

Dying in the Lord

by John Newton

John Newton's sermon emphasizes the assurance of dying in the Lord and the comfort found in God's providence and love during life's uncertainties.

Scripture: Psalm 139:1, Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 10:29, Romans 8:28

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Faith Guidance"

Description

John Newton reassures his friend of God's sovereignty and care, emphasizing that even in moments of darkness and doubt, they can trust in the Lord's love and provision. Newton acknowledges his friend's struggles but points to the greater truth that God's wisdom surpasses human understanding, and every aspect of their life is under His control. He encourages his friend to have faith and confidence in God's guidance, likening life's challenges to a stormy sea where God is the unwavering Pilot leading them safely to their destination.

Transcript

Nov. 27, 1778.

My dear Friend,

You are a better expositor of Scripture than of my speeches, if you really inferred from my last that I think you shall die soon. I cannot say positively you will not die soon, because life at all times is uncertain: however, according to the doctrine of probabilities, I think, and always thought, you bid fair enough to outlive me. The gloomy tinge of your weak spirits led you to consider yourself much worse in point of health than you appear to me to be.

In the other point I dare be more positive, that, die when you will, you will die in the Lord. Of, this I have not the least doubt; and I believe you doubt of it less, if possible, than I, except in those darker moments when the atrabilious humour prevails.

I heartily sympathize with you in your complaints; but I see you in safe hands. The Lord loves you, and will take care of you. He who raises the dead, can revive your spirits when you are cast down. He who sets bounds to the sea, and says "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further," can limit and moderate that gloom which sometimes distresses you. He knows why he permit, you to be thus exercised. I cannot assign the reasons, but I am sure they are worthy of his wisdom and love, and that you will hereafter see and say, He

has done all things well. If I was as wise as your philosopher, I might say a great deal about a melancholy complexion; but I love not to puzzle myself with second causes, while the first cause is at hand, which sufficiently accounts for every phenomenon in a believer's experience. Your constitution, your situation, your temper; your distemper, all that is either comfortable or painful in your lot, is of his appointment. The hairs of your head are all numbered: the same power which produced the planet Jupiter is necessary to the production of a single hair, nor can one of them fall to the ground without his notice, any more than the stars can fall from their orbits. If providence, no less than in creation, he is Maximus in minimis. Therefore fear not; only believe. Our sea may sometimes be stormy, but we have an infallible Pilot, and shall infallibly gain our port.

I am, &c.

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