

# Lxix. to a Christian Gentlewoman, on Her Death-Bed

by Samuel Rutherford

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*Death is a friendly dissolution and a change, not a destruction of life, because Christ is the period, end, and lodging home at the end of our journey.*

**Scripture:** Romans 8:38, 1 Corinthians 15:55, Philippians 1:21, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Revelation 21:4

**Topics:** "Eternal Life", "Christ Presence"

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## Description

Samuel Rutherford preaches about the comforting assurance of Christ's presence in the face of death, emphasizing that for believers, death is a friendly dissolution and a passage to be with Jesus. He encourages the congregation to find joy in the thought of being with Christ in the afterlife, where they will experience His magnificence and love in ways beyond earthly comprehension. Rutherford assures them that in death, they will not lose anything of value, but gain the sweetest fellowship with Christ, free from the pains of this world.

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## Transcript

MISTRESS, -- Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. -- If death, which is before you and us all, were any other thing than a friendly dissolution, and a change, not a destruction of life, it would seem a hard voyage to go through such a sad and dark trance, so thorny a valley, as is the wages of sin. But I am confident the way ye know, though your foot never trod in that black shadow. The loss of life is gain to you. If Christ Jesus be the period, the end, and lodging home, at the end of your journey, there is no fear; ye go to a friend.

And since ye have had communion with Him in this life, and He has a pawn or pledge of yours, even the largest share of your love and heart, ye may look death in the face with joy. But though He be the same Christ in the other life that ye found Him to be here, yet He is so far in His excellency, beauty, sweetness, irradiations, and beams of majesty, above what He appeared here, when He is seen as He is, that ye shall misken Him, and He shall appear a new Christ: as water at the fountain, apples in the orchard and beside the tree, have more of their native sweetness, taste, and beauty, than when transported to us some hundred miles.

I mean not that Christ can lose any of His sweetness in the carrying, or that He, in His Godhead and loveliness of presence, can be changed to the worse, betwixt the little spot of the earth that ye are in, and

the right hand of the Father far above all heavens. But the change will be in you, when ye shall have new senses, and the soul shall be a more deep and more capacious vessel, to take in more of Christ; and when means (the chariot, the Gospel, that He is now carried in, and ordinances that convey Him) shall be removed.

Sure ye cannot now be said to see Him face to face; or to drink of the wine of the highest fountain, or to take in seas and tides of fresh love immediately, without vessels or messengers, at the Fountain itself, as ye will do a few days hence, when ye shall be so near as to be with Christ. Death is but an awesome step, over time and sin, to sweet Jesus Christ, who knew and felt the worst of death, for death's teeth hurt Him. We know death has no teeth now, no jaws, for they are broken.

It is a free prison; citizens pay nothing for the grave. The jailer who had the power of death is destroyed: praise and glory be to the First-begotten of the dead. The worst possible that may be is, that ye leave behind you children, husband and the church of God in miseries. But ye cannot get them to heaven with you for the present. Ye shall not miss them, and Christ cannot miscount one of the poorest of His lambs. No lad, no girl, no poor one shall be a-missing in the day that the Son shall render up the kingdom to His Father.

As for the church which ye leave behind you, the government is upon Christ's shoulders, and He will plead for the blood of His saints. The Bush has been burning above five thousand years, and we never yet saw the ashes of this fire. Yet a little while, and the vision shall not tarry: it will speak, and not lie. I am more afraid of my duty, than of the Head Christ's government. He cannot fail to bring judgment to victory. Now, if I have found favor with you, and if ye judge me faithful, my last suit to you is that ye would leave me a legacy; and that is, that my name may be, at the very last, in your prayers: as I desire also, it may be in the prayers of those of your Christian acquaintance with whom ye have been intimate.

LONDON, Jan 9, 1646

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