



NCFI Caring Across Regions with Encouraging Scripture

The Gift of Death
By Carrie Dameron

I am the resurrection and life. Whoever believes in me though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26, ESV).

Recently, my pastor spoke about the resurrection of Lazarus, which is found in John 11. He mentioned the incredible gift we have been given to die. Yes, that is what he said. We have been given the wonderful gift of death, for when we die, we will no longer be bound to this world. Instead, we will be ushered into the presence of Jesus Christ, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, the angels, and all the saints (Revelation 21). Thus, we should not be afraid of death; instead, we should welcome the time when it comes. At first, like you, I was shocked to hear my pastor say this. I know I look forward to seeing Jesus face-to-face and dwelling with Him for all eternity. Yet, I have never wanted to die nor looked forward to my final hours on earth as a gift from Him. The more I reflected on this teaching, the more I wondered how it would change my perspective as a nurse.

How would I alter my nursing care for the terminally ill, actively dying, or elderly? In addition to treating my patients' pain, providing comforting words, or praying for peace, could I encourage them to get ready to enjoy their gift of death? Maybe I could help them say goodbye to the suffering they have experienced in this world--a time without pain, tears, or loneliness. I would help them anticipate an eternity without racism, abuse, or evil. And even though they will miss their loved ones, maybe I could assist them with writing a letter to each family member. Instead of words expressed as a forever goodbye, the letter would be in expectation of seeing them again after death in the presence of Jesus.

I could help them imagine what they would do when they finally did see their Savior face-to-face. Will they hug Him like a long-lost older brother they haven't seen in years? Maybe fall at His feet with humble thanksgiving? Or would they prostrate themselves in reverence at the magnificence of His holiness?

I have always hoped that when I finally see Jesus, I would be drawn to tears and, like Mary, would wash his feet with my hair and tears (Luke 7:36-38; John 11:2). These wouldn't be tears of sadness; they would be tears of gratitude for a life with Him. A life on earth and in Heaven filled with love and joy.

This Easter season let's share our wonderful gift of death as the passage to a life of eternity with our Lord Jesus.