

Fearless Fear of Death

Until we are ready to die, we cannot truly live (Psalm 23:6). Though so many fear death and the unknown after death, God is actively chasing after us, pursuing us daily with goodness and mercy so that we have the best opportunity to have the abundant life He offers us. That pursuit is most clearly seen in the work and person of Jesus, who came to destroy death and free us from the fear of death so that we can truly live. When we commit to give Him control of our lives in full surrender, death becomes good news and dying becomes gain.

GETTING STARTED

According to a recent study, five of Americans' top ten fears have to do with death. Why do you think that is? Do you believe the world is now less safe or safer than when you were growing up, and why? How much do you fear death?

GO DEEPER

1. In Psalm 23:6, what does it mean that *goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life*? What is significant about the word **follow**? Why do we need both goodness and mercy rather than just one?
2. From Philippians 1:21-24, how is living Christ and dying gain? What is the tension Paul is expressing in these verses?
3. According to John 14:1-2, why does a funeral contain the same hope as a wedding?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. Is death good news for you? Why or why not? What do you think needs to shift in your heart or perspective for death to become less feared and more celebrated?
2. How has God chased after you? In what ways have you seen or experienced His goodness and mercy?
3. If you no longer fear death, what does it look like to truly live?

PRACTICE IT NOW

As a group, take time to ask God to release you from any fear of death. Ask Him to make death good news, and purposefully thank Him for the ways He has daily pursued you with His goodness and mercy. Verbally praise Jesus for entering humanity's mess and sinfulness, for being victorious over death and the grave through the cross and His resurrection, so that we can say that *to die is gain*.