

# LINKS PLAYERS

DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR FEBRUARY 22, 2013

## IS DEATH OUR ENEMY?

*When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." (1 Corinthians 15:54, NIV)*

**I**F YOU'RE A LONG HITTER OF THE GOLF BALL, sometimes laying up can feel like dying. You know it's the right thing to do, but you sure have to push a lot of your enjoyment of the game to the side to pull out the mid-iron and bunt it down the fairway.

The secular person, hip to life but not to God, must feel the same about death itself. If they've lived the according to "my way" and "no regrets," when it comes time to die, it's a grudging surrender. Pastor and author Jonathan Fisk tells the story of a woman he visited in the hospital. A respirator sustained her emphysema-ridden breaths after years of living life just as she had desired. She choked out these telling words: "I just don't understand. How did this happen?"

But what of a Christian, one whose heart has believed the resurrection and whose tongue has confessed the lordship of Jesus? What are we believers to make of death?

It's a question that even the most settled Christ-followers ask at times, if only because it's a question they are often asked about their faith: what awaits us when death comes?

The promise of Scripture, of course, is that while physical death awaits all of us, believers are given eternal life in the presence of God. For unbelievers, the alternative is an eternity apart from God. They are self-judged, having told God all their life that they are not interested in him and his ways.

So what are we believers to think of death—is it an enemy or a friend? The apostle Paul wrote extensively to the believers in Corinth about these things. Death is the end of physical life, sending each person to the grave. But death's grip on our spirit has been broken by the resurrection power of Christ. Death has been defeated. Death is, then, an enemy of all that does not last; but if we have, as Jesus instructed, laid up for ourselves treasures in heaven, then physical death is only a bridge to the grand life we will walk into with him.

### Opening questions: The end of fun

How do you get around the sinking feeling of pitching out or laying up on the golf course? What earthly things do you most hate the thought of losing?

### Physical and spiritual existence

*Read 1 Corinthians 15:42-44.* What promising outlook do we find here for "the other side" of death?

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### The source of eternal life

*Read Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 15:56-57 and Hebrews 9:27-28.* What causes death? What avenue for life has God provided for us?

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### Answering the big questions

*Read Psalm 49:12-15, Luke 16:19-31, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.* According to all that you have read and studied today, what answer would you give to someone who asks you, "What does the Bible say about what happens to us when we die?" and "What can I do to be prepared for death?"

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