

“Hope” by Kirk Hunt

“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him.”

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 (NIV)

You are never quite ready for the death of kith or kin. A long, protracted illness lacks enough warning. A sudden tragedy always catches us unready.

Death does not ask. He does not negotiate. He simply comes. Even Scripture says so.

Death can force us to choose, but he can not control our choices. You can respond in faith. You can reply in strength.

The tears may fall faster and hotter than you like. That is because you are flesh and blood. The sorrow comes because you love and care. That is a good thing.

Grief is not weakness. Sorrow is the most authentic evidence of a life lived, with love, among men and women. Tears are the normal response to loss and permanent separation. Any relationship worth having extracts some grief at its end.

Still, after the waves of sorrow pass, you are left with the memories. Those stored moments of laughter, tears, brawls and embraces are precious treasure. As long as you remember, your friend or kinsman is just a thought away. Especially for those who live and die in Christ, it is never “goodbye,” just “see you later.”

Go on and live through this season. You will have to feel it all. Your real friends and remaining family will see you through the hurt and heartache.

Christians cry at the open grave or weep before the burning pyre. Still, we stand, triumphant through Christ. Death may force the issue, but Jesus has the final Word. “They are not dead, but sleep.”

You will live, love and laugh again. Sooner than you think. God's grace will carry you. His peace will settle you. God's power over death gives us our greatest strength: Hope.

Think: His power gives me hope.

Pray: “Lord, help me to remember that You have already triumphed, even over death.”

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