

Living with Dying

“For to me to live is
Christ, and to die is gain”
(Philippians 1:21)



“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

“For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

“When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”

(Colossians 3:1-4)



We cannot avoid living with dying. But Christians can live with dying as no one else.

From his death bed a pastor dictated a letter to a classmate. “I am leaving the land of the living and will soon be with the dying.” Then he quickly changed his mind. “No, write instead, ‘I am leaving the land of the dying and will soon be with the living.’”

We live in the “land of the dying.” It is the wages of sin (Romans 6:23a). We also live with dying if we have a chronic or terminal disease or if we care for someone who does, or know someone who does. We cannot avoid living with dying. But Christians can do this as no one else because we know:

- The value of life does not depend upon what we are able to do but upon what God has done—created, redeemed, and called us (Isaiah 43:1).
- Death is a cruel but defeated enemy in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:26).
- The assurance of God’s love is found in Christ’s suffering on the cross, not in the absence of suffering in our lives (1 John 4:9-10).
- Because of His love, He will not abandon us in our suffering, but work in it (Romans 8:28, 32).
- To “die is gain,” but the time of our death is in God’s hands (Job 1:21; Psalm 31:15).
- The unspeakable glories that await us (Romans 8:18).

These truths guide our end-of-life decision making. Based on these we know:

- We can allow the dying to die. (Dying here meaning bodily functions are shutting down.)
- We should never intend for the death of the living.
- We base decisions about treatment on the worth of the treatment—whether it sustains life or merely prolongs the dying process—not on the supposed worth of the person.
- As long as God gives life, He gives life meaning and purpose.
- We should always care and never kill.



[Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)

www.lutheransforlife.org • info@lutheransforlife.org • 888.364.LIFE • Item LFL812BI

Scripture quotations from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.