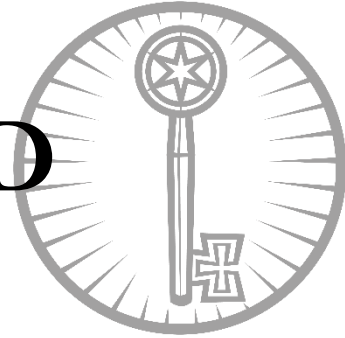


In the HOUSE *of the* LORD

LESSON #11 – FUNERAL



Death is not pleasant. It is not natural. Adam and Eve were created to live, not die. But when they sinned, they brought death and judgment upon humanity. Death is the terrible rending of the soul from the body. The worst part of death is not the pain that leads up to it, but the pain we deserve for an eternity after it.

Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57)! As Christians, we no longer need to fear death. Hell has also been removed from us. All through the perfect life, innocent suffering, substitutionary death and victorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus, Christians can look forward to death and the eternal life in heaven that awaits all those who have faith in Jesus.

Death and Resurrection

What happens to the body when a person dies?

- Genesis 3:19 *By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.*
- Ecclesiastes 12:7 *The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.*

What happens to the soul when a person dies?

- Luke 16:22-23 *The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.²³ In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.*
- Luke 23:43 *Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."*
- 2 Corinthians 5:8 *We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.*
- Philippians 1:23-24 *I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.*
- Hebrews 9:27 *Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.*
- Matthew 13:49 *The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous.*

Jesus will show His power over death on the Last Day

Whose appearance will herald in the Last Day?

- Acts 1:11 *This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.*
- Luke 17:24 *The Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other.*
- Revelation 1:7 *Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him.*
- Matthew 24:30 *At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.*
- Matthew 25:31 *When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.*

Read 1Thessalonians 4:13-18. Even as we mourn the death of a Christian loved one, why can we still have hope?
(v13)

Verse 14 says that Jesus “died,” while believers in Jesus “fall asleep in Him.” Why the difference in description in referring to death?

To further encourage us, God then gives us some of the details of the Last Day. What are some of the things that will happen?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4. How is Jesus’ coming like a thief in the night?

How is Judgment Day for the unbeliever like a pregnant woman having labor pains?

- 1Thessalonians 5:3 *While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.*

What purpose do these truths about the Last Day serve for Christians?

- 1Thessalonians 4:18 *Therefore encourage each other with these words.*
- 1Thessalonians 5:11 *Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

When will Jesus return for the great Day of Judgment?

- Acts 1:7 *It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.*
- Matthew 24:42 *Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.*
- Matthew 24:36 *No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*
- Matthew 24:44 *So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:3 *While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.*

Why do we believe that Jesus could come back at any moment? How does that encourage us to be prepared?

- Hebrews 10:37 *In just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay."*
- James 5:8,9 *Be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!*
- Revelation 22:20 *He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*
- 2 Peter 3:3-9 *First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires.⁴ They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."⁵ But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water.⁶ By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.⁷ By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

What will happen to the unbelievers who rejected God's gracious forgiveness in Jesus Christ?

- Mark 16:16 *Whoever does not believe will be condemned.*
- Matthew 25: 41, 46 *Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." ... Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.*
- Revelation 20:15 *If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*
- Luke 16:23-24 *In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.²⁴ So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'*
- Isaiah 66:24 *And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.*
- Revelation 1:7 *Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.*
- Revelation 6:15-17 *Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"*

What great comfort is there for those who have died with faith in Christ?

- John 5:28,29 *Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.*
- Job 19:26,27 *After my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!*
- 1 Corinthians 15:42-44,49-54 *So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 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."*
- John 14:19 *Because I live, you also will live.*
- Psalm 23:6 *Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

Knowing that you are going to heaven as a result of your faith in Christ's suffering, death and resurrection, how do you want to look forward to Christ's return?

- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 *But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.*
- Luke 21:28 *When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.*
- Philippians 3:20 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 2 Timothy 4:8 *Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*
- Revelation 22:20 *He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.*

What importance does the resurrection from the dead and eternal life in heaven have for the believer in his everyday life?

How is a Christian funeral service different from other funeral services?

What do you say at a funeral for an unbeliever? What do you say at the Christian funeral for a believer?

Christian Funeral I

This order of worship from Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal, with the addition of Preparation and Comfort and Encouragement, is intended for the funeral or memorial service of one who has departed from this life in the Christian faith. With the Word of God, the Christian Church comforts the bereaved family and friends and confesses its lasting hope in the resurrection of the dead in Christ.

M: Know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were therefore buried with him through Baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of God the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

Comfort and Encouragement

M: Christ, speaking through his prophet Isaiah, says: “The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”

The paschal candle may be used at the church as a symbol of the connection between Christ’s death and resurrection, Baptism, and the Christian’s victory at death. If the casket is brought into the church in procession, the paschal candle leads the procession. The paschal candle is placed at the head of the casket for the service

Greeting and Prayer

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: We have come together to seek God’s comfort in our sorrow and to rejoice in the promise of the resurrection. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, “Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Let us pray. Lord Jesus, you wept at the grave of your friend Lazarus, and you consoled Mary and Martha in their distress. Draw near to us who mourn for _____, and dry the tears of all who weep. Calm our troubled hearts, dispel our doubts and fears, and lead us to praise you for having brought him to faith. In your rising from the dead, you conquered death and opened the gates to eternal life. Strengthen us with your Word, and lead us through this earthly life until at last we are united with you and all the saints in glory everlasting.

C: Amen.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

A hymn may be sung.

Resurrection Comfort

M: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. The apostle Paul wrote to the Romans, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Jesus gives us this comfort: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die."

M: Death has been swallowed up in victory! Thanks be to God!

C: He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

M: When Christ, who is our life, appears,

C: Then we also will appear with him in glory.

M: We will be before the throne of God

C: And serve him day and night in his temple.

M: Never again will we hunger;

C: Never again will we thirst

M: For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be our shepherd. He will lead us to springs of living water,

C: And God will wipe away every tear from our eyes.

M: Let us pray. God of all grace, you sent your Son, Jesus, to destroy the power of death and to open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Make us certain that because he lives, we too shall live. Comfort us with your promise that neither death nor life nor things present nor things to come shall be able to separate us from your love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

C: Amen.

The Word

Lessons

Hymn

Sermon

Apostles' Creed

Prayer

The following responsive prayer or another prayer may be said.

M: Almighty God, we praise you for the great company of saints who have finished their lives in faith and now rest from their labors. We remember especially our loved one, whom you have redeemed by the blood of your Son and received as your dear child through Holy Baptism. We thank you for giving him to us as a companion on our earthly pilgrimage. In your compassion, comfort all who are sad in this hour. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: We praise you for your love in Christ, which sustains us in life and death. In our earthly sorrows, help us find strength in the fellowship of the church, joy in the forgiveness of sins, and hope in the resurrection to eternal life. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: You do not leave us comfortless but strengthen and care for us through your Word and sacrament. You give us family, friends, and neighbors to help when there is loneliness now and in the days to come. Brighten our future with a firm trust in your promises and care. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

A special prayer or intercession may follow.

M: Remove our fears, and make us bold to pray with confidence as our Savior has taught us:

C: *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Blessing

M: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace.

C: Amen.

A hymn that teaches the faith: Christian Worship #728 – “Jerusalem the Golden”

1 Jerusalem the golden, With milk and honey blest—
The sight of it refreshes The weary and oppressed:
I know not, oh, I know not What joys await us there,
What radiancy of glory, What bliss beyond compare:
To sing the hymn unending With all the martyr throng,
Amidst the halls of Zion Resounding full with song.

2 Oh, sweet and blessed country, The home of God’s elect!
Oh, sweet and blessed country That eager hearts expect,
Where they who with their leader Have conquered in the fight
Forever and forever Are clad in robes of white.
Jesus in mercy bring us To that dear land of rest
Where sings the host of heaven Your glorious name to bless.

3 The Christ is ever with them; The daylight is serene.
The pastures of the blessed Are ever rich and green.
There is the throne of David; And there from care released,
The shout of them that triumph, The song of them that feast.
To God enthroned in glory The Church’s voices blend,
The Lamb forever blessed, The Light that knows no end.

