

THE BEACON BEAM

April 2022

DECLARING HOPE IN CHRIST

Grief: Finding Hope in the Darkness

Paul David Tripp

No matter how unexpected or predictable, death shakes us to the core. The pain is inescapable.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Nothing is more shocking, emotional, or final than the death of a loved one. Facing the death of someone you love—a child, a spouse, a parent, a close friend—is one of life's most difficult experiences.

Your head is spinning with so many thoughts, feelings, and emotions. You can't grasp that you've had your last visit, your last conversation, your last meal, and your last holiday with your loved one. Your mind is flooded with things you wish you had said or done. You want to say, "I love you," one more time, and you want to hear it said to you.

Your warehouse of memories is filled with fond and painful remembrances, and you are holding tightly to that treasured collection of fading photographs. You don't feel ready to say goodbye or to deal with the grief that's overtaken you.

This article is written to help you make sense out of what appears to make no sense and to point you towards hope even as you are experiencing the darkness of death.

When you are dealing with grief your emotions race and your thoughts are scattered. In the middle of this confusing

and hard time, you need to remember a few simple truths from the Bible. God will use them to help you understand what you are experiencing and to give you hooks on which to hang your emotions.

You can't prepare for the death of a loved one. Whether death results from a sudden accident or a long illness, it always catches us unprepared. Death is so deeply emotional and stunningly final that there is nothing you can do ahead of time that will help you sail through your moment of loss. Those who knew that death was coming and those who were taken completely by surprise will go through many of the same things.

The Bible includes many poignant stories that mirror our experience. The story of the death of David's son, Absalom, gives us a picture of a grieving parent.

Absalom plotted to take David's place as king of Israel. When his rebellion was crushed, he was killed, even though David had ordered his soldiers to take him alive. David knew that Absalom's actions might lead to his death, but that didn't lessen his grief. 2 Samuel 18:33 (ESV) tells us, "And the king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept. And as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my

son!"

David's cry is the cry of every grieving parent. No matter how unexpected or predictable, death shakes us to the core. The pain is inescapable. Don't feel guilty or embarrassed if you feel unprepared to face it. There's no way to be ready for what you are going through.

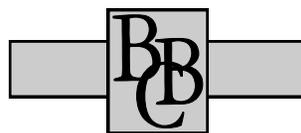
Death was not part of God's original plan. One reason death is so hard to accept and understand is that it's completely out of step with the life God planned for this world. The apostle Paul calls death our "enemy" (1 Corinthians 15:25-26). Death is the enemy of everything good and beautiful about life.

Death should make you morally sad and righteously angry. Death reminds us that we live in a world that is terribly broken; it's not functioning according to God's original design, where life was meant to give way to life, on into eternity. It's biblical to treat death as sad and unnatural.

God encourages you to mourn. Death was never meant to be. When you recognize this, you will hunger for a final restoration of all things. You will long to live in a place where the last enemy—death—has been defeated.

You are never alone in the darkness. Death is one of the loneliest experiences of human existence. The circumstances you are dealing with are individu-

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Gregory N. Barkman, *Senior Pastor*
Michael R. Karns, *Minister of Christian Education*
Robert F. LaTour, *Minister of Pastoral Care*
Gregory L. Phillips, *Minister of Music*
N. Hunter Strength, *Minister of Youth*

Sunday

Morning Worship.....9:30 AM
Sunday School.....11:10 AM
Evening Worship.....6:00 PM

Wednesday

Prayer Meeting.....7:00 PM
IMPACT Clubs.....7:00 PM
Teen Ministry.....7:00 PM

CHRIST, OUR EXAMPLE

by Bob La Tour

Hebrews 2:10 “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, *to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*”

We live in increasingly challenging days! Nothing can prepare us to cope with hostility and opposition from a world that has steadily drifted into secularism better than the example of Christ. “He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”¹ The Greek word for *captain* means “author, pioneer or leader who blazed a trail for others to follow. The captain never stood at the rear giving orders. He was always out front, leading and setting the example. Christ gave to us the pattern of perfect obedience.”²

Paul wrote, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery [something to be held onto] to be equal with God, but made Himself of *no reputation*, taking the form of a *bondservant*, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, *He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*”³

For us to begin to appreciate the magnitude of Christ’s submissive obedience to the Father’s will, we must consider what He laid aside to become the humble Man of Sorrows.⁴ In John 10, Jesus said, “*I and My Father are one.*” The fact that He left behind the shared glory of God the Father defies human understanding; it should evoke from us the gratitude and determination to demonstrate our love through humble obedience.⁵

Great God, unsearchable, unknown, supreme beyond compare, in rev’rent adoration, LORD, our feeble praise we share. Thy glory is that *Excellence*

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Christ.***

unique to Thee alone—spectacular in majesty vast universe Thy throne! For hungry souls, Thy written Word grants a faint glimpse of Thee. Though dim, the image awes the mind, and bows both heart and knee. Thy grandeur, matchless King of kings and regal Lord of lords, leads saints to meditate on Thee and silently adore. What dazzling light, like dreadful flames, engulfs Thy sapphire throne that rests upon a sea of glass like dazzling crystal stone! Bright amber glow, Thy glory draws the heart to holy thoughts; its splendor shames the rainbow’s boast and pales heavn’s hosts to naught. Thy whisper mutes the thunder crash of lightning round Thy throne—Jehovah, High and Lofty One, Who calls all things Thine own. Pure worship of the Heav’nly throng envelops me in praise, o’erwhelming me with joy that sets my grateful heart ablaze. None but Thyself can fully know The glory that is Thine. All tribute saints may offer Thee falls short by Thy design save fearing Thee and loving Thee and walking in Thy ways. Save serving

Thee with grateful heart beyond my earth-bound days.⁶

By God’s grace and for His glory, we must humbly be whoever, endure whatever, go wherever and do whatever He demands whenever He demands it. We can rest assured that He is preparing us to take up our cross and follow Him as we trust and obey. Peter reminded the persecuted Christians of his day, “*For to this you were called*, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow His steps.” “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that ***when His glory is revealed***, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. *If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you...*”⁷ May we embrace the opportunities that lie ahead to take up our cross, to suffer reproach and to exalt the Lord of Glory in humble awe and adoration.

1 Heb. 5:8-9 2 MacArthur
3 Phil 2:5-13 4 John 1:1-2; 10:30;
14:9; Col 1:15; Heb 1:3
5 John 17:5 6 Ex.24:10; Ezek.1:26-28;
Rev. 4 7 I Peter 2:21-25; 4:12-14

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al and unique. It's normal to feel as if no one has been through what you're experiencing. It's normal to feel all alone, even when you are surrounded with people.

But the death of a loved one is a universal experience, and a company of mourners surrounds you. Yet there is an even more powerful way in which you are not alone. Your Savior, Jesus, has taken another name, Emmanuel, or "God with us." This name reminds you that, as you came to Christ, you literally became the place where God dwells.

You have a powerful Brother, Savior, Counselor, and Friend who not only stands beside you, but lives within you! His presence makes it impossible for you to be alone in this moment of pain (John 14:15-20).

Good can come out of the very worst of things. Is death a bad thing? Yes. But the Bible tells us that the brightest of good things can be found in the midst of evil's darkness.

The death of Jesus Christ is a powerful demonstration of this truth. On the hill of death outside the city, the best thing that ever happened came from the worst thing ever. What could be worse than the killing of the Messiah? What could be more unjust than the illegal execution of the one perfect person who ever lived? In the sermon he preached on the day of Pentecost, Peter said that Jesus' death was an evil thing done by evil men to the one truly good person in the whole world (Acts 2:22-36).

But this terrible moment was

under God's control. God planned that this ultimate evil would accomplish ultimate good. In this dark moment, as Jesus died on the cross, God defeated sin and death—two enemies we could not defeat on our own.

In the same way, God can and does bring wonderful things out of the darkest moments of our lives. Your Lord is present with you in this darkness. He has planned that even the darkest of things would result in redemptive good for His children. He surrendered His Son to death so you could have life. He will not abandon you now.

One day death will be put to death. The death of a loved one should remind you that God's work is not yet complete. Because of sin, death entered the world. When sin is completely defeated, death will also be defeated. The apostle Paul talks about Christ's present ministry this way: "For he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:25-26).

Jesus died so we would no longer have to die. When He rose from the dead, death was defeated. Until Jesus returns, we still experience death, but one day life will not give way to death. Children will not mourn their parents. Parents will not mourn their children. There will be no widows or grieving friends. Yes, death is an enemy, but this enemy will die. The present reign of Christ guarantees this. One day life will give way to life for eternity.

As you weep, remember that the

One who weeps with you understands your heartache. He is "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). But He does more than understand; He also acts. Jesus will not let death reign forever. On the cross He defeated death, and His resurrection is your guarantee that one day, all who believe in Him, will be resurrected to a life of glory and peace. One day He is coming again to end physical death and to usher in a new heaven and earth where there will be no dying, no tears, and no sorrow (Revelation 21:1-4).

Paul David Tripp, is the president of Paul David Tripp Ministries, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to connect the transforming power of Jesus Christ to everyday life. Paul is a conference speaker and author of many books.

THE BEACON BROADCAST

Monday thru Friday

WITA 1490 AM (Knoxville, TN)	9:30 a.m.
WKBA 1550 AM (Roanoke, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WKPA 1390 AM (Lynchburg, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WBAG 105.9 FM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	2:00 p.m.
WDZY 1290 AM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WDZY 103.3 FM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WSKY 1230 AM (Asheville, NC)	7:15 a.m.
WYYC 1250 AM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.
WYYC 98.1 FM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.

Monday thru Sunday

WXTH-LP 101.7 FM (Richwood, WV)	10:05 a.m.
	10:05 p.m.

Sunday

WCRU 960 AM (Charlotte, NC)	9:30 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WDRU 1030 AM (Raleigh, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WLES 590 AM (Richmond, VA)	10:30 a.m.
Harbour Light of the Windwards	9:30 p.m.
1400 AM/94.5 FM (Caribbean)	
WGNQ mixlr.com/wgng-radio (M-F)	8:45-9 a.m. & 4:45-5:00 p.m.
	(Internet station based in Greenville/Washington, NC)

BEACON HIGHLIGHTS FOR APRIL

CALENDAR

03-06 Spring Bible Conference
 ESL
05 Coffee n' Courage
10 Lord's Table
 ESL
12 Coffee n' Courage
13 IMPACT Clubs
14 Elders/Deacons Meeting
17 Easter Sunday
 ESL
20 IMPACT Clubs
21 Silver Saints
24 ESL
26 Coffee n' Courage
27 IMPACT Clubs
28 Men Sharpening Men

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

01 Alice Marley
02 Kevin Isley
04 Bonnie Kooy
 Paul Nance
 Ann Rose
10 Daniel Freeman
11 Jamie Hinshaw
12 Don Boudreault
14 Pam Atkins
17 Emily Lewis
18 Dean Via
19 Jay Lowe
20 Brenda Yelverton
21 Gayle Davis
23 Daniel Hinshaw
24 Judy Caldwell
25 Angela Boyd
27 Ed Bradshaw
 Carl Hinshaw
 Rob McDorman
28 Greg Barkman
 Barbara Coble
 Joe Moody
30 Lori Craig

MISSIONARY BIRTHDAYS

01 Cathy Payne
03 Joshua Jensen
27 Trevor Johnson
29 Steve Worth

Welcome New Members

Caleb and Logan LaTour
 3674 E. Maple Avenue
 Burlington, NC 27215

We express our heartfelt sympathy to the families of:

Ram Chimbarange/Zimbabwe
 Blair Ellington
 Frieda King
 Hank McMillian
 Pastor Jim Raines
 Priscilla Ray
 Betty Shumaker Wallace Smith
 Lillian Williams

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