

Bible Readings (examples)

John 14:1-7, 27

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so,

I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Jesus the Way to the Father

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Love

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love,

I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love,

I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Psalms 23 A psalm of David

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

He restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

A Time for Everything

There is a time for everything,

and a season for every activity under heaven:

a time to be born and a time to die,

a time to plant and a time to uproot,

a time to kill and a time to heal,

a time to tear down and a time to build,

a time to weep and a time to laugh,

a time to mourn and a time to dance,

a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,

a time to embrace and a time to refrain,

a time to search and a time to give up,

a time to keep and a time to throw away,

a time to tear and a time to mend,

a time to be silent and a time to speak,

a time to love and a time to hate,

a time for war and a time for peace.

Funeral Readings (examples)

Jesus Comforts His Disciples

DEATH IS NOTHING AT ALL... I have only slipped away into the next room. I am I and you are you. Whatever we were to each other that we are still. Call me by my old familiar name. Speak to me in the easy way which you always used. Put no difference in your tone; wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word that it always was. Let it be spoken without effort, without the ghost of a shadow on it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was; there is absolutely unbroken continuity. Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight? I am waiting for you for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner. All is well.

– *Canon Henry Scott Holland*

You can shed tears that she is gone, or you can smile because she has lived.
You can close your eyes and pray that she'll come back or you can open your eyes and see all she's left.
Your heart can be empty because you can't see her or you can be full of the love you shared.
You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.
You can remember her and only that she's gone or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.
You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back or you can do what she'd want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.

– *Anon - used at the funeral of HRH Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.*

Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep

Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there, I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond's glint on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight,
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there, I did not die.

– *Anon*

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God laid for me
I took His hand when I heard Him call
I turned my back and left it all
I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work or play
Tasks left undone must stay that way
I found that place at the close of day
If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with remembered joy
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss
Ah yes, these things, I too, will miss
Be not burdened with times of sorrow
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow
My life's been full, I savoured much
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch
Perhaps my time seemed all too brief
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief
Lift up your heart and share with me
God wanted me now, He set me free

– *Anon*

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;
Amid these earthly damps
What seem to us but sad, funeral tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

– *Longfellow*

"I am standing upon the seashore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength. I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.

Then some one at my side says: 'There, she is gone!'

'Gone where?'

Gone from my sight. That is all. She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as she was when she left my side and she is just as able to bear her load of living freight to her destined port. Her diminished size is in me, not in her. And just at the moment when some one at my side says: 'There, she is gone!' there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices ready to take up the glad shout: 'Here she comes!'

– *Victor Hugo (often attributed to Bishop Brent)*