



Week 12: Seeing Jesus in Dying/Death

Scripture: Job 19:25-27, Psalm 16:9-11, Psalm 23, 46:1-5, 10-11, Psalm 103, Psalm 116, Isaiah 43:1-3, 5-7, John 6:37-40, 11:25-26, 14:1-3, Romans 6:3-5, 1 Corinthians 15, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 21:1-5

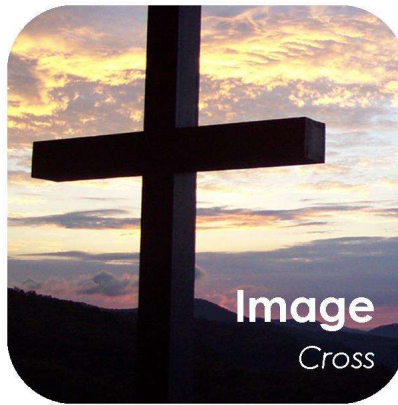
Devotional:

At the opening of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul writes that he doesn't want believers to "grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope." In my experience as a Christian, I've often seen emphasis placed on the first part of that sentence – not grieving like the rest of mankind. What I mean is I've seen grieving treated as something not very fitting for a believer. We don't grieve like the rest of people is interpreted more like we shouldn't grieve very much, if at all. I've had many share they've been taught or felt it wrong to cry too much over a death, because that shows a lack of faith. I've heard others told they should be over the death of a loved one by now. These things point to a view that says grieving isn't fitting for a Christian. But this isn't what Paul or Scripture is communicating about how we view death as believers.

Paul isn't writing about *if* Christians should grieve, he is writing about the *way* Christians should grieve. Grief at the death of a loved one is assumed, but Christians have a hope in Christ which gives a new perspective. This fits well with the whole picture of Scripture on the matter. The Psalmists talk at great length and with great emotion about the enemy of death. Death is something that impacts our lives, but something which God has power to overcome. In the New Testament we see believers, and Jesus himself in the case of Lazarus, struck with emotion in the face of death. Certainly Jesus and these other believers aren't lacking faith, but faith doesn't deny the reality of the sting of death we still feel at present.

God empowers us through Christ in a couple of ways concerning death. He empowers us to express the emotions and impact we feel in the face of death with him and others. The scars death causes in our lives we continue to carry, and it is healthy and fitting for

us to express and share the emotions they cause. God also empowers us to know that death does not have the final say for believers. In Jesus, God overcomes death and promises its power will be no more when Christ returns. So as Christians we still grieve death, but we grieve with a different perspective. We grieve with hope. We grieve with hope and faith that death is not the last word but instead life in Jesus Christ has the final say. We live in hope that when Christ returns we, and all others who have died in Christ will live and be with the Lord forever.



Memory Verse:

Hebrews 4:15-16

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Questions to reflect on this week:

- How have I seen Jesus in the **B**ible?
- How have I seen Jesus in the **L**ove I show toward God/others?
- How have I seen Jesus in **E**arth he's created?
- How have I seen Jesus in **P**rayer?
- How have I seen Jesus in the **O**thers he's placed before me?

[**BLEPO**: means "to see" in Greek]

Seeing Jesus is believing in Him!



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