



# Berean Christian Fellowship

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## Life from the Ashes—Part 1

**“He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying” (Matthew 28:6).**

Lying “dead” is the ultimate punctuation on life. From here, all blessings, plans, dreams, and hopes for the future come to an end. There is no coming back from it. It is the ultimate loss. The fallen life is full of the finality of death. But death is not just the ultimate loss of life. All our pain, suffering and loss is different measures of death brushing against, touching, or taking hold of life. Death is all loss—loss of life, loss of dreams, loss of plans, etc. We were not created for it, but through the Fall, we experienced loss—death touching and eventually embracing our lives. And so, fear of death, in all its forms, consumes mankind.

Yes, in this life we experience many hopeless stretches when we despair over the loss of favorable conditions, quality of life, future plans, birthrights, loss of our loved ones, and loss of ourselves—our own death. Yet, many Christians instinctively pocket Biblical promises of God’s protection and provision as if they are adding “insurance” against loss. So, we are bewildered, perplexed, frightened, shamed, embittered, and angered by the death that touches, brushes or embraces our life and the lives of those we love. After all, we are born into a cultural birthright of a “normal” life, not to mention access to an extraordinary one, if we want it badly enough. How dare anything come between us and that? We feel betrayed - we feel robbed!

The inflexible truth is we have not fully internalized the Gospel, which speaks of our share in the sufferings, trauma, and loss experienced by Christ for the delayed gratification, restoration, and glory of eternity. There simply is no escaping death in this life—it touches, grazes, and embraces us through the unreasoning curse of sin. We cannot plead, pay off, or bargain with it. And as much as it torments us, we must consider that our encounters with

death are nothing compared to Christ’s!

What were the sufferings of Christ? More than we can possibly understand. He endured loss and death His whole life: *“He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”* (Is. 53:3a). The world heaped on Him the blows of their reproach atop the strokes of death that scarred Him. And it all culminated in the deepest loss possible—His Father’s abandonment at the cross as sin fell on Him. Jesus cried out, *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”* (Matt. 27:46b). This was the agony of the deepest stroke that pierced Him—separation from Life itself because of the filthiness of our sin that clung Him to the death no one can endure. He died and was lost to the world.

The three darkest days in human history were the days Jesus was lost to the living. His body lay dead in a tomb with a massive stone resting over the entrance, punctuating all the universe’s hope with the finality of death and decay. What of His promise when He had said, *“I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies”* (John 11:25b)? He had promised He would restore mankind from death’s power and its trauma, but it looked like death had won. The road to this moment had been filled with suffering, rejection, and pain. All those strokes of death culminated in the final blow that severed Him from this life. There was no way that Jesus was getting out of there.

But then in the morning, the women who had come to find a decaying body and anoint it with scents to cover the smell of death, found something completely unexpected. The tomb was empty! The stone was rolled back! Jesus had risen to power and glory—restored beyond an infinite measure! He had conquered death! And not just the final death, but the little strokes that slowly kill us all this life—He had undone the possible and done the impossible. And in like manner, to all who Believe, death will one day be undone and all its strokes will be healed beyond measure. Even so, Amen.

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