

Death, Life, and the Christian Faith
Are we living for Christ, or living to stay alive?

Accountability: Let's hold ourselves accountable!

- Last week we challenged ourselves to think about our core values. How did we do actually living up to the values that we believe in this week?
- We also talked about letting God work through us...depending on God to do the heavy lifting, and ceasing from our strivings and works of the flesh. Did anyone have a breakthrough this week in learning to walk in the spirit and not in the flesh in a specific area? Share with the group if you can.
- Paul taught us to set our minds on eternal things, and not to get distracted by the temporary hardships and challenges of life. How did you do this week in seeing your struggles in light of our heavenly reality?

Exploration: Questions to guide our group discussion.

- We learned this week that there are far more important things than just staying alive...like living a life that is pleasing to God and joining God in His master plan. What good is it for us to be alive, but not to be living for the Lord? While the world is consumed with the idea of peace and safety, we know that Christians have a higher concern than just staying alive. We are called into this great adventure of serving God...and it's not always safe! How do God's promises from this week's passage give the Christian confidence in death and life that an unbeliever can never possess? How can a Christian live with greater confidence so that death is not feared? (Hint: Tents and Buildings)
- Paul reminded us that his chief aim was to live a life that pleased God. Paul valued pleasing the Lord more than life itself, and was willing to even die if necessary in serving the Lord. Even if it cost him his life, Paul would not allow himself to be distracted by the love of his own life. How can a Christian live this way too...with confidence in serving God, and not in cowering back from God's mission in human fear? What commitments would it take now to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ in confidence then? How would we want that conversation to go?
- Paul was totally committed to serving Jesus, and he stopped seeing anything of regard in people other than their spiritual condition: saved or unsaved. He taught us that these are the only designations that really matter in eternity. As a result, he made it his aim to share Jesus as an ambassador of God, pleading with men that they might be born

again. In light of this simple fact that knowing Jesus is the demarcation line of eternity, how might we join with Paul in being the Lord's ambassadors? Do we really do anyone any good in eternity to be so concerned with personal physical safety and preserving our own human lives that we withdraw from our ambassadorship?

Additional Scriptures for Deeper Study:

- Matthew 24:45-51 The parable of the faithful servant.
- John 12:23-26 The grain of wheat.
- Revelation 12:11 They loved not their own lives unto death.
- Acts 7:54-60 Stephen the martyr.

Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?

- While the unsaved world around us is preoccupied with simply staying alive at all costs...isolation, depression, closures, social distancing from one another, etc...what would Jesus say to us about pressing into the mission and calling of God as ambassadors of Christ?
- If we're being honest, many Christians are just as afraid of dying as those who do not know Christ. How does a fear of dying reveal a lack of trust in God's Word, or perhaps a lack of understanding? How can conforming our thinking to God's Word squelch our fears and empower us in the Spirit to live with greater confidence? How do we need to preach to ourselves so that our thinking is aligned with God's Word?
- In light of what we have learned about the two kinds of people...saved and unsaved, and that these are the only designations that matter at the judgment, how might the Lord help us to think about those around us from a more Biblical point of view? Is this a form of thinking that we can put on in our relationships with others?