

Overcoming Grief From The Death Of A Loved One Or Friend

(also Understanding Death & Aging)

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Hundreds of copies of this mini-book have been distributed from friends to friends and family members to family members. It has even been passed out at viewings and funerals. Copies have comforted and healed people all over the USA. **You have my permission to print this right from your web browser, make as many copies as you wish, and give it away to anyone you want to help.**

Introduction: As one who has experienced the death of loved ones and friends myself, I know that your pain is real. But I also know that God wants to heal you, soothe you, fill you with hope, and speed you to emotional recovery. I lost a brother to a tragic motorcycle accident. My wife and I experienced a miscarriage. I have preached the funerals of my grandparents, my brother, and a close aunt who was murdered. I have felt what you are feeling, at least to some degree, and I can testify that Jesus has made me whole. I can honestly say that as I am writing this to you, that there is no more pain in my heart concerning these deaths; that the ache is entirely gone. So I humbly offer the following Bible truths to aid in your healing process. Truth heals. Hope heals. God's Word is transforming. Jesus Christ has a special place in his heart for you and He has a reputation for "turning mourning into dancing." Reach out to Him in your time of need! He's reaching for you!

I highly recommend that you purchase the following book written by one of the most respected leaders in the church world (who recently himself went to be with the Lord). This book can help you overcome grief as well as renewing your mind on the subject of death and life after death. *The Mystery Of Death* by Lester Sumrall, New Leaf Press, Inc., PO Box 311, Greenforest, AR 72638, Call 1-800-643-9535 to order.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Asleep	2
2. Far Better	2
3. No Pain	2
4. Absent Equals Present	3
5. Long Vacation	3
6. Surrender	3
7. Precious Moments	4
8. Resurrection & Reunion	4
9. Instant Recognition	4
10. Same Appearance	5
11. God Is Good	5
12. A Bright Future	6
13. Choose & Refuse	6
14. Where Are You Living?	7
15. Unsaved Loved One	7
16. Children In Heaven	8
17. Meet Your Best Friend	8
18. A Time To Reflect	8
19. Scripture References About Death	9
20. Ministering To Those On The Deathbed	10
21. God's Word on Longevity & Aging	11
22. No Need To Die Early	13
23. Make A Choice	13

1. Asleep

Mark 5:39 NIV - He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep."

For Christians and young children, death is a permanent graduation and an eternal promotion into a greater life in heaven. When a believer or child dies, they have not really died. According to Jesus and many other scriptures, and from an eternal perspective their body is merely "asleep" (waiting for the body's future resurrection; see no. 8 below). They are still alive but now in a different place. The body is lifeless because the "real them" is no longer in their body. In this verse Jesus couldn't understand why the friends and relatives of this child were grieving so deeply; didn't they know that the child wasn't REALLY dead? Why were they so self-centered? If they would just celebrate that the child had gone to be with God, their grief would not have been so overwhelming and long lasting. Why couldn't they rejoice for the child instead of just feeling sorry for their own temporary loss? Didn't they realize that the child had more energy, more vitality, and more reality in heaven than she did while on earth. Didn't they have any faith that heaven is a real place. Couldn't they trust the Lord's words that heaven is a beautiful and meaningful place where life continues...with even more zest and vitality.

2. Far Better

Philippians 1:21-24 KJV - For to me to live [is] Christ, and to die [is] gain. But if I live in the flesh, this [is] the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better...

Your DEPARTED loved one GAINED something FAR BETTER! They did not lose. They won. Please try to see this painful event in your life from your loved one's present perspective. They do not miss you (as you and I know the emotion of "missing" someone); rather they joyfully await your future arrival in heaven, anticipating a glorious reunion with you. They are not lonely. There are no feelings of loneliness in heaven. They feel so very close to Jesus. They are so very warmed in their heart by His presence and the presence of other family members and Christians in that wonderful place. Right now they are busy with purposeful activity, fulfilling God's plans and agenda for the ages to come. They are attending lavish banquets, engaging in warm conversations, laughing and smiling, participating in exhilarating concerts of praise and worship, touring the sights of heaven, working on God's projects, and preparing for your own future arrival. They are probably glowingly talking about you with the other saints, showing them your pictures from God's library. (You don't think earth and Kodak is ahead of heaven's technology, do you?)

3. No Pain

1 Corinthians 15:55 KJV - O death, where [is] thy sting? O grave, where [is] thy victory? -AND- Re 1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death...

Jesus has already conquered death and the grave. For the believer, death doesn't hurt anymore. The STING is gone! Regardless of the circumstances surrounding your loved one's death, the very moment your loved one "died" there was absolutely NO PAIN. Actually to them, the experience felt exhilarating. They became free from that old restrictive physical body. It felt like they were discarding a heavy coat and taking off like an eagle! *Psalms 90:10 KJV - "The days of our years [are] threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength [they be] fourscore years, yet [is] their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."* Their soul was suddenly rushed with glorious power and energy. Instantly they were "wisped" away by angels. *Luke 16:22 KJV - "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom..."* Suddenly their emotions were flooded with incomprehensible joy and supernatural peace beyond expression. *Revelation 21:4 KJV - "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more*

death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." The moment your loved one separated from their body, they felt energy surging throughout their being. They were consumed with a consciousness of perfect love. Their spiritual eyes beheld beauty beyond their wildest imagination or dreams. Divine glory began to course throughout them. All of a sudden, life became extremely vivid, intensely fulfilling, and colorful as they were suspended there in the eternal moment of their ultimate destination.

4. Absent Equals Present

2 Corinthians 5:8 KJV - We are confident, [I say], and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

According to this verse, we know with absolute certainty that the very moment a Christian or a young child vacates their physical body, they instantly take up residence in heaven in the Lord's presence. Absence from the body equals immediate presence in heaven with God. To be absent from here is to be present there. In a flash, faster than the blink of your eye, your friend or loved one entered the very presence of God. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, each of us is a triune being, being made of three parts: spirit, soul, and body. Your spirit is what the Bible also calls your spiritual "heart", the part of you that receives the eternal life and nature of God when you receive Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Saviour. Your soul is your mind, will, and emotions. And of course your body is that physical part of you that can die and be buried. You see, when your loved one went to be with Jesus, their body was buried or cremated, but the real person, their invisible soul and spirit went to heaven to be with Jesus where they can never die again.

5. Long Vacation

2 Samuel 12:23 KJV - But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

Ask God to give you grace so that you can FOCUS as king David did when he lost his child. Instead of drowning in self pity by focusing on the fact of his loss, he SURRENDERED the child to God, admitting that the death was final and that it would be futile to go through internal motions, unconsciously trying to get the child to RETURN. Then David focused on the good news that he would surely GO TO BE WITH HIS CHILD in the future. In David's heart (and from that moment forward in his words and conversation with others) he dealt with both the FINALITY of the event and the FUTURE FACT which eclipsed the present event. He saw his child's death as it really was - the TRUTH of just being on an extended vacation away from his child and anticipating the reunion and fellowship with this child forever. He focused on the TRUTH; the long range GAIN, not the short term PAIN. This brought quicker CLOSURE to the event in his soul. This brought healing and recovery to his emotions. This helped him release the pain quicker and fuller, enabling him to look forward again to new horizons in his own life. (In actuality, all that I write here in this brochure is aimed at helping you do EXACTLY what David did.)

6. Surrender

Psalms 68:20 KJV - [He that is] our God [is] the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord [belong] the issues from death.

It's alright not to understand everything about your loved one or friend's death. The issue is really too deep for us to understand. Many issues may seem unresolved in your own mind about the circumstances of their death. Just talk to God and remind Him of this verse. Tell Him that you are surrendering all these issues to Him. Let Him understand the issues for you; after all, according to this verse, the issues belong to Him, not us.

7. Precious Moments

Psalm 116:15 KJV - Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

Psalm 73:23,24 KJV - Nevertheless I [am] continually with thee: thou hast holden [me] by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me [to] glory.

Because the event of death is so important to God, so very PRECIOUS to Him, be assured that the Holy Spirit was there with your loved one at the moment of their passing on to glory, even if you could not be present. He Himself held their right hand and RECEIVED your loved one into glory.

8. Resurrection & Reunion

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NIV - Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

According to these verses, when Jesus returns in the air to resurrect His people, He will bring from heaven WITH HIM the living souls of those who have already died and have been enjoying heaven since their departure. Then their bodies that have been sleeping in the graves or have been decomposed or scattered by the elements will suddenly come together and rise to join their souls. From that moment forward their body shall never again be separated from their soul and they shall be a whole immortal person for all of eternity. Their bodies can never again be hurt or destroyed. (The split second after these believers' bodies are resurrected and permanently joined again with their souls, then those believers who are still living on earth shall also be resurrected - souls and body together, never having died.) *Philippians 3:21 "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."*

We also see from these verses that we are not to grieve like people who aren't saved. Grief is scriptural. And grief can bring healing. But our grief should not be devastating like others who don't know Christ. WE HAVE HOPE OF CERTAIN REUNION WITH OUR LOVED ONES AND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS. WE ALSO HAVE HOPE THAT THEIR BODIES SHALL BE GLORIFIED AND IMMORTALIZED. Because we know these truths as facts, our grief is shorter and shallower because at the same time we hurt (and this hurt is real), we know that the separation is at worst TEMPORARY. We know that we shall see and enjoy their presence again! Say it aloud now with your own mouth: "I am going to see (name) again soon! (Name) and I are going to hug again and talk with one another for all eternity! The reunion will be glorious! Jesus has promised it! In the meantime, (name) would have it no other way than I live life here to its fullest with gusto, with loyalty to my living family and/or friends and service to the Lord Jesus, my local church, and humanity! (Name) would say to me, "Honor me today by acting like I am still alive in the presence of Jesus and that life on earth has dignity and hope!"

9. Instant Recognition

You will have instant recognition of your loved one when you get to heaven, regardless of the age or circumstances of their departure. On the mount of transfiguration (Matthew chapter 17) when Jesus temporarily showed his future heavenly glory to Peter, James, and John, these three disciples instantly recognized and

identified Moses and Elijah who were talking with Jesus, even though they had never met them before, their names were never mentioned, and even though they had died centuries before the disciples' births. On a personal note: My mother in law had nine (9) miscarriages. I once reminded her that she will meet those nine children (besides her three living children), recognize them, and will enjoy their companionship and her huge family for all eternity.

10. Same Appearance

Your loved ones will have the same appearance in heaven as they did on earth, except with no imperfections. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 teaches that our heavenly tabernacle (spiritual body) resembles our earthly body. If they were children when they died, it is unclear from the scripture whether they will be childlike in size or adult in size. In any case, you will enjoy the reality of their presence and conversation forever. It is possible that since Jesus died around the age of 33, and since the Bible teaches that when He resurrects our bodies that we will be "like him", that everyone in heaven may appear around the same age in size and maturity.

11. God Is Good

If the circumstances surrounding the death of your loved one were tragic or if your loved one died at an early age, be assured that God DID NOT CAUSE the tragedy. He did NOT take your loved one, but He did RECEIVE your loved one. (People often misquote Job when he lost his children, thinking that Job was accusing God of giving him his children and then taking them away. But careful examination of the verse and study of the Hebrew verb "take away" reveals that there is only one Hebrew word there, not two, and the word means "receive." So Job was not accusing God of being a Schizophrenic, giving him his children one day and then cruelly murdering them on another day. No, not at all! Job was comforting himself in the face of personal tragedy by stating scriptural truth. In context and more accurately translated: "...the Lord gave [me my children], and the Lord has [now] received [them into heaven]; blessed be the name of the Lord." He was not accusing God of causing the tragedy; he was reminding himself that the children were not lost forever but were with God.)

Because we live in a fallen world, in bodies with a fallen nature (like Adam) which are subject to human error and also because we live in an environment with other fallen people, and even fallen angels (demons) - things can go amiss. Sin and Satan have so infected the world we live in, that BAD THINGS CAN HAPPEN EVEN TO GOOD PEOPLE. The Bible teaches that a third of the angels in heaven conspired with Lucifer when he rebelled against God and that Lucifer was cast out of heaven and renamed Satan and that his cohorts became demons. Ephesians 6:12 teaches that human beings are in constant struggle with these evil invisible forces. Since they cannot defeat God himself, these demons constantly plot to defeat and destroy human beings who are made in the image of God. Jesus taught in John 10:10 that the thief, or Satan, was the one who came to steal, kill, and destroy, but that He, Jesus, had come to give life. Also carefully examine this next verse: *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."* (Acts 10:38, KJV). So Satan is the Destroyer and Jesus is the Lifegiver. Accept this by faith; Jesus would never lie to you. Somehow, some way the enemy Satan took advantage of something and brought about an early death or a tragic death. But don't let a tragedy rewrite your theology; GOD IS GOOD! The Bible even promises protection and long life in Psalm 91. The Bible teaches in Psalm 104:29 that when God is ready to receive an elderly person in a ripe old age, He "takest away their breath", NOT... brings a tragedy. You may feel that you have lost A BATTLE for the life of your loved one, BUT YOU HAVE NOT LOST THE WAR. Jesus has already provided for the eternal victory of your loved one and yourself by the shedding of His blood. Your belief and confession as to the goodness and loving nature of God is a foundation to your recovery. If Satan can convince you that this loss of a loved one is, somehow in a round about way, God's fault and God's cruel joke on you, you will become bitter instead of better. So this is very important. Maintain your bold confession of God's goodness in spite of contrary emotions! Remember, there was no sin, sickness, disease, death, decay, natural disasters, wars, accidents, or tragedies in the garden of

Eden. Until Satan came into the picture, life on earth was a paradise. So pin the blame where it belongs...on Satan. And by the way, because of God's goodness, your loved one is right now this very moment in another paradise... a permanent one...patiently awaiting your reunion with them.

The Bible even seems to imply that your loved one may be in a grandstand in heaven observing and watching as you put your faith in Jesus and do the will of God for the rest of your life. (See Hebrews 12:1-4 and Hebrews 12:22-23)

Why is it that if two people bump into one another walking down the hall they merely blame it on human error. (They don't get into deep religious superstition by stating, "God must have allowed them to bump; there was some mysterious purpose and reason for them to accidentally bump.") But if the same two people were to collide in an automobile accident and die, everyone would blame it on God, making all kinds of erroneous statements to try to deal with the harsh reality of death? People speak all kinds of traditional clichés which aren't Biblical at times like these. Here is a list of just a few of the unscriptural adages (or at best half-truths) that people quote during periods of grief as they desperately attempt to comfort themselves or one another: "God needed another flower in heaven." "God knew he was going to get into sin, so He took him." "This tragedy had to be an "Act Of God."" "God needed him more in heaven than on earth." "Well, you never know when God is going to take you." "Well, the Bible says to 'number our days' so I guess the number of his days were up." (scripture out of context) "None of us are promised another day." (the Bible is copiously replete with promises of protection and long life.) "The devil can't do anything unless God first permits it or allows it." (This logic is erroneous if you apply it to other issues of life and salvation.) "This is what happens if you love your children or your family more than you love God; God will take them away from you by a tragedy." (What preacher taught such nonsense?) "God made a phone call, and he answered." "God only loans us our children for a little while; when He gets ready, He comes and takes them away." "God knew that this was the time, the place, and the way they had to go." "God took him to get the attention of the family members, draw them together, and so that the black sheep might come to Christ and be saved." "Don't question God; God doesn't make any mistakes." "God couldn't heal him on this side so he took him and healed him on the other side." "God needed another angel, so he took him." "God loved him more than others, so he took him." The above is just a sampling of the tabletop theological statements people have made up out of their own misunderstanding of God's nature while they are suffering grief or trying to comfort those in grief. But don't get trapped by traditional phrases that paint a picture of God being a tyrant just because your heart is aching and your finite human mind is striving for answers. Stay scriptural and admit that you don't understand everything. Let God understand it for you. You don't have to have all the answers to "why" before you can be made whole by God and experience joy again. "Why?" may be the wrong question. "How...should I take steps to recover?" is the right question. Go back to the promises of God and appropriate them in prayer for your own life and the lives of your living loved ones and friends. Be that much more determined to claim the Bible promises and live victoriously in Jesus.

12. A Bright Future

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV - For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

You have many good days ahead of you and people need your love and care. Many are looking to you and are dependent on your contribution into their lives. They are hurting in some area of their life too. You can heal your own wounds by reaching out to heal them. As you defy the temptation to withdraw to yourself by reaching out to others, you will find God pouring in the wine and oil of wholeness into your heart!

13. Choose & Refuse

Don't punish yourself. Many good people punish themselves for the death of a loved one or close friend. They insist on carrying their grief until their own dying breath. Some feel guilty if they don't continue to grieve. They

feel their continued grief is the only proof of their devotion and love to the one they lost. They unconsciously feel that if they were to stop grieving they would not be loving that person anymore. Others continue in long-standing grief because they have regrets... regrets about what they didn't or did say to their departed loved one. Regrets about what they didn't do for or did do to their loved one. They feel that Jesus' blood was not enough price to pay for their mistakes; that they must continue to punish themselves with grief per chance one day they might finally make atonement enough for their mistakes in that relationship. Others accept the unbelief of friends or acquaintances who have said, "You'll never get over it!" They even begin to take pride in living with the pain. They nurse the grief and protect it from anyone who would even hint that they could be free from their pain. Their grief becomes masochistic and alters the beauty of their personality, eroding their own health and attitudes. This masochistic grief robs them of the pleasant surprises and new beginnings God has for their future. They buy the lie from Satan that no future relationships, friendships, or activities could ever bring them as much fulfillment as the relationship they had with the departed loved one. Backward glancing, they are no longer forward advancing. They could REFUSE to continue in grief and CHOOSE the joy of the Lord by faith (based on the truths outlined here). But instead they think that they are pleasing God by dying on the cross of grief. They insist on trying to be the bleeding Saviour of their loved one.

Yes, even if one chooses the joy of the Lord and refuses to live in grief, there still may be seasons and battles against the temptation to mourn again, but the battles will grow further and further apart until the every trace of pain has evaporated in the light of God's love. Hope now floods the vacuum in one's heart, leaving no more room for loneliness or self pity.

14. Where Are You Living?

Some feel under legalistic compulsion to never miss decorating the grave of their departed loved one for the rest of their lives on the anniversary of their death...as if their loved one is actually there in the grave. But their loved one is not there. That's just their body. The real them is busy, active, alive, and relocated. Some feel that it would be irreverent to enjoy life on the anniversary day that their loved one died or on their birthday. Their loved ones are probably screaming in heaven, "I know those feelings of missing me come on you from time to time, but don't succumb to them. If you knew how real this place of heaven was and how very happy I am at this moment, you would not waste time feeling sorry for my dead body, vainly trying to comfort it! I'm still alive! Please...can't you act like you are alive too! God knows exactly where my body lies; He will resurrect it on that day and glorify it with majesty and dignity. But if you insist and you must mark the occasion, at least celebrate it as my graduation and revel in our soon coming reunion. Honor me by getting on with your life and feeling good about yourself and your relationship with Jesus Christ! DON'T LIVE AT MY BODY'S GRAVESTONE; LIVE AT THE EMPTY TOMB OF OUR RISEN LORD!"

15. Unsaved Loved One

What should I do if my departed loved one or friend was not saved? Or...I am not sure whether they knew Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour. Let me quote Lester Sumrall from his book "The Mystery Of Death":

"Death of an unsaved loved one is especially painful. When a loved one dies, and he or she did not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, coping with grief is harder because there is no hope left. You, however, still have hope for your life. You must continue to live and not one of your tears will bring that loved one back. The only thing you can do is to give your grief to Jesus and ask him to help you accept that this person is lost to you forever."

Also I have found that many Christians have found peace about this issue simply by querying God and discussing this issue of the soul condition of their departed loved one with God in prayer. Also I know that from time to time in my own prophetic ministry the Holy Spirit has had me supernaturally speak to people whom I didn't know and tell them facts about their departed loved one's life that only they would know about, and then

follow it with comforting or revealing words about their present destination. This has often caused the tears to flow and a burden of fear or doubt to dispel off their lives. God can use prophets and pastors to supernaturally speak into these situations as He wills.

16. Children In Heaven

If the loved one you lost was a young child, be assured that child is this very moment in heaven in the presence of Jesus. Paul the apostle clearly teaches that he (and everyone else) had spiritual life once as a small child, but then when he grew old enough to know for himself in his own conscience the difference between right and wrong, good and evil; sin came into his heart and he died spiritually. *"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."* (Romans 7:9, KJV). *So children who are aborted, miscarry, die prematurely, die cribdeaths, die from starvation, or who die from crippling diseases or tragedy go straight to heaven.* (This does not mean, however, that children don't need a Savior too; they do need a Savior. If they don't receive Christ as a young child, they will eventually come to a time in their life where they experience spiritual death (*1 Corinthians 15:22a - "For as in Adam all die..."*) and are held responsible before God to repent and receive Christ lest they die and go to hell like everyone else. For this reason, its all the more important that we try to lead our children to Christ at an early age so they never have to experience separation from God in their soul or for their eternity. *1 Corinthians 15:22b - "...even so in Christ shall all be made alive."*) Many people ask me to tell them the "age of accountability" of a child. But since the Bible does not define that age but only alludes to this truth, it is probably a different age for each child, depending on their background, upbringing, and their own individual conscience. The Bible doesn't talk too much about this concept, probably because people wouldn't try to lead children to Christ until after a certain age if they knew that age. By the way, many reputable church leaders who died and went to heaven only to be revived later or who have had visions of heaven (such as Kenneth Hagin, Jesse DuPlantes, Roberts Liardon, as well as other recognized credible Christians) have seen these multitudes of children in heaven. [Excursus: Don't listen to every stupid story of life after death that the TV, media, popular TV shows, movies, or magazines may purport as a true testimony. Most are false and deceiving. But there are reputable Bible-believing leaders who have had valid experiences.]

17. Meet Your Best Friend

Talk to the Holy Spirit Whom Jesus assigned to your side. Tell Him everything. Hide nothing from him. Shed your tears to Him. Tell Him how you feel. Ask Him for what you need emotionally, mentally, financially, and in every other way. Tell him of any feelings or frustrations you are experiencing because of this loss in your life. Fertilize your friendship with Him. Like the Father and Jesus, He is God. He is your Comforter. Dare to acknowledge His presence and assistance and discover that He will whisper beautiful thoughts back to you and even give you supernatural laughter, indescribable peace, and emotional release. Read about His role in your life often in St. John chapters 14 through 16. O how He loves you. O how He will comfort and reassure you. O how he will fill the void in your heart. O how He will help you face life positively and victoriously. O how He will give you wisdom for the decisions facing you and the bright future awaiting you. O how the Holy Spirit will make Jesus and your loving Father so very real, present, and personal to you. Pour out your heart before Him in prayer; you will feel His tangible presence. He will make Himself known to you. You will sense His arms around you, suspending you, cradling you, protecting you, and strengthening you. Give Him a chance. Give Him yourself. He loves you!

18. A Time To Reflect:

If you haven't already done so, **Receive Jesus Christ As Your Own Lord and Savior!**

STEP 1. The Bible says in Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Accept God's Word, about this sinful condition of your heart and all human's hearts.

STEP 2. The Bible says in Ephesians 2:4,5 "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins..." Accept God's Word, that God loves you unconditionally, just like you are!

STEP 3. The Bible says in Romans 6:23 that "For the wages of sin is death..." Accept God's Word, about the penalty for your sin, which is eternal death and separation from God, if you were to reject Christ.

STEP 4. The Bible also says in Romans 6:23 "...but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Accept God's Word, that there is a free gift available as a remedy for your sin.

STEP 5. The Bible says in Romans 10:9 "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Accept God's way of salvation. You must do two things to receive Christ according to the scripture: BELIEVE and CONFESS. BELIEVE that He really died for your sins, was buried, and rose from the dead. Next you should CONFESS Him with your own mouth, inviting Him to be your Lord.

STEP 6. Since you accept these facts from God's Word, may I suggest you open your heart to Jesus and talk to Him sincerely. Come just as you are and trust Him to forgive, save, and make you a brand new person in your heart.

PRAY THIS PRAYER: Heavenly Father, I come to you in the name of Jesus. Your Word says in *John 6:37*, "*him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*" So I know you welcome me now and would never reject me. Your Word also says in *Romans 10:13*, "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" I am calling on Your name, Jesus. I am depending on Your goodness to save me, not my own. Forgive me, Jesus, and give me new life. I believe Romans 10:9. I believe you died for my sins and that you rose from the dead. Thank You for saving me. I love You! On the authority of Your Word, I believe I'm saved. Yes, right now, this very moment, I am a child of God.

Now believe He has heard you. Thank Him often each day for the fact of your salvation. Purchase a New International Version Bible and begin reading a chapter a day from the books of St. John and Romans. Email me at DrDan@devotional.net and I will send you some literature that will help you grow stronger in your new relationship with Jesus. I'll also be glad to recommend a good church in your city if you desire and pray over any prayer requests that you may send me.

19. Scripture References Dealing With Death

Psalms 48:14 KJV - For this God [is] our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide [even] unto death.

Psalms 49:1-20 KJV - Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: Both low and high, rich and poor, together. My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding. I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp. Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about? They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption. For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah. Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah. Be not thou afraid when one is

made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him. Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

Psalm 89:48 KJV - What man [is he that] liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

Psalm 68:20 KJV - [He that is] our God [is] the God of salvation; and unto GOD the Lord [belong] the issues from death.

Psalm 116:15 KJV - Precious in the sight of the LORD [is] the death of his saints.

Hosea 13:14 KJV - I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction:

1 Corinthians 15:55 KJV - O death, where [is] thy sting? O grave, where [is] thy victory?

Psalm 31:5 KJV - Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

James 2:26 KJV - For as the body without the spirit is dead...

2 Corinthians 5:6-9, KJV - Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

20. Ministering To Those On The Deathbed

There Is A Time To Stand By Faith (Holding On To Someone)

-But -

There Is Also A Time To Surrender By Faith (Letting Go Of Someone)

A person on the deathbed in a comatose state needs to be gently prepared for slipping into eternity or they need a bonafide "Working Of Miracles" as listed in 1 Corinthians Chapter 12. If you are ministering to a person in this condition, you will know by the Spirit through prayer whether you are to release this person into heaven or whether you are to make the command of faith by the Spirit's "working of miracles." As you pray for the will of God to be done in this person's life, either an overwhelming deep-down knowing that when you make the command of faith the person will be raised up will form inside you, or, you will have a gentle peace to release this person by faith into eternity. There is no sense fooling yourself. You can't fool God. As you pray fervently, deep inside you know whether or not God has placed within you a true faith to raise the person up. If you have to "STAND" by faith for a person in this condition, you are going to be disappointed. They either need a bonafide miracle by the Spirit of God, or they need to be prayed into eternity. When Peter raised up Tabitha, he didn't HOPE she would be raised up. He didn't STAND on the Word that she would be raised up. He didn't TRY to raise her up. No...He KNEW she would be raised up because the Spirit of God came on him with the "Gift of Faith" and "Working Of Miracles" as listed in 1 Co 12. First he prayed with his own faith, and as he did, he sensed the Spirit of God's own faith take over, giving him the authority to make a command that she be raised up (Acts 9:36-42).

Another issue that must be considered is the person's own internal desires. Often the person is ready to go home and has made a decision that this is what they want from God. In their own mind they may feel they have put their house in order and are sure that they will die. (2 Kings 20:1 KJV - *In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.*) A person in this condition may have resigned themselves to departure and be in the process of yielding over their spirit. (Genesis 25:8 KJV - *Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full [of years]; and was gathered to his people. Genesis 25:17 KJV - And these [are] the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. Genesis 35:29 KJV - And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, [being] old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.*) They may no longer be undecided. Perhaps they have made the decision to go on to the other side. (Philippians 1:23 KJV - *For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:*) They may be ready NOW. (2 Timothy 4:6 KJV - *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*)

Sometimes you can get a comatose person or a semi-comatose person to give you signals with their fingers, eyelids, lips, breath, or another part of their body. You can talk to them just like they hear you; and try different parts of the body, asking them to signal "Yes" to simple questions. (Medicine and testimonies of those who have returned from a coma prove that in most cases they CAN hear and understand you regardless of whether they can respond.) Even if they cannot respond, you should slowly, methodically read them scriptures about Jesus, salvation, death, eternity, heaven; explaining them as you go.* You can ask them questions about whether they understand along the way. Then you can ask them to repeat the phrases of a prayer with you silently in their heart. If you are not sure of the condition of their soul, whether or not they have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, PLEASE BE COURAGEOUS ENOUGH to take them through a few scriptures that show them how to receive Him and then ask them to pray the sinner's prayer with you (even though you can't hear them pray it). Their ETERNITY MAY BE HANGING IN THE BALANCE, AND YOU MAY BE THE ONLY THING STANDING BETWEEN THEM AND A PERMANENT HELL...OR A PERMANENT HEAVEN. Don't forget the "Thief On The Cross" being crucified with Jesus. Even though he had lived an entire lifetime of unbelief, indifference, rebellion, and disobedience to God, he repented at the last second, and Jesus promised him eternal life! Don't UNDERESTIMATE the moments that you have with this person. BELIEVE that it was God's Providence that you were somehow connected with this dying person. You may even have to request the family members or friends leave the hospital room temporarily, gently explaining that you're respectfully requesting that you be given some time alone with the dying person so that you might pray for them.

* Romans Road To Salvation: Romans 3:23 (explain), Romans 5:8 (explain), Romans 6:23 (explain), Romans 10:9 (explain). Then ask them to sincerely pray a prayer to God with you (one short phrase at a time, giving them time to repeat in between) leading them to say aloud (or silently in their heart in the case of a comatose person) a prayer that does exactly what Romans 10:9 says to do. Finally, help them have assurance of what they just did, reminding them that God cannot lie and that Romans 10:9 doesn't say that you "might be saved", hope to be saved", "guess you're saved" if you do these two things...no, it promises that if you do these two things, "you WILL be saved!" It's a sure thing, a done deal!

21. God's Word On Longevity and Aging

Promises Of Long Life

Exodus 23:26 KJV - There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land: the number of thy days I will fulfil.

Exodus 23:26, NIV - ...and none will miscarry or be barren in your land. I will give you a full life span.

Isaiah 65:22 KJV - They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree [are] the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

Psalms 91:16 KJV - With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

Proverbs 3:2 KJV - For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Philippians 1:23,24 KJV - For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh [is] more needful for you.

MINIMUM YEARS PROMISED:

Psalms 90:10 KJV - "The days of our years [are] threescore years and ten (note-70 years); and if by reason of strength [they be] fourscore years (note-80 years), yet [is] their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

The reason I qualified this with "minimum" is that this verse of scripture is taken from Ps 90, a psalm of Moses who was leading a generation of Israelites who had rebelled against God and were under judgment. They circled around in the wilderness for 40 years until they had all died off. 70 to 80 years is only a minimum; there is no reason a Christian (one who is not under judgment like the rebellious Israelites) cannot live longer if he or she chooses so.

MAXIMUM YEARS DECLARED:

Genesis 6:3 KJV - And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also [is] flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

Psalms 71:9 KJV - Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.

Psalms 71:16-18, KJV - I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.

Genesis 25:8 KJV - Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full [of years]; and was gathered to his people.

1 Chronicles 29:26-28, KJV - Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

2 Corinthians 4:16 KJV - For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward [man] is renewed day by day.

2 Corinthians 4:16 RSV - So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day.

Psalms 103:1-5 NKJV - Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,

Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

22. No Need To Die Early; The Holy Spirit Will Let You Know When Its Time

2 Timothy 4:6 KJV - For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

John 21:17-19 KJV - Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

2 Peter 1:13-15, KJV - Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

COMBINE THE ABOVE SCRIPTURE WITH JESUS' WORDS TO PETER EARLIER IN HIS LIFE:

John 21:17-19 KJV - He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

ONCE WHEN PETER WAS IN PRISON, AS RECORDED IN THE BOOK OF ACTS, BEING SCHEDULED FOR EXECUTION THE NEXT MORNING, PETER WAS SO "UNCONCERNED" ABOUT IT, THAT AN ANGEL HAD TO PROD HIM OUT OF HIS SLEEP TO ESCORT HIM OUT OF THE CELL. PETER "KNEW" THAT THE LORD HAD ALREADY PROMISED THAT HE WOULD LIVE UNTIL AN OLD MAN, SO HE LEFT IT IN THE HANDS OF GOD, AND FELL ASLEEP IN PEACEFUL BLISS AND TRUST IN GOD. (Acts 12:1-11)

1 Kings 2:1-2 KJV - Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man;

23. MAKE A CHOICE TO:

Live Long and Stay Strong!

Glorify God on the earth and FINISH the work He has given you to do; completing your heavenly assignment on earth.

Forget your age and live your life!

Get Some Sage While You Age.

Enjoy The Privileges & Positive Sides Of Aging.

Categorically Refuse To Allow The Devil To Abort Your Mission In Life And Take You Early Before You Have The Opportunity To Fulfill Your God-Given Destiny and Assignment. Fight The Good Fight Of Faith For Your Longevity!

Never Look Back.

Obey both the spiritual laws and the natural laws which supernaturally and naturally bring longevity.

Don't place your faith in other people's bad experiences concerning your longevity; place your faith in the written Word of God!

Never rewrite your theology to accommodate a tragedy. Someone's tragedy doesn't change God's Word. But God's Word can change or prevent a tragedy.

Remember that Timothy was over 40 years old when Paul wrote to him, instructing him to "let no man despise thy youth."