

Week 7: What is Death?

In Preparation for Small Group Discussion:

1. Listen to one of the messages given at Kettlebrook on March 21st, 2010 live, on the web at: <http://www.kettlebrook.org/resources/index.htm> or via podcast on iTunes.
2. Read chapter 16 (pages 108-112) in Wayne Grudem's *Christian Beliefs*.
3. Prepare your responses to the questions presented here in this study.

From Sunday:

What was the main point of the message?

How will this practically change your life?

From Your Perspective:

What are some euphemisms (other words) used for "death"?

Why is death so difficult to talk about?

When the subject of death is brought up, what memories or experiences come to mind?

From the Skeptic:

Below are comments that reflect different perspectives on death. "Underline the comments below that reflect thoughts you have had about death at some point in your life."

- *“Begin with the end in mind.”* – author Stephen Covey (1932 -)
- *“In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.”* – Benjamin Franklin (1706 – 1790)
- *“I want to die in my sleep like my grandfather... Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.”* – Comedian Wil Shriner (1953 -)
- *“Death does not concern us, because as long as we exist, death is not here. And when it does come, we no longer exist.”* – Greek Philosopher Epicurus (341 BC – 270 BC)
- *“Death is one of two things... Either it is annihilation, and the dead have no consciousness of anything; or, as we are told, it is really a change: a migration of the soul from one place to another.”* - Greek philosopher Socrates (469 BC–399 BC)
- *“Of course you don't die. Nobody dies. Death doesn't exist. You only reach a new level of vision, a new realm of consciousness, a new unknown world.”* – novelist Henry Miller (1891-1980)
- *(create your own here)*
“
_____”
_____.”

What people, personal experiences, or philosophy influenced your above choices?

From the Bible:

What happens when you die? This is not a question you expect to come up in the course of everyday conversation. It's a question that can be loaded with fear and laden with misconceptions. Perhaps you might get this question from a child or from someone on their deathbed. But how would you answer it? Where would you go to explain death and dying? Most people don't realize that the Bible has a lot to say about the topic.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-9. What does this text have to say about death?

When Christ-followers die what happens with their souls in relation to their bodies?

Read Philippians 1:18-24. Paul writes this letter from prison. What can we learn about death in this text?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-57. How are we to grieve for those Christ-followers who “fall asleep”?

What happens at the second coming of Jesus?

What does Jesus’ second coming mean for death itself?

From the Book

In chapter 16, Grudem describes why Christians die, what happens when Christians die, what happens when non-Christians die, and the resurrection of the dead.

1. Why do we die anyways?
2. What happens to your soul when you die?
3. What happens when Jesus returns to earth?
4. What will you be like after resurrection?

5. How is the sorrow felt for a Christ-follower dying different than the sorrow you might feel for someone else?

Moving Forward

Have you ever really considered your own death?

What fears, concerns, or questions do you have about your own death?

With a different perspective on death, how would that change your perspective on life?

Digging Deeper:

Some other passages that you may want to explore include:

- Eternal Life: John 3:14-16, John 3:36, 1 John 5:11-12
- A Guarantee: 1 Peter 1:3-9
- More on Resurrection: Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Corinthians 15:12-23 and 35-57
- No More Death: Revelation 21:1-4

Another message that you may want to listen to:

- <http://ez13.com/doorcreek/>
Click on the December 5th, 2004 “Born to Die” mp3 link. The pastor giving this sermon unexpectedly passed away about one month later.

One book that you may want to explore:

- *Final Exam: A Surgeon's Reflections on Mortality* by Pauline Chen (ISBN # 030727537X). This book does not explore death from a Biblical perspective, but provides valuable insights that could lead to great discussion on the topic of death.