




A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

## Questions for Reflection

- In Mark 5:36, Jesus **ignored** what faithless people said regarding the finality of death. What are some faithless messages you frequently encounter (regarding the existence or goodness of God)?

**How** do those messages impact you emotionally? **Why** do you think you respond that way?

- Pastor Doug said "as Christians, our grief (as the loss of **believing** loved-ones) should be tempered". Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14. Notice the metaphor of "sleep" for Christian death (*cf.* Mark 5:39). Notice Paul's logic: **Being informed** (v. 13a) that Jesus' resurrection **guarantees** our resurrection (v. 14) **results in** believers "**not** grieving **as** the rest **who have no hope**" (v. 13b). What results if we **are** ignorant of the theological truth that Jesus' resurrection **guarantees** ours? **How** do **you** grieve?

- Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. Do **you** lose heart as you see **your** body decaying? **Why** didn't Paul?

Is your spiritual life ("inner man") growing? ...and, is it growing **faster than** your physical body is decaying?

**Do you** prefer spiritual growth to physical fitness, beauty, and longevity? Why or why not? If not, **what would it take** to change your values in this way? How attractive is that idea to you?

- Turn to the "Digging Deeper" section of today's *Talking Points, Walking Points*, and read the three passages at the beginning (in boldface). **Which one** is most surprising to you—and **why**?

What **one small concrete change** should you make as a result of that surprising truth?

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## Application-Challenge

- Don't despair when a **believer** dies. (Grieve, yes, but don't despair—they're with Jesus.)
- Share the gospel with friends and loved-ones. Pray for God to save them.
- If **you** have not trusted Christ—do so! There's too much at stake (Luke 11:23).

**Take One Step:** What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



## Sermon Summary

Many of us have lost loved ones to death—family members, friends, members of our church family. And understandably, we grieve that loss. Grief and death go together. But as Christians, our grief should be tempered, because if our loved one died in faith, the Bible assures us that we will see him or her again one day, when God calls us home (John 14:2-3). Through the eyes of faith, God calls us to a confident assurance that we will see our loved ones again, even though we can't see them right now. How can we have such confidence? In the gospels, we have an incident in Jesus' life where he teaches us how to face the death of a loved one with confident hope that one day he or she will live again.

In Mark chapter 5, a synagogue official named Jairus implores Jesus to come heal his little girl, who is close to death. Unfortunately, at that moment, they are informed that his daughter has already died. But Jesus says to Jairus, "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe" (v. 36). The people surrounding Jairus were consumed by the dark circumstances surrounding the little girl's death. All they could talk about was the tragedy of her untimely passing. They were focused on the hurt. But Jesus wanted Jairus to focus on the healer. He ignored the despair of the crowd and invited Jairus to do the same.

Jesus didn't want Jairus to listen to only the audible and see only the visible. He wanted Jairus to have eyes of faith. He wanted Jairus to believe that there is more to life and death than meets the eye. Sometimes faith begins in your life by shutting your ears to the despair and unbelief of those without faith. God wants us to act before we see! That is called faith! The Holy Spirit defines faith this way: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

When we begin focusing on the Healer, then we are ready for the next step. We need to look at death from the Healer's perspective, rather than a human one. From Jesus' perspective, the girl wasn't dead, just asleep (Mark 5:38-40). Sleep isn't a permanent condition, and to God, neither is death. It's just a necessary step in passing from this world to the next. Death is not an end, it is a beginning. That's what the Bible teaches (1 Corinthians 15:50).

When we see death, we see disaster. When Jesus sees death, he sees deliverance. However, on this occasion, instead of waking this little girl up in heaven, Jesus chose to wake her up again in the world. He did so that we might learn to see with eyes of faith. God knows that you and I must often walk in darkness, and that faith doesn't come easily or naturally. God knows that we need the assurance that death is not the last act.

Jesus raised this little girl not as a promise that he would do the same for every loved one who dies. Rather, he raised her as a sign that he can and will restore life to our believing loved ones in heaven. We will see them again. Jesus has power over death. That brings us great comfort, for what we know Jesus can do—that is, to raise the dead—he has promised to do at the end of time. That's the Healer's perspective: death is temporary, resurrection is coming, life is forever!

If you look at death from God's perspective, you too can see with eyes of faith. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "...while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and if you will place your trust in him, he will raise you from the dead one day, just as he did Jairus' daughter.

### Talking To Others About This Week's Message

If a neighbor or friend at work asked you, "*What kind of stuff do they talk about at your church?*", how would you summarize the most important elements of this week's sermon and the key lessons you intend to apply to your life? Can you explain it in **plain language** anyone could understand?

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

Our Savior Christ Jesus **abolished death** and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

2 Timothy 1:10

Through death Jesus **rendered the devil powerless**—he who had the power of death—and freed those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

Hebrews 2:14-15

**Better to spend your time at funerals than at festivals.**

**After all, everyone dies—so the living should take this to heart.**

**Sorrow is better than laughter, for sadness has a refining influence on us.**

**A wise person thinks a lot about death, while a fool thinks only about having a good time.**

Ecclesiastes 7:2-4

Below is a brief overview of the biblical teaching on death. For each of the following points, look up the verses in context and make sure you understand and agree with them:

**Monday:** People universally recognize the blunt reality of death, but only the Scriptures reveal death's origin, its significance, and whether and how it can be defeated. Death is "the king of terrors" (Job 18:14). The fear of death enslaves the lost (Hebrews 2:15). Death was **not** a part of God's original, good creation. Death is an intruder; it is **not** natural or good. Death is the result of sin and a judgment against it (Genesis 2:17). Death only **appears** natural because it is a universal human experience. Death will not exist in heaven (Revelation 20:14; 21:4).

**Tuesday:** God **imposed** death as the consequence for sin, but mankind is **responsible** for death since he was not compelled to rebel against God (Genesis 1:31; 2:16-17; Romans 6:23). Our life and our death are in God's hands (1 Samuel 2:6; Job 12:10). Death is, at its core, a spiritual matter, but its consequences are wide-ranging and far-reaching.

**Wednesday:** Death is **not** nonexistence (cessation). **Death is separation.**

There are **three** categories of death (each of which is a distinct sort of separation):

- [a] Physical death is the separation of one's soul from his body (Genesis 35:18a; Psalm 146:3-4; Ecclesiastes 12:6-7; James 2:26);
- [b] Spiritual death is the separation of a sinner from God (Ephesians 2:1). A person can be physically alive yet spiritually dead—in fact, **everybody begins** life **this** way (Psalm 51:5; John 5:24).
- [c] Eternal death happens to those who die physically **while** spiritually dead (Hebrews 9:27; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 21:8). Eternal death is eternal separation from God's blessings and consignment to God's presence to curse.

**Thursday:** One's **physical** death occurs when one takes his final breath (Genesis 25:8, 17; Job 14:10; Mark 15:37). One's **spiritual** death dates from his conception (Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12-19; humanity's spiritual death, of course, began in Genesis 3). Those who experience **eternal** death do so simultaneously with physical death.

**Friday:** Since death is **not** natural or good, mourning and tears **are** an appropriate response (John 11:35). Death is not God's original intention for mankind; it is a disruption to life (which was his plan for us) and so death should never be downplayed, ignored, glamorized, or considered illusory. Since death is an inescapable reality which ushers us into accountability before our Creator and Judge, it must be dealt with (Hebrews 9:27). Heaven is not the destiny for all (in fact, it appears that only a minority will be there; Matthew 7:13-14; 21-22). Death is an immutable transition from one state of existence to another. This fact should lead all to repent and believe, without delay (Proverbs 11:7; Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:15-23; 16:19-31; 2 Corinthians 6:2).

**Saturday:** Believers should not fear death (Matthew 10:28a; Romans 8:1). Physical decay and death are certainties (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Romans 8:16-23), but so too is God's unconquerable love for us and our ultimate glorification (Romans 8:28-39). To be absent from the body is to be at home with our Lord (2 Corinthians 5:5-9). To live is Christ, to die is gain (Philippians 1:21).