



Numbering Our Days

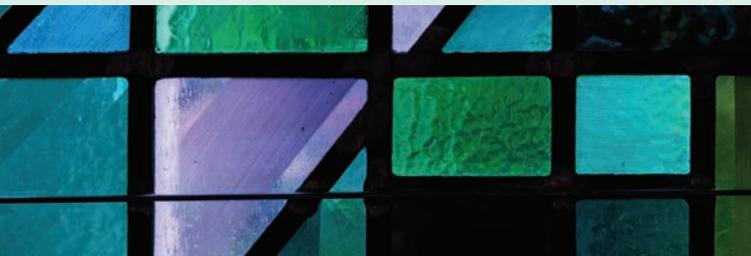
by Peter III

When God made the world and declared it “very good,” He created the world for life. When death entered the world, it wasn’t good. It’s why Scripture talks about death as a bad thing. Adam and Eve died. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph all died. Even Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, died. Scripture doesn’t praise death.

On the other hand, our culture does speak highly of it. At funeral homes, we hear that someone is “in a better place” or that he “doesn’t have pain anymore.” While these sentiments are true for those who die with faith in Christ, any attempt to make death look good is misguided.

Death is the wages of sin. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they received a death sentence and all creation suffers under it too (ROM. 8:20-22). As Christians, we don’t look forward to death. Instead, we look forward to being set free from death in Christ. We don’t look forward to dying; we look forward to being raised with Christ on the Last Day, just as we confess in both the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

Unless Jesus comes back first, we expect to die, because even though God doesn’t cause death, He does allow it to happen. As we prepare for death, we look to God who teaches us to number our days (PSALM 90). Not only did Jesus die the death that we earned by our sin, but He also rose from death and has promised to restore us to everlasting life in Him and with Him! LW



Use this space to answer the questions posed here or by your Bible study leader.

1. Read Gen. 48:1–22. How does Jacob prepare for death while at the same time speaking of God’s faithfulness? Read Matt. 26:36–46. How does Jesus prepare for death? How do these passages teach you to prepare for your own death while continuing to confess hope in Jesus Christ?

2. When we consider the circumstances of the world around us, sometimes it seems better to die than to continue living. Read 1 Kings 19:4–8. How did Elijah understand death? How did God strengthen him in body and soul for the life and work that God had prepared for him? Read Phil. 1:19–26. How does St. Paul understand death? How does Scripture teach you to understand death, even when the devil, the world and your sinful nature tempt you to look at death as a way out of the sorrows of this world?

3. It can be easy to say that God has authority over all things when life is going well. Read Job 14:1–22, Psalm 90; and John 11:5–53. How do these portions of Scripture speak about God’s authority over death? What comfort is offered you from this understanding of God, who rules over death?

4. While death is a significant concern to us, God loved the world by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die in order to undo death. Read Gen. 3:15–19 and Rom. 6:23. Even in the midst of the tragedy of death, how does God use death for your good?



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