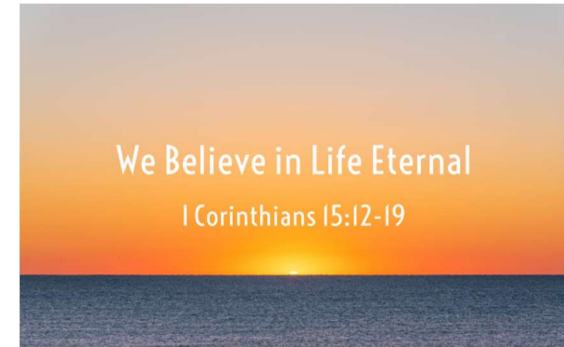




I Corinthians 15:12-19 New Revised Standard Version

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised, ¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. ¹⁷ If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

[illegible]

A woman peers into the grave of her deceased friend and says, "This is it! Goodbye!" A man looks at the casket of his beloved wife and says, "Until we meet again!" They are two similar yet very different scenarios. There is the experience of someone close having passed from this life, emotions are high in both instances, but the perspectives are what some might consider to be opposites. One views death as the end of life with nothing to anticipate "on the other side," while the other anticipates something more/better to come.

“We believe in the promise of life eternal.” The Apostles’ Creed states the same conviction a bit differently, “We believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.” These statements each supply what we believe to be “hope.” That is to suggest we believe certain things offer meaning and life to who we are in the present, but, at the same time, also prepare us for the continuation of life in a different form.

There is much mystery associated with death and people have developed many ideas as to how it unfolds and what awaits a person beyond the here and now. Those at a loved one's bedside may hear him or her speak of a "bright light" or seeing family or friends who have long since passed from this life. For much of I Corinthians 15, Paul tries to "make sense" of this form of existence we call "eternal life." While some of what the apostle states is workable with our imaginations, other aspects must be embraced through faith. Our belief in eternal life...

1. Encourages us to be ready for whenever this life concludes.
2. Allows us to walk through death knowing God is with us.
3. Supplies us with comfort knowing God will heal all things.

Prayer Pebble: Lord, let your assurance of eternal life shape how I live today.