

3 Hope That Comforts

Introduction

“Ngayong wala na sila, may pag-asa pa ba?”

Losing someone we love is one of life’s most painful experiences. Many Filipinos have faced this heartache, especially through sickness, accidents, and natural disasters. The loss feels final, and grief can seem unbearable. But the Bible tells a different story—a story of comfort and hope.

God promises that death is not the end. Those who have died in faith are simply “asleep” in Jesus, waiting for the day He will call them back to life. The resurrection is not a fantasy—it’s the heart of the Christian hope. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we have the assurance that our loved ones will rise again, too. Even when we grieve, we can find peace in knowing that Jesus holds the keys to life and death.

Jesus—our Hope—holds the power of life and resurrection.

Top Five Reasons Why Many People Struggle to Move On After a Loved One’s Death

Losing a loved one is one of life’s most painful experiences. While grief is natural, some find it difficult to move forward. Here are five key reasons why many struggle with loss:

1. **Deep Emotional Bond and Unresolved Feelings**

When a loved one dies, the emotional connection does not instantly disappear. Many people struggle with unresolved feelings—whether love, regret, guilt, or even anger. The inability to say a final goodbye or express certain emotions can keep grief lingering for years.

2. **Fear of Forgetting or “Betraying” the Deceased**

Some believe that moving on means forgetting their loved one or dishonouring their memory. They fear that if they start enjoying life again, it may seem like they no longer care about the person who passed away. This emotional conflict can keep them stuck in grief.

3. **Life Feels Empty Without Them**

When a loved one played a central role in someone’s life—whether as a spouse, parent, child, or best friend—their absence creates a deep void. Everyday activities, traditions, and even simple routines feel incomplete, making it hard to adjust to life without them.

4. **Lack of Hope for a Reunion**

People who believe that death is the absolute end often experience deeper despair. The absence of hope for seeing their loved one again can lead to prolonged sadness, depression, or even existential crises. Those who understand the biblical promise of resurrection often find greater peace and healing.

5. **Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms**

Instead of allowing themselves to heal, some people suppress their grief or turn to unhealthy distractions like isolation, workaholism, substance use, or excessive attachment to memories (e.g., keeping everything unchanged in their loved one's room for years). These actions prevent true emotional recovery.

What really happens when we die? Is there awareness in death? And most importantly, will we ever see our loved ones again?

Bible Discussion

Many misconceptions exist about what happens after death. The Bible, however, provides clear answers. Here is a comparison of common myths versus biblical truth regarding the state of the dead.

Myth #1: The dead are aware and can communicate with the living.

Truth: The dead know nothing and cannot interact with the living.

Ecclesiastes 9:5-6 – "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing... never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun."

Explanation: The dead are unconscious and unaware of earthly events. Any supposed communication with the dead is deception, often influenced by demonic spirits (Isaiah 8:19).

Myth #2: Death is a transition to another life, where the soul lives on.

Truth: Death is an unconscious sleep until the resurrection.

John 11:11-14 – Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

Explanation: In death, there is a complete cessation of life. Here, Jesus upholds the OT teaching that there is no activity, awareness, or transition into another life as explained previously. However, He uses sleep to illustrate the immediate restoration of consciousness at resurrection.

Myth #3: At death, the soul immediately goes to heaven or hell.

Truth: The dead remain in their graves, awaiting resurrection.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 – “The dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive... will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.”

Explanation: If the righteous were already in heaven, there would be no need for a resurrection. Instead, Scripture teaches that all believers will receive eternal life together when Christ returns.

Myth #4: The soul is immortal and cannot die.

Truth: Only God has immortality; humans are mortal.

Ezekiel 18:4 – “The soul who sins shall die.”
1 Timothy 6:15-16 – “God... alone has immortality.”

Explanation: The Bible never says that the soul is naturally immortal. Immortality is a gift from God, given only to the saved at the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

Myth #5: The dead can praise and worship God in heaven.

Truth: The dead do not praise God because they are in a state of unconscious sleep.

Psalms 115:17 – “The dead do not praise the Lord, nor any who go down into silence.”

Explanation: If the righteous went straight to heaven at death, they would praise God. But the Bible says the dead are silent, awaiting the resurrection.

Myth #6: The wicked are burning in hell right now.

Truth: The wicked are reserved for judgment at the end of time.

Job 21:30,32 – “The wicked are reserved for the day of doom... He shall be brought to the grave.”

Explanation: The wicked do not go to hell immediately. They remain in their graves until the final judgment, when they will receive their punishment (Revelation 20:13-15).

Myth #7: The spirit of a person continues living after death.

Truth: The “spirit” is the breath of life, not a conscious being.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 – “Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.”

Explanation: The “spirit” in this verse refers to the breath of life (Genesis 2:7), not a living entity. When a person dies, their breath returns to God, and their body returns to dust.

Myth #8: Eternal life is automatic for everyone.

Truth: Eternal life is only given through Christ at the resurrection.

1 John 5:11-12 – “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”

Explanation: People are not naturally immortal. Eternal life is a gift from God, received by faith in Christ and granted at the resurrection.

Myth #9: The first death is the final end for everyone.

Truth: There are two deaths—the first death (temporary) and the second death (eternal).

Revelation 20:14 – “Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

Explanation: The first death (physical death) is temporary, as there will be a resurrection. The second death, which occurs after judgment, is eternal and final.

Myth #10: The idea that the dead continue to exist comes from God.

Truth: The belief in an immortal soul was Satan’s first lie.

Genesis 3:4 – “Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die.’”

Explanation: Satan deceived Eve by telling her she wouldn’t truly die. Many false teachings about the afterlife stem from this original lie, leading people away from the biblical truth that death is a sleep until the resurrection.

Appeal

Understanding the biblical truth about death removes fear and deception. Instead of believing that loved ones are suffering or watching from beyond, we can rest in the blessed hope that they are simply asleep, awaiting Christ's return (Titus 2:13).

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." —John 11:25

This truth brings peace, assurance, and the joyful anticipation of a glorious reunion when Christ returns!