

PREACHINGtoday

BE INSPIRED

The following illustration is located at: <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2023/march/people-cant-say-goodbye-anymore.html>

People Can't Say 'Goodbye' Anymore

People can't say goodbye anymore," writes the poet Les Murray. "They say last hellos."

In his book *A Severe Mercy*, Sheldon Vanauken tells the story of his last meeting with C. S. Lewis, who had become a friend. The two men ate lunch together, and when they had finished, Lewis said, "At all events, we'll certainly meet again, here—or there." Then he added: "I shan't say goodbye. We'll meet again." And with that, they shook hands and parted ways. From across the street, above the din of traffic, Lewis shouted, "Besides, Christians never say goodbye!"

Avoiding goodbye when we have to move on and face the prospect of never seeing each other again in this life denies the importance of our bodily life together. Brushing over "farewell" denies that the pain of separation is real—that no matter how many texts or phone calls or Facebook updates we share, we won't be available for each other in the same way anymore.

The word "goodbye" is actually a contraction of "God be with you." Saying goodbye is important, in the end, because it's one way of reminding each other that we are God's bodily creatures. We want him to watch over us and keep our love for one another alive, right now, even before the day of our eventual reunion.

Source:

Wesley Hill, "A Severe Separation," *CT magazine* (October, 2014), p. 34

Filters: [Pop Culture](#); [Stories](#)

Topics: [Ageing](#); [Death, preparation for](#); [Denial](#); [Eternal life](#); [Eternal perspective](#); [Heaven](#); [Hope](#); [Life & Death](#); [Life, short](#); [Meaning of life](#); [Memory](#); [Old Age](#); [Resurrection](#); [Resurrection of believers](#); [Separation](#); [Transience](#)

Scripture: [John 14:19](#); [Philippians 1:23](#); [2 Timothy 4:6](#); [Psalm 90:1-12](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [Hebrews 2:14-15](#); [1 Peter 1:3](#); [Ruth 1:6-18](#); [John 16:16](#); [2 Samuel 23:1](#); [1 Corinthians 15:53-55](#); [Luke 9:31](#); [2 Peter 1:14-15](#); [Acts 20:17-29](#); [Jeremiah 22:10](#); [Job 7:8](#); [Genesis 24:56](#)

Copyright © 2023 by the author or Christianity Today/PreachingToday.com.
[Click here](#) for reprint information on PreachingToday.com.

