

Why Us?

If Jesus conquered death and we belong to Him, why do we still die? Is God punishing us as Christians? Wayne Grudem writes in *Bible Doctrine*,

Death is not a punishment for Christians. Paul tells us clearly that there is “no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1). All the penalty for our sins has been paid. Therefore, even though we know that Christians die, we should not view the death of Christians as a punishment from God or in any way a result of a penalty due to us for our sins. It is true that the penalty for sin is death, but that penalty no longer applies to us—not in terms of physical death and not in terms of spiritual death or separation from God. All of that has been paid for by Christ. Therefore, there must be another reason than punishment for our sins if we are to understand why Christians die.

Death is the final outcome of living in a fallen world. In His great wisdom, God decided that he would not apply to us the benefits of Christ’s redemptive work all at once. Rather, he has chosen to apply the benefits of salvation to us gradually over time. Similarly, he has not chosen to remove all evil from the world immediately, but to wait until the final judgment and the establishment of the new heaven and the new earth. In short, we still live in a fallen world and our experience of salvation is still incomplete.

The last aspect of the fallen world to be removed will be death. Paul says, “Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. *The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*” (1 Cor. 15:26)

When Christ returns,

Then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (1 Cor. 15:54-55)

But until that time death remains a reality even in the lives of Christians.

How can you talk with your children about death? A favorite pet dies. A classmate is diagnosed with leukemia. You take them to the funeral of a family member. Death happens around our kids, and we need to help them understand it—so they don’t misunderstand it and live in fear. Two children’s books can help: *Water Bugs and Dragonflies* by Gloria Ortiz and the older but excellent book *Someday Heaven* by Larry Libby. You’ll learn from these books, too!

LONGING FOR A CURE
The Afterlife series

Facing the Last Enemy

Is your belief well-founded? It makes sense and is supported by the facts? A belief that works in real life and when you die? That's worth figuring out.

1. What kinds of things have you heard people say about someone who has died? Do you think we really believe these things, or do we just say them to help each other feel better?
2. What has influenced your belief the most about what happens when we die? Choose one or more and explain.
 - My religion—
 - My family—
 - Science—
 - Society—
3. Hebrews 2:14-15 suggests that fear of death can affect our lives now. Are you afraid of getting old and dying? What are some things we do to avoid facing the reality of our own death? Consider these verses:
 - Hebrews 2:14-15—
 - Psalm 55:4-5—
 - Ecclesiastes 2:14-17—
 - 1 Corinthians 15:32—
4. What does the Bible teach about death—why we die and how we should think about it?
 - Genesis 2:15-17; 3:6—
 - Genesis 3:17-19; 5:3-5—
 - Romans 5:12—
 - 1 Corinthians 15:26—
5. Some people have real peace about death. Why is that? How can you have this kind of peace about your death? These verses will help you answer.
 - Psalm 23:4-6—
 - Philippians 1:20-23—
 - Galatians 2:16; 3:12-13—
 - Revelation 21:3-4—

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole." Galatians 3:13