



Facing Death Leader Guide – May 17, 2020

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. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NIV)

ICE BREAKER

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of the word “death”?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1) Death is something that all of us face in our life – the inevitability of our own death, loss of friends/family, etc. What is the biggest cause of anxiety in your life when facing death – both personally and with loved ones?

- Group leaders feel free to share your own anxieties/experiences with death
- Give your group time to process, ask questions, and interact with each other
- Be sure to be a safe/open space for those who are anxious about different things than others

2) Pastor Kevin shared on Sunday the root cause/reason for death out of Genesis 2:17 and Romans 6:23. What is death a consequence of? How does this truth allow us to face the reality and reason for death?

- Death is a direct consequence of sin – be sure to clarify we are talking about the consequence of sin in the world/all of mankind, not that when an individual dies he/she must've sinned just minutes before.
 - Pastor Kevin said it well -> “Sin is rebellion from God, and physical death is not only a consequence but a reminder of our own limits.”
- Physical death is a consequence of sin, but points us to something greater -> spiritual death. Spiritual death is eternal separation from God due to our sin. This is what the Apostle Paul was describing in Romans 6:23.

3) Grief is something we inevitably face when experiencing death, but as followers of Jesus we have hope in death. What does Paul say gives us hope in vv. 13-14? How can we hold onto this hope in our life?

- The hope we have when facing death is anchored in Jesus' resurrection. Since He conquered death once and for all, we no longer have to fear its sting, finality, or separation from God.
- We hold onto this hope by staying rooted in God's Word, remembering what Jesus has done, and viewing our anxieties/worldly afflictions in light of eternity. (See also 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 NIV)

4) Facing death brings an incredible opportunity to discuss spirituality, eternal life, separation from God, etc. Who do you need to share the hope you have in Jesus with this week? What would this look like in your current relationships? Take time as a group to walk through these conversations.

- Group leaders, give your group time to role play and have these conversations with each other
- As great of an opportunity as the reality of death can bring for spiritual conversations, we have to be very careful to be kind, compassionate, and discerning when it comes to the tone/pace of the conversations
- Sometimes the best place to start is simply sharing your own story/experience then explaining why you have hope in the midst of it.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1) How can you reflect on the promise of eternal life with Jesus this week to see all you face – fear of death, anxiety, etc. – in the right perspective?

2) Who can you reach out to this week to support them in their fear of death or grief in loss?