

# Something to Pray About

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By Cindy Sears – September 2010

**“DEATH”**

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. —Revelation 20:14 (NIV)

We were made to be eternal beings, because we are made in the image of God—Who is Eternal. The question for us is: do we have eternal life with God or eternal death without God?

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was denied to Adam and Eve in the garden—not the Tree of Life until after they rebelled against God. *And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”* Genesis 2: 16-17. As long as we continue to try to usurp God’s rule and make our own rules, we are barred from the Tree of Life. *And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden...he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.”* Genesis 3:22, 23a, 24b (NIV)

And now Death reigns here on earth—in humans, in animals, in nature, in material things (all things break down eventually and return to a chaotic state). If not for God’s common grace that sustains us, we and our world would have been obliterated long ago. Sin has entered the world and Death is here to stay—for now. Yet, Jesus says that we who believe in His name (ALL that He is and stands for and did for us on the cross) have eternal life. That’s in the present tense.

I don’t know about you, but when I see a loved one die, whether human or animal, my faith in this promise takes a beating. But then I remember in Whom I have believed. The God/Man who died a horrible death on a bloody cross, was buried in a borrowed tomb, and was able to give it back empty to the owners. He arose! The evidence that this is so is overwhelming to those who are willing to look and see.

Still, I hate death—of the not yet born, the young, the middle aged and the old, the physically strong and the physically decrepit, the emotionally balanced or the mentally deranged or challenged—all these deaths stink. Death on purpose or death by accident, death by old age or death by disaster, justifiable death or malicious death—all are painful and unsatisfying and an affront to my soul that speaks to me of eternity.

It is awful to meet death whether it comes slowly or quickly. It comforts me to know that Jesus hated death also (see John 11:33-44), and He will come back and stop Death—for those of us who have accepted His gift of Grace. He declares in His Holy Word that our death on this earth is only a step away from eternity in the heavenly realms with Him, because we who believe have eternal life NOW! But those who refuse to believe are dead already (John 3:36)—and are headed for eternal death.

For whatever reason, this is the plane upon which we must choose to accept God’s grace through Jesus Christ and only through Him—or to refuse and continue to be condemned NOW. If death is so horrible here, how much worse will eternal death be? No one is guaranteed another minute on this earth. Today is the day to choose. You choose life once or you choose death every moment you live, and that moment may be your final one. There is no turning back after we cross that divide. Eternity is forever. Choose now! *IF anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.* Revelation 20:15 (NIV). —Cindy Sears

