

A photograph of a person walking a dog on a dirt path through a misty forest. The trees are mostly bare, with some autumn leaves still on the branches. The ground is covered in fallen leaves. The overall atmosphere is serene and quiet.

I have set the Lord continually before me;
Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Psalms 16:8

The Path of Life

“Oh for such holy faith in the prospect of trial and of death! It is the work of faith, not merely to create a peace which passeth all understanding, but to fill the heart full of gladness until the tongue, which, as the organ of an intelligent creature, is our glory, bursts forth in notes of harmonious praise. Faith gives us living joy, and bestows dying rest.”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

WHAT IS THE ANSWER TO OUR WORRIES, our anxieties, our trials? We, in our earth-bound myopia, imagine things could not possibly get any worse. Yet, no matter how tough, how challenging life gets, could any one of us in a million years be faced with the situation in which Jesus found Himself at Golgotha?

We will never be nailed to a cross; if we are a believer, we will never experience the Lord God forsaking us; and we will never, ever, feel the weight of the whole world's sin bearing down on us. Yet throughout the pain and anguish of those long hours Jesus was sustained by His hope in His heavenly Father.

Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will dwell securely.

Psalms 16:9

This psalm contains the foundational Old Testament prophecy for the Messiah's bodily resurrection. But wrapped around that critical verse is an outpouring of confidence, joy, and peace based on a sustained dependence on Father God.

Jesus the Christ did indeed suffer horribly—physically, mentally, emotionally—before and on the cross. He was spat upon, slapped and beaten, brutally tortured, then made to suffer one of the most agonizing deaths ever devised by man. But He went into it knowing this:

For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol;
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

Psalms 16:10

For Jesus—and because of Him, for all of us—after the grave there will be only the fullest measure of joy with the Father. This is the path of life for the Son, as well as for all who believe: we are not abandoned at the grave; it is only the door opening onto paradise. And ultimately, even the physical is restored. For us there will come a day when that weak and dying earthly body that *did* decay will be replaced by one new and eternal.

You will make known to me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Psalms 16:11

But let us not limit the truths of this passage to our post-death experience. The Christian's eternal life begins at the moment he is converted from a fleshly being to a spiritual being—that is, the moment He trusts in Jesus. For most, that well-trodden “path of life” is a journey of many years, during which he experiences the “fullness of joy” from walking in the presence of the Lord. But of course, the “fullness” we experience while still on our earth-bound path pales in comparison to the “pleasures forever” we will experience once we are literally in His presence.



Not one of us will ever suffer as Jesus did on the cross, but we have the unearthly privilege of sharing in the very same peace and joy that sustained Him through His trial.

When we “set the Lord continually before” us, we receive His counsel—even when it has not been specifically requested. Even in the night our mind communes with His, our spirit converses with His Spirit, and we are not shaken.

As believers, He has set our upward path. That path may not always be easy, but it will always—*a/ways*—have the Lord at our side.