righteousness or reality about death, for it "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (**1CO 13:6**).
 - E. Charity will be dignified, for it "...beareth all things...endureth all things..." (**1CO 13:7**).
 - F. Charity will cling to the gospel, for it "...believeth all things, hopeth all things..." (**1CO 13:7**).
- VII. (**1TH 5:18**) In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.
- A. Thank God for His Son, His resurrection, His heaven, His promises, His grace.
 - B. Thank God for the time He has given, and for timelessness beyond it.