

What Is This Thing Called “Death”?

“...man is destined once to die...” Hebrews 9:27 (NIV)

“Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die.”
2 Samuel 14:14 (NIV)

Many great minds over the centuries have pondered this fact of life called “death”. Other people seek to ignore the subject as long as they possibly can. But when old age comes knocking at our door and our bodies show the inevitable signs of wear and tear we find ourselves face to face with our appointment with death. What can we say then? We are stopped in our tracks by the inevitable.

Supposing we were to go on living forever in this sinful world would not that be a form of hell? Is physical death a release from the grief and sorrows of this life? Is not our fear of death an admission of our ignorance of what comes after death?

The Bible gives a very good answer to where death came from. The story of Adam and Eve indicates that originally death and corruption were not part of God’s creation. However, when our first parents rebelled against God, the physical world became infected with the disease called “sin”. The decay in all of creation was the result of Adam and Eve challenging God’s law (Genesis 3).

Since death is the common lot of us all we do well to find out how we can manage to overcome this enemy. What cannot be avoided should be understood in order for us to find the best way of dealing with it.

We have just come through the season of Easter, a Christian celebration of the victory of Jesus’ over death. From a few days after Jesus came back from the dead, His followers have been announcing this Good News or Gospel as it is often called. When we read the book of Acts and the history of the early church we see that the theme of Jesus’ resurrection filled every sermon.

Over half of John’s Gospel is about the last week of Jesus’ life, the cross, and the resurrection appearances. So we know that the message about Jesus’ resurrection is the most important thing concerning Him.

The Christians have always insisted that Jesus is the conqueror of this enemy of ours. If you do not accept the teaching that He is alive from the dead, you have missed the entire point of the Gospel message.

The great English poet George Herbert penned a beautiful poem called *The Dawning*. The last two lines sums up the invitation of the Gospel concerning the resurrected Jesus.

“Christ left His grave-clothes, that we might, when grief
Draws tears or blood, not want a handkerchief.”

May your grief over the trials and tragedies of life be softened by embracing this One Who called Himself the Resurrection and the Life. May His victory over the enemy of death become yours today through faith in Him.