

## VI. THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

### Order For A Christian Funeral Service

*We recommend that wherever possible a Christian funeral be conducted in a church building. It is customary that the presiding minister meet the coffin and go before it into the church.*

### Opening Sentences

*The minister or someone whom he may appoint shall read one or more of the following scriptures or use such other call to worship that he shall choose.*

“I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die” (John 11:25, 26).

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah” (Psalm 46:1-3; 11).

### Order Of Service

Invocation

Congregational Hymn

Obituary and Tributes (if desired)

**Scripture Reading** (Suggested passages include Psalms 23, 90, 121; John 14:1-6; 1 Corinthians 15:35-49; 2 Corinthians 5:1-5; Revelation 7:9-17)

**Hymn** (either congregational or offered by musicians)

Meditation or Sermon

Pastoral Prayer

Benediction

### Order For The Service At The Grave

*When all shall have gathered at the grave, the minister shall say:*

“I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die” (John 11:25, 26). “I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another” (Job 19:25-27).

“We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” (1 Tim. 6:7; Job 1:21).

*The minister may read such scriptural passages as he shall choose, then offer prayer, either extemporaneous or one or more of the following:*

Almighty God, in the midst of life we are in death. Of whom shall we seek for comfort but in You, whose only Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ by His death and resurrection has conquered death for us. Out of the depths of our grief and loss, we turn to You, praying that the light of Your countenance will now shine upon us, a sense of Your presence will strengthen us, and the reality of Your promise of eternal life will console us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God of life, as we have learned to do in all our experiences, we come to You in the hour of death. We know that You love us, and that You can turn even the shadow of death into the light of morning. Help us now to wait before You with reverent and submissive hearts. Make this a time of opening our eyes and our understanding, and a time of admonition to our hearts and souls. Bless those who feel this sorrow most keenly, and cause the bonds of Christian love to bind us closer together, so that we may share with them that spiritual strength and that faith in God which is ours through the love of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

O Lord, be with us in this hour of need and loss. Let not our faith fail or our hope grow dim. May we now perceive the shadow of Your hand, outstretched in love; and may the ministry of Your Holy Spirit surround us with the hope of heaven with You forever. Now thanks be to Him who lives, though He was dead; and behold, He is alive forevermore, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **The Committal**

*The minister shall read one of the following committals.*

#### **1. For a Believer, Form One**

Forasmuch as the spirit of our departed loved one has returned to God, who gave it, we therefore tenderly commit his/her body to the grave in sure trust and certain hope of the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come, 156 RITUALS ~ FUNERAL

through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall give to us new bodies like unto His glorious body. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

#### **2. For a Believer, Form Two: Traditional Methodist Committal**

Forasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God, in His wise providence, to take out of the world the soul of the departed, we therefore commit his/her body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, looking for the resurrection of the body, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose second coming in glorious majesty to judge the world, the sea and the dead shall give up their dead, and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Him shall be changed and made like unto His own glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.

#### **3. For a Non-Believer**

We have come now to commit the body of our departed friend to its kindred dust. The spirit we leave with God, for we know the merciful Judge of all the earth will do right. Let us who remain dedicate ourselves anew to live in the fear and love of God, so that we may obtain an abundant entrance into the heavenly Kingdom.

#### **4. For a Child**

In the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commit the body of this child to the grave. And as Jesus, during His earthly life, took the children into His arms and blessed them, may He receive this dear one unto himself, for, as He said, "The kingdom of heaven be-ongs to such as these."

*Then shall the minister say:*

"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit, for the rest from their labors."

*Then may be offered The Lord's Prayer in unison:*

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

### **The Benediction**

*Then the minister may dismiss the people, saying:* May the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; and may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be yours now and forever. Amen.

*Or this:*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the love of God; and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

*The singing of a hymn may be added to the service at the grave if desired*