

“When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: ‘Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.’” (Revelation 1:17-18)

We find many reasons for fear in this life, and death is often at the top of the list.

Whether it's cancer or a contagious new virus, such as the coronavirus we are all very aware of right now, reminders of our mortality can shake our security and peace. Christ's promise of eternal life soothes our doubts about eternity, but we might fear the process of dying or dread the loss of our loved ones.

In the book of Revelation, God gives us hope as we face *all* our fears. He pulls back the curtain of heaven to show us the present reality of Christ's reign and the future consummation of His triumph over the grave. Turning our eyes to our victorious Lord Jesus gives us hope and comfort in the face of death.

In today's verse, John has seen the Lord standing in the midst of the seven lampstands. (Revelation 1:12-16) John then falls on his face in reverent awe of the power and majesty of Christ.

In Christ's words, we find a command —“**fear not**”— and three reasons to trust Him. We can live fearlessly in a frightening world because of who Christ is, what He has done and what He will do.

- 1) **Jesus is the first and the last.** The Son was with the Father in the beginning, and He will reign forever. Through Him, we have a living hope that will never end.
- 2) **Jesus died and rose again.** Christ died the death we deserved and secured our eternal life. His resurrection guarantees the future resurrection of all who belong to Him. Because He lives, we also will live.
- 3) **Jesus has “the keys of death and Hades.”** Christ's resurrection also demonstrates His dominion over the grave. Death may break our hearts now, but its impact is fleeting because of the eternal victory He has won. Revelation promises that when Christ returns and makes His dwelling with us, there will be no more death, no more pain and no more tears.

Christ's victory isn't just a future expectation; it's a present reality. God has conquered death and given you new life. (2 Corinthians 5:17) And one day soon, He will make all things new. This is the message of Revelation that brings hope and light to our deepest fears and darkest moments.

So, remember, in the midst of all this uncertainty we're in, we have these reasons to fear no evil. (Psalm 23:4)

Our Shepherd is the Alpha and Omega.

Our Saviour died and rose again.

Our Sovereign Lord holds *“the keys of Death and Hades.”*

Remember you can send your prayer request to:

Prayer@baystonhillchurch.org Or ring: (01743) 583215