



# Berean Christian Fellowship

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## Life from the Ashes—Part 2

**“I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Psalm 27:13).**

Jesus conquered death! We will all be with Him in glory for all eternity!

As Believers, we know this mentally—the final outcome of our lives is sure in Jesus Christ, but we still have a hard time letting go our “rights” and “birthrights” in this present life, which death chips away at very painfully, sometimes with a thousand strokes and sometimes with sudden violent blows. We have a hard time believing in these moments that all things *“work together for good to those who love God”* (Rom. 8:28). Similarly, the Disciples forgot all the words Jesus had told them through the trauma of His death. Three times, He said He would *“go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day”* (Matt. 16:21b). But it is hard to remember hope in the trauma of loss. The disciples were confused and hurt. Even if they had understood mentally, they didn’t understand in their hearts and emotions.

As Paul explained later, all disciples of Jesus are *“afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body”* (2 Cor. 4:7-10). When He rose, Jesus found His perplexed disciples who had been struck down, and *“He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen”* (Mk. 16:14b). It is hard to trust in hope when your eyes tell you something different. Had they not internalized His words when He told them, *“I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies”* (Jn. 11:25b)?

Yet they were behaving like men who had lost everything—crushed, despairing, forsaken, and destroyed. And why not? Many of them had made plans concerning what their roles and positions might be in Christ’s Kingdom on earth. In their eyes, all their hopes and dreams for this life had burned to the ground with Christ’s death. But that is the point, as Jesus had told them: *“Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it”* (Matt. 16:25).

This life must be lost. It is destined for different measures of the strokes of death upon it, until the final blow. But from the ashes of our human dreams, the dust of our birthrights, the trauma of loss, and the finality of death, we will enter, like Jesus Christ, into the glory of eternity where we will lose nothing—more than that—we will have all restored where nothing can take it from us again. This is why Jesus taught that *“if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire”* (Matt. 18:8). This body and life destined for loss and death is not worthy of the body and life to come. Then, when we are no longer acquainted with loss and death, we will understand, for it will have no more power over us, just as it has no more power over Jesus. To Him belongs praise we cannot yet express properly because we are not yet in His presence, but soon we will be.

So in this fallen life, *“let us go out to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking the city which is to come. Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name”* (Heb. 13:13-15). *“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever”* (1 Tim. 1:17a), *“even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist”* (Rom. 4:17b). Even so, Amen.

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