

PSYCHOLOGY IN THE PSALMS

PSALM 16

# A GRAVESIDE SONG



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**FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

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# INTRODUCTION

I've stood at gravesides and rejoiced. No death is tear-free, but if it's a believer, no death is joy-free. Insofar as we are able to grasp the reality of the believer rejoicing in Christ's presence without sin or suffering, we can have joy.

I've stood at gravesides with unmixed grief. I've wept and wept without any hope of heaven for those who died without saving faith in Christ. The reality and enormity of where the person is and will forever be is heart-crushing.

**What will your graveside be like?** Psalm 16 gives us hope that our graveside can be joyful as well as tearful.

## BACKGROUND

The Psalms are God's infallible study of the connections between feeling, thinking, and doing. They stimulate healthy thoughts, feelings, and actions. But they also help us process dangerous and damaging emotions. So far we've felt the following Psalms:

- Psalm 1: A Happy Song
- Psalm 2: A Fight Song
- Psalm 3: A Peace Song
- Psalm 4: A Love Song
- Psalm 5: A Hate Song
- Psalm 6: A Complaining Song
- Psalm 7: A Justice Song
- Psalm 8: An Awe Song
- Psalm 9: A Safe Song
- Psalm 10: A Patient Song
- Psalm 11: A Stabilizing Song
- Psalm 12: A Healing Song
- Psalm 13: A Questioning Song
- Psalm 14: A Reminder Song
- Psalm 15: A Devotional Song
- Psalm 16: A Graveside Song

Who is this Psalm about? In Acts 2:29-31, Peter tells us that David knew Psalm 16 was about the Messiah not himself. Paul later confirms this interpretation of the Psalm (Acts 13:35-37).

However, Christ is the head of the body, and the body benefits from his work. He is the first-fruit from the dead, but believers follow him.



What will your graveside be like? Like Christ's?



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# 1. CHRIST LIVED A HOLY LIFE AND DIED A HAPPY DEATH

## Christ's Holy Life

- He prayed to God (1)
- He took refuge in God (1)
- He obeyed God (2)
- He found all good in God (2)
- He loved the people of God (3)
- He warned the haters of God (4)
- He valued the inheritance of God (5-6)
- He blessed God (7)
- He received counsel from God (7)
- He followed God (8)
- He trusted God (8)

## Christ's Happy Death

- He rejoiced at his security in death (9)
- He rejoiced that death would not doom his soul to everlasting hell (10)
- He rejoiced that death would not corrupt his body (10)
- He rejoiced that the path of life was at the end of the path of death (11)
- He rejoiced that death would usher him into God's joy-filled presence (11)
- He rejoiced that death would begin forever pleasures (11)

## CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

**Sing this Psalm about Christ.** Hear Jesus singing it and then teaching you to sing it about him. Listen to Jesus sing it solo then join with him in it as you sing about his holy life and happy death. His death was at the same time the most painful and yet the most joyful. He suffered with great hope.

**Sing this Psalm with Christ.** You can sing this Psalm in union with Christ, receiving the benefits of his holy life and happy death as your own.

**Sing this Psalm for Christ.** Aspire to this experience of a holy life and a happy death for Christ's honor and glory. Make it possible for this Psalm to be sung at your graveside.

CHRIST'S LIFE WAS THE HOLIEST LIFE  
CHRIST'S DEATH WAS THE HAPPIEST DEATH



What about unbelievers?  
They have a very different life and a very different death.



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## 2. UNBELIEVERS LIVE AN UNHOLY LIFE AND DIE AN UNHAPPY DEATH

### An Unholy Life

- You do not pray to God (1)
- You do not take refuge in God (1)
- You disobey God (2)
- You find no good in God (2)
- You do not love the people of God (3)
- You love the haters of God (4)
- You do not value the inheritance of God (5-6)
- You curse God (7)
- You refuse counsel from God (7)
- You do not follow God (8)
- You do not trust God (8)

### An Unhappy Death

- You have zero security in death (9)
- Death will doom your soul to everlasting hell (10)
- Death will corrupt your body (10)
- The path of death begins at the end of your life (11)
- Death will usher you into God's angry presence in hell (11)
- Death will begin forever agonies (11)

### CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

**Does this describe your life?** Is your life an unholy life? The opposite of Psalm 16. Is it a Christless life?

**Does this describe your death?** Will your graveside be joy-free? Will it be impossible to sing this Psalm there?

If you answered "Yes" to both of these questions, and you are asking "What shall I do?" that's exactly what happened when Peter preached this message in Acts 2:37. Peter's answer to the unbelievers of his day is the same one to you today: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." (Acts 2:38-40).

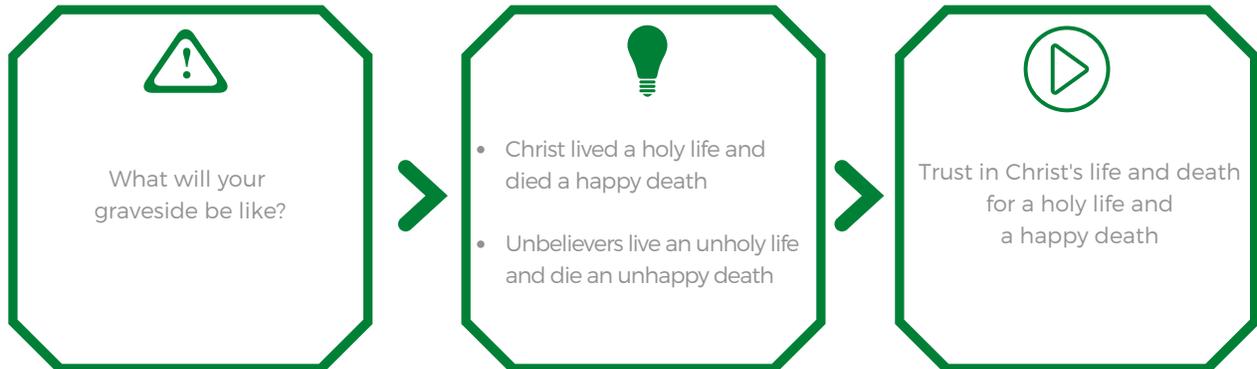
AN UNHOLY LIFE  
MEANS AN UNHAPPY DEATH.



Hear God's Story > Change your story > Tell the story > Change others' stories



# SUMMARY



## THE NEXT CHAPTER

**Jesus:** What a Savior we have. Isn't he worthy of worship and wonder?

**Gratitude:** Thank Jesus for his life and death by living a holy life and dying a happy death.

**Grave:** Will your graveside be totally tearful or joyful in Jesus.

**Heaven:** Think of heaven as a place of God's joy-filled presence and forever pleasures.

**Prayer:** Holy and Happy Jesus, thank. you for saving me from unholiness and unhappiness so that I can be happy and holy here and forever.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How have different gravesides been different for you?
2. What Gospel passages show how Christ fulfilled this Psalm in his life and death?
3. Was Christ's death the saddest or happiest or both?
4. How will you share the message of this Psalm with an unbeliever?
5. Why are some Christians still afraid of death? (Hebrews 2:15)
6. How does this Psalm change your view of death? of heaven?

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