

HELP BEYOND THE GRAVE



Insurance for the next life

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus Romans 8:1

A friend of mine once broke down in a country area and rang for road side assistance. He was told, to his great annoyance, that his bargain-price policy did not cover him for breakdowns occurring outside of metropolitan areas. That minor detail had avoided his attention in the fine print when he signed up for the deal.

We've seen enough tragic stories now to be very suspicious of 'good deals', particularly when it comes to insurance. The qualifications, concessions and conditions can make those policies stretch for pages on end. We still take them out, though, because we know that bad events can happen 'when we least expect them' and it's 'good to be prepared' (muttered through gritted teeth when the price of the premium is known).

But when it comes to death, it's hard to be prepared. Even more so, how can you be prepared for what comes after death? All the policies, safety nets and procedures in the world are useless. There's no insurance company in the world that offers any guarantees for after death.

In the light of this, the Bible contains the best insurance policy you'll ever find. Not because it's long, or because it's got fine print but because of the promise it contains regarding life after death. A writer in the New Testament talks about the freedom Jesus brings from the 'fear of death'. (Hebrews 2:15) It's not just death we may be afraid of, we may fear rejection, loneliness, embarrassment, insecurity or uncertainty about the future. These are all forms of social death. As with physical death, it's not so much that we fear the act of dying (though we do) but it's that 'fear has to do with punishment' (1 John 4:17) or the consequences of death. We may fear that when we're finally face to face with God he'll see through our cleverly constructed excuses; that our well-hidden flaws will be thoroughly X-Rayed and our deepest thoughts and acts examined in a way that leaves us guilty with no comebacks.

That's the help that Jesus offers beyond death. Never mind fixing a broken-down car, Jesus fixes a broken-down life. Instead of mending a busted gasket, he mends a busted relationship with God. Instead of our paying premiums for conditional insurance, Jesus pays with his life so that God can forgive us unconditionally. That's help beyond the grave that's worth trusting in today.

Prayer

Dear Lord, your unconditional love has delivered me from all condemnation brought about by my sinful life. Thank you for helping me now and beyond the grave. Amen