

This is such an important series:

- Jesus said things like – I am THE I Am, THE light, THE Bread of Life, THE Door, THE Good Shepherd
- So many have opinions – when they do we ask –who are you, and why should I believe you?
- The New Testament is written by those whose lives were absolutely changed –even unto death
- Why were they so changed?
- Jesus said several things – People say things – but Jesus was believed –why?

The story up until this point – Miracles: He fed the 5,000

John 11:12–16 (NIV) — 12 His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” 13 Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. 14 So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, 15 and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” 16 Then Thomas (also known as Didymus) said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

John 11:20–28 (NIV) — 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. 21 “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.” 23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” 24 Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?” 27 “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” 28 After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.”

John 11:37–43 (NIV) — 37 But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” 38 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39 “Take away the stone,” he said. “But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.” 40 Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” 41 So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. 42 I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.” 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”

Notice 3 things:

1st Why Jesus did the miracles—including His own resurrection from the dead

- To prove who He was –VS 42

2nd To verify His words were true about eternal life – what happens after death

- Politics and religion – our goal is to think biblically
- Death is not final –there is eternal life – a soul – the body turns to dust – there is a spiritual part of you and of all humans who are created in Gods image
- That He will raise us from the dead

Daniel 12:1–3 (NIV) — 1 “At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. 2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

1 Corinthians 15:51-57 (NIV) – 51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” 55 “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

3rd To proclaim the way to eternal life is through Christ alone
This changes the way we see death

Philippians 1:20-24 (NIV) – 20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

So - this changes the way we think about those who have died in the faith

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NIV) – 13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

This also changes what do we do on planet earth

1 Corinthians 15:57-58 (NIV) –57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

For Small Group Discussion: What stood out to you most from the message?

Opening Question: What is a fun thing you hope to be able to do or have in Heaven?

Main Point: Death is not the final word for those in Christ. There is no resurrection apart from Christ, and there is no eternal life apart from Christ. **Main Scripture:** John 11:1-27

Head Questions:

- What did the sisters expect from Jesus?
- Why do you think Jesus waited before going to Lazarus?

Heart Questions:

- Jesus didn’t respond right away to their request. When in your life has God not responded in your preferred timeline?
- How has your faith in Jesus changed your perspective about death?

Hands Questions:

- What does knowing your eternal destination change about the way you live in the present?
- Who do you know that needs to know Jesus as the resurrection and the life?

Additional Scripture: John 11:25, 1 John 5:11-12, 1 Corinthians 15:53-57

Tips and Resources: Heaven by Randy Alcorn

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