

- **There are so many religious and so many voices!**
 - ⇒ Atheism, Buddhism & Hinduism, Islam & Allah, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses...
 - **Even within Christian circles, there is so much confusion.**
 - Remember, there are some things we can disagree about and still be Christians, but there are some things that we must agree on and understand or we are not Christians.
 - My interest is in what the Bible says and how it has been interpreted *from the beginning*.
 - **Our goal in this series: to help you know what Scripture says.**
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1. JESUS IS DIFFERENT THAN ANY OTHER PERSON IN HISTORY. HE IS UNIQUE.

- He fulfilled all of the Old Testament prophecy. He was a real person who did something that no one else has done.
- For those who want more evidence, we'll be putting our previous **Why Believe** series on the App next week.

2. JESUS AFFIRMED THE OLD TESTAMENT AND BROUGHT CLARITY TO THE SUBJECT OF DEATH.

Hebrews 1:1-2 ¹In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

3. IN THE BEGINNING, WE CAN FIND THE BIBLICAL HISTORY OF DEATH AND WHERE IT CAME FROM.

- In the beginning God created... and it was good.
 - People were created in God's image with a physical body, but more than that, with a Soul and Spirit.
 - Adam and Eve were free to eat anything, but... they were also free to choose relationship with God or not.
 - ◆ The result? If you choose poorly, you suffer the curse—death for your body in the living physical realm. This is ongoing until the end of the story.
 - ◆ There are two kinds of death: physical and spiritual. *When your body dies*, your soul lives on.
 - A veiled kindness: The Tree of Life is taken from the earth. (See **Genesis 3:33**)

THERE'S A GREAT "Y" IN THE TIMELINE HERE. ONE PATH IS FOR THE LIVING, AND ONE IS FOR THE DEAD.

4. THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD SHOWS US THE TIMELINE FOR THOSE LIVING ON EARTH.

- God's mission from then on was to establish a covenant people, all while there's a battle on planet earth with the enemy (Satan). This is the living side of the timeline.

5. IN THE MEANTIME, THOSE WHO DIED BEFORE THE CROSS AND EMPTY TOMB HAVE THEIR OWN TIMELINE.

- The Scriptures speak of people dying as people going to sleep.
- Death in the Old Testament led to *Sheol* (in Hebrew, aka *Hades* in Greek)—the place of the dead.
- God shared more and more about what happens after you die as Scripture was given.
- *Sheol* provided for two kinds of experiences, some positive and some negative.
- The place of the dead, according to Jesus, has two chambers.
- See **Psalms 23:6** and **Isaiah 14:9**

JESUS BRINGS CLARITY. (Most scholars do not believe this is a parable because it's the only place Jesus uses a name.)

Luke 16:19-31

- Some would ask, "Why were these people not with the Lord?"
 - ⇒ Jesus had not paid the price for sins yet. The people of faith were in a place like heaven, but God could not be there. (See **Hebrews 10:1-10** where the blood of lambs could not pay for sin.)

NOTICE THERE IS NO REINCARNATION, NO SECOND CHANCES, AND NO "SOUL SLEEP." (See Hebrews 9:27-28)

6. AFTER THE CROSS AND THE EMPTY TOMB, THE TIMELINE CHANGES FOR THE PHYSICALLY DEAD.

- Many theologians believe things changed at Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus called the place where those who have died "Abraham's side." If Jesus was there, then it would have been called something different.
- See **Luke 23: 43, 1 Corinthians 15:50-52, 2 Corinthians 5:6-9, and Philippians 1:22-23**

7. IN THE END, THOSE WHO'RE LIVING AND THOSE WHO'RE DEAD MEET CHRIST TOGETHER.

- Called Judgement Day or the Great White Throne Judgement
- Eternity is given to all—whether in heaven or in hell.
- There's the restoration of all things for those who have chosen the New Covenant with God (Jesus' sacrifice).
- See **Daniel 12:1-3 and Revelation 20:14-15**

8. THE BOTTOM LINE: X MARKS THE SPOT.

John 3:11-21 ... ¹³No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. ¹⁶**For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.** ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. ...

- Notice "Just as the snake was lifted up in the wilderness..." references **Numbers 21:8-9**.
 - ◆ Remember it was the serpent that deceived Eve and Adam. This is a precursor for Jesus.

JESUS BECAME SIN FOR US AND TOOK ON THE PUNISHMENT FOR IT. (See also 2 Corinthians 5:21)

Colossians 2:13-15 ¹³When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

- Those who refuse to look to Jesus are condemned already.
 - ◆ We need to repent and trust the remedy God gave.
 - ◆ We've been bitten by a snake with no remedy but death.

Will you look up if you haven't already?

Do you know someone who needs to look up? Pray for them and ask God for help to share God's love.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS IN LIFE GROUP OR WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

Passages to consider: Luke 16:19-31 and John 3:14-18

1. Share from the sermon what was insightful to you.
2. What have you heard about this topic from the society and media? Or: What do you think the people you around believe? (Consider the people you know from where you work, live, and play.) A) What have you thought about this topic?
3. What from the timeline was impactful to you? A) What questions do you have? (This doesn't mean you or your life group have to have the answers, but write them down and send them in to the address below.)
4. Take a look at Luke 16:19-31. What are some things you observe about what happens when someone dies? A) What are some insights you gained? A) How does viewing yourself and others as eternal beings impact how you interact in the world?
5. Take a look at John 3:14-18. What is Jesus saying to Nicodemus and to us?
6. Where are you in the process of believing Jesus? What is your next step in that process? A) Who in your life needs to hear about Jesus and eternity? What is your part? (Ask God to show you, and look for opportunities.)

GOT QUESTIONS? Send in your questions to askreallife@reallifeministries.com

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: *What Happens When You Die* by Randy Frazee, *TouchPoints: Heaven* by Randy Alcorn, and *Heaven for Kids* by Randy Alcorn.

NEXT WEEK: One Minute After You Die (Week 2): Judgment

PASSAGES TO PREPARE: Hebrews 9:27 and Revelation 20:11-14