

How to Connect to Long Life

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Scripture References

Revelation 1:18, <i>NLT</i>	Deuteronomy 34:7, <i>ESV</i>
1 Corinthians 15:55, <i>NLT</i>	Joshua 24:29, <i>ESV</i>
1 Corinthians 15:55	Isaiah 51:1, 2, <i>ESV</i>
Hosea 4:6	Galatians 3:13, 14, <i>ESV</i>
Matthew 27:52, 53	1 Thessalonians 4:13-15, <i>ESV</i>
1 John 5:4	1 Thessalonians 5:7, <i>ESV</i>
Genesis 15:15	Genesis 6:3, <i>ESV</i>
Genesis 25:7, 8, <i>ESV</i>	Psalms 90:10, <i>ESV</i>
Genesis 35:28, 29, <i>ESV</i>	Hosea 13:9, <i>ESV</i>
Galatians 4:28	Hosea 13:9, 14
Genesis 47:9, 28	Proverbs 18:21
Genesis 50:26, <i>ESV</i>	1 Peter 3:10, <i>NLT</i>

Summary

If we do not understand death, it can seem very final and very frightening. However, the finished works of Jesus Christ have re-written the ending of the story. Very seldom do we hear believers talk about victory over death, yet this is what Jesus' death and resurrection have given us. Most people think they have absolutely no control over when they die, but the Bible reveals otherwise. Not only is it God's will for us to live long lives, it is a covenant right when we become born again. We take possession of this right by faith. Believing God's Word in this area positions us for a strong, vigorous life.

A. Jesus conquered death when He rose from the grave. We now have the same victory.

1. Jesus—not Satan—now holds the keys to death. The devil turned them over when Jesus died on the cross. Jesus now uses them for our favor.
 - a. I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave (Revelation 1:18, *NLT*).
 - b. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? (1 Corinthians 15:55, *NLT*).
 - c. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (1 Corinthians 15:55).
2. We rarely hear the church teach about victory over death. Because of this, we have experienced defeat in this area.
 - a. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge... (Hosea 4:6).
 - b. Most people think that we die “when our number is up.” However, we have the authority in this area.
3. And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many (Matthew 27:52, 53).

- a. When Jesus took the keys of death, He used them to open the graves of the dead saints, so they could walk through the streets of Jerusalem.
- b. Long life is entirely possible for us; we take possession of it by faith.
- c. ...And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith (1 John 5:4).

B. God's will for us is a long and healthy life. We do not have to tolerate an early death.

- 1. Old age is a gift God wants us to have; an early death is *not* His will. Abraham was one person who enjoyed long life; his son Isaac also lived a long time.
 - a. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age (Genesis 15:15).
 - b. These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, 175 years. Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people (Genesis 25:7, 8, *ESV*).
 - c. Now the days of Isaac were 180 years. And Isaac breathed his last, and he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him (Genesis 35:28, 29, *ESV*).
- 2. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise (Galatians 4:28).
 - a. Being born again makes us children of promise; long life is one of those promises. This is something we can expect.
- 3. And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage... And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years (Genesis 47:9, 28).
 - a. Even at age 130, Jacob was not feeble, but still very active.
 - b. Old age is not a special offer, but a covenant right.
- 4. We are accustomed to thinking that 70 years old is the limit to our life span; however, people used to live much longer than that.
 - a. So Joseph died, being 110 years old. They embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt (Genesis 50:26, *ESV*).
 - b. Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated (Deuteronomy 34:7, *ESV*).
 - c. After these things Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being 110 years old (Joshua 24:29, *ESV*).

C. Born-again believers have access to the same covenant of promise that Abraham had.

- 1. God promises to deal with believers the same way He dealt with Abraham. Christ connected us to the same covenant that God had with Abraham.
 - a. Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the LORD: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, that I might bless him and multiply him (Isaiah 51:1, 2, *ESV*).
 - b. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith (Galatians 3:13, 14, *ESV*).

2. But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep (1 Thessalonians 4:13-15, *ESV*).
 - a. Christians do not die—they sleep. In the world, people die; in the church, they fall asleep.
3. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night (1 Thessalonians 5:7, *ESV*).
 - a. When saved, born-again believers die, they sleep because they die in the Lord.

D. We have become accustomed to shorter life spans. However, longer life is in our power.

1. In Noah's time, the life expectancy was 120 years old; however, sin shortened the life span to 70 years. The key to long life is to avoid destroying ourselves.
 - a. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years" (Genesis 6:3, *ESV*).
 - b. The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away (Psalm 90:10, *ESV*).
2. It is tragic to destroy ourselves and not know that our help is in God. The destruction of covenant people is primarily self-caused.
 - a. He destroys you, O Israel, for you are against me, against your helper (Hosea 13:9, *ESV*).
 - b. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help (Hosea 13:9).
3. The spoken word is powerful; what we do not know can kill us. Speaking the wrong things can lead to our self-destruction. This is something the world does not understand.
 - a. Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof (Proverbs 18:21).
 - b. For the Scriptures say, "If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies" (1 Peter 3:10, *NLT*).
4. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes (Hosea 13:14).
 - a. This is God's promise to His children; Jesus fulfilled this promise.
 - b. We are delivered from self-destruction when we avoid speaking evil things, thinking thoughts we should not think, and living in stress.

Category: faith

Keywords: life, death, final, victory, resurrection, die, live, lives