

## Reminders

**Ladies' Class:** Today at 4:00 p.m. at Limburg home.

**Business Meeting:** next Sunday, September 20 at 4:30 p.m.

**Gospel Meeting:** Brent Willey, October 11-14

## Quotations about Death

*“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”*

- Revelation 21:4 -

*“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones.”*

Psalms 116:15

## September Birthdays

3 Wendy Cortes	15 Marcos Perales	24 Mason Perales
11 Marie Burruss	16 Jim Burruss	30 Kurt Hoffman
	30 Dortha Gentry	

## September Anniversaries

13 Luis & Wendy Cortes

### Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

**Preacher:**  
Mike McKnight

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# Indio Informer

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## Death Hurts, But Jesus Helps

### Death hurts.

We see this is Martha's words and Mary's tears (read John 11). When the Visitor welcome above all others finally arrived at Martha's house, He did not find a party. He found tear-blurred eyes, faces red and swollen from crying, and emotions on edge. Death had charged a high toll and left poverty in its wake.

### Death hurts because of the initial shock.

Mary and Martha's grief was doubtless intensified by the fact that Lazarus was cut off in the midst of his life. We never know when death will come.

*The clock of life is wound but once, and no man has the power,  
To tell just when the hands will stop, at late or early hour.  
Now is the only time you own, live, love, toil with a will  
Place no faith in tomorrow, for the hands may then be still.*

Often death comes unexpectedly—as in an accident or an emergency surgery that failed. Even if it is expected—after several hard months dealing with a terminal illness, for instance—it still leaves a shock in its wake. If you've been to a funeral, then you know that death still hurts. If you've lost a parent, child, spouse, grandparent, friend, or someone else dear to you, then you know about the pain you feel deep down. You had time to tally the loss that continues long after everyone has gone home.

### Death hurts because it leaves us lonely.

These sisters missed their brother. When death leaves an empty chair at the table, an empty bedroom in the house, and an empty pew at church services, it can be very lonely for awhile—even when others we love are still around. It can make us feel like the little boy pictured in a Saturday Evening Post cartoon. It showed him talking on a phone, saying, “Mom is in the hospital, the twins and Roxie and Billie and Sally and the dog and me and Dad are all home alone.” Mary and Martha still had each other, and their friends, but they felt “all alone” without Lazarus. Though we enter and leave the world by ourselves, we are sometimes more alone while living than at any other time. David said, *“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but*

*there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul*" (Psalm 142:4; cf. Psalm 31:11; Psalm 69:20; Psalm 88:8, Psalm 88:18).

### **But Jesus Helps.**

Does Jesus know about this? Does He care? O yes He cares! (Read 1 Peter 5:7.) Death hurts, but Jesus helps. How?

### **Jesus helps us grow through the adversity itself.**

Biologists recognize "the adversity principle" at work among plants and animals. Strangely, habitual wellbeing is not advantageous to healthy life. Any species—including people—that does without challenge soon becomes weak. One survey found that 87% said "a painful event (death, illness, breakup, divorce) caused them to find more positive meaning in life." Jesus said, "*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33).

Ironically, adversity can be therapeutic and trials can be occasions of joy (James 1:2). Adversity grants patience. James wrote: "*Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing*" (James 1:3-4). Adversity purges. Peter said, "*That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*" (1 Peter 1:7). As gold ore is put into a flame to remove dross, so we must be put into a fire of suffering to remove impurities from our characters that we might be better people. A poet said:

*I walked a mile with pleasure, she chatted all the way  
Yet she left me none the wiser for all she had to say;  
I walked a mile with sorrow, and ne'er a word said she,  
But O the things I learned when sorrow walked with me.*

### **Adversity sobers.**

Paul was concerned that young women learn to be "sober," young men "sober-minded," and old men "grave" (Titus 2:2-6). One way God helps us gain this desired trait is adversity. Solomon said, "*It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart*" (Ecclesiastes 7:2). It is not more pleasant to go to a funeral than a party, but it teaches more valuable lessons. It reminds us that we will not live forever (Ecclesiastes 12:7; James 4:14) and this lifetime is a training ground for the next (2 Corinthians 5:10). We

must prepare by obeying God's Gospel (John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38) and live faithfully (1 Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10).

### **Jesus helps people through His people** (2 Corinthians 1:2-4).

The mourners who came to comfort Mary and Martha illustrate this point. This was a common Old Testament practice (Genesis 37:35; 2 Samuel 10:2; 1 Chronicles 7:21-22; Job 2:11; Job 42:11). The Jewish mourning period generally lasted thirty days, and their custom was to weep at the tomb as often as possible during the burial week to "get it out of their system." The weeping was often an almost hysterical wailing and shrieking, for they thought that the more unrestrained the weeping, the more honor it paid the dead. Christians today are to "*...weep with them that weep*" (Romans 12:15; Job 30:25; 1 Thessalonians 4:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:11). Those who have known affliction, doubt, sickness, and temptation are better equipped to console others in similar pain (1 Peter 3:8). Tender-hearted Christians (Ephesians 4:32), have often been known to cry with their friends in funeral homes and hospitals.

### **Jesus helps by assuring us that there is a better life beyond.**

Death is a termination of earthly life, but not a termination of life. We are not really on our way to death, but on our way to life. Edward the Confessor's last words were: "Weep not, I shall not die; and as I leave the land of the dying I trust to see the blessings of the Lord in the land of the living." The housing of the soul is torn away, the tabernacle to be taken down (2 Corinthians 5:1), but it's not destruction. We should not speak of a Christian in the past tense—as if he does not exist any more. "*God is not the God of dead beings but of living beings, for all live unto him.*" Imagine an artist carving a statue of expensive marble with gold inlay. He purchases expensive tools and spends years bringing the work to completion. Will he then ask his helper to take a hammer and break it in pieces? Imagine a business owner patiently training a worker. He treats him as a son and shows him how to run every part of the business. When he has him fully trained and ready to take over, will he then fire him? Yet this what happens if God makes us His children, trains our souls, and then refuses to grant us immortality. After all, this life is "*but a vapor*" (James 4:14) and a thousand years are but one day (2 Peter 3:8). On the great painter Albrecht Durer's tombstone in his native city, Nuremberg, they put the word *Emigravit*, which means, "He has emigrated." That's death—an immigration path to heaven's fair city.

**"O death, where is thy sting?"**  
1 Corinthians 15:55