

**Jesus as Help, Hope, and Comfort in the Face of Death**  
**Psalm 23; 1Corinthians 15:17–26; John 11:4, 11, 14–15, 32–35**  
a funeral sermon preached on June 27, 2020

**Jesus, Help facing death as a reality (Psalm 23)**

Death is a reality. And to approach it with true comfort, you must have Jesus as your help.

In Psalm 23, it is not so much the stillness of the waters or the greenness of the pastures, as it is that the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd, would be the One who leads you. There is no restoring of the soul, unless Jesus is the One restoring your soul. There is no walking in paths of righteousness unless Jesus is the one leading you in that path of righteousness; true walking in true righteousness is only ever for Jesus's Name's sake.

Death is a reality, a deep and dark shadow, but if the rod and staff of the Lord Jesus have directed and protected you in life, that same rod and staff will comfort you, when it comes time for you to enter the valley of the dark shadow. For, the Lord Jesus will be with you.

**Jesus, Hope in the face of death as an enemy (1Corinthians 15:17–26)**

Death is an enemy. And the only hope that you can have in facing it is the Lord Jesus.

Death reminds us that it is the wages of each and every one of our sins that must come due. Death reminds us that it is against the Living God that we have sinned, and that each of us justly deserves Hell. We are one race, descended from Adam. And, as sin and death came from Adam, we are truly a dying race!

But Christ has died for sinners. He has borne, on His cross, God's infinite and holy fury against our sin. In His death, Jesus paid off the debt that is the wages of sin, and He rose again from the dead. Jesus Christ has defeated death, and if you commit yourself to Him, you are not still in your sins. If Jesus Christ is your life in this world, then as surely as He rose from the dead, so shall you.

Death is still an enemy! It is good and right to hate it, and to feel the pain and loss that it brings. But just as death means that our days are numbered, so also death's own days are numbered. As v26 says, "the last enemy to be destroyed is death." Jesus Christ has defeated death, and its days are numbered; He will finally destroy it altogether!

**Jesus, Comfort in the face of others death as an agony (John 11:4, 11, 14–15, 32–35)**

The death of a dear one is an agony. But the sympathy of the Lord Jesus is a great comfort in that agony.

On another occasion, we might come to this passage to see the mighty power of the Lord Jesus as the Resurrection and the Life. But His plan and His certainty to raise Lazarus from the dead in just a few moments is what makes His weeping so amazing in v35. Though He knew His good purposes through Lazarus's death, He was moved to His own agony and tears by Mary's agony and tears, and by the others' agony and tears.

When a dear one dies, you may not know the specific purposes for it in the plans of the Lord—perhaps it is for you as it was in John 11, that you would see Jesus's glory, that you would believe in Jesus. But, whatever the Lord's purposes are, as you agonize and weep in your loss, you may know that you have His sympathy.

**Conclusion**

Do you have this Jesus? He is such a help in facing death as a reality! What can the dark shadow do to you, if you belong to Jesus, and follow your Shepherd throughout your life, who will still be with you in death? Jesus Christ has defeated death, and its days are numbered; He will finally destroy it altogether! And though He sits enthroned in glory and power, He sympathizes with the agony and tears of His dear ones below. Do you have this Jesus?

He brings us today, in the light of a dear one's death, not so much that we might consider the great and weighty reality of death, but rather that we might consider the greater and weightier reality of our Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of sinners, Good Shepherd, Defeater of death, Destroyer of death, and Sympathizer with those who weep. Amen.