

## Living Hope

### Scripture Reading — 1 Peter 1:3-9

*In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. — 1 Peter 1:3*

Christmas is a season of birth, remembering the new life of Jesus when he was born on the earth. But in our Advent preparation for Christmas, we can also think about the other end of the life spectrum, remembering that we will eventually die.

This is a frightening thought to many people, so we often try to avoid even saying the word death. Instead we often say that someone “passed away.”

But for Christians, death does not have to be frightening, because it does not get the last word. We might be frightened of the pain that can come before death, and we may grieve the deaths of our loved ones while we are still living. But death itself does not have to be frightening, because we have hope in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

When God raised Jesus from the dead, he promised that we too will be raised from death to eternal life. We have hope that even though our earthly lives will end, our lives with the Lord will never end.

Some Christian traditions refer to a funeral as “a service of witness to the resurrection.” That is a good reminder of the hope that Christians have in the face of death. Death does not have the last word; God does, and his Word is life!

### Prayer

*God of life, thank you that in the resurrection of Jesus you have promised us the gift of eternal life with you. Give us hope in the face of death. In the name of our resurrected Lord we pray. Amen.*

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Written by Rebecca Heys — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/rebecca-jordan-veys>

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