

"GOD HAS VISITED *HIS PEOPLE!*"

unit 24 | session 2



CHRIST CONNECTION

When Jesus raised the widow's son from the dead, He showed that He has power over death. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). Because Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, we have full assurance that Jesus will one day defeat death forever and resurrect us from the dead.

POWER OVER SIN AND DEATH

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

Luke 7

DEATH IS THE EFFECT OF SIN

LUKE 7:11-13

11 Afterward he was on his way to a town called Nain. His disciples and a large crowd were traveling with him. 12 Just as he neared the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the town was also with her. 13 When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said, "Don't weep."

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY OVER DEATH

LUKE 7:14-17

14 Then he came up and touched the open coffin, and the pallbearers stopped. And he said, "Young man, I tell you, get up!" 15 The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. 16 Then fear came over everyone, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us," and "God has visited his people." 17 This report about him went throughout Judea and all the vicinity.

MAIN POINT.

When we face the reality of physical death, we can cling to the hope of eternal life.



THEOLOGY CONNECTION

RESURRECTION

Both the Old and New Testaments teach that one day believers will experience a resurrection of the body from the dead (Isa. 26:19; Ezek. 37:12-14; John 11). The promise of the resurrection is found in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and it will take place at His future return. Because Jesus was resurrected, Christians can be assured that their resurrection will be similar in nature, meaning it will be both bodily and glorious (Phil. 3:20-21; Rom. 8:22-23). The hope of the future resurrection gives believers confidence that death has been defeated by Jesus's death and resurrection.

DISCUSSION

DEATH IS THE EFFECT OF SIN

LUKE 7:11-13

- What does Luke tell us about the woman in Nain (v. 12)? How does it help us see the way sin affects our world?
- ✝ • What did Luke call Jesus in verse 13? Why do you think he chose that title here?
- ♥ • How does Jesus show us we can hold on to hope, even when we grieve?

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY OVER DEATH

LUKE 7:14-17

- 🧠 • What did Jesus do to bring the widow's son back to life? How would you have responded if you saw this miracle?
- 📖 • How did Jesus's power over death affect the people watching? How should it affect us now?
- What does it show about Jesus that He met this woman's need (and ours) before she knew His identity?



WHAT ARE SOME WAYS THIS PASSAGE TEACHES US TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE WHO ARE GRIEVING? HOW CAN YOU HELP THEM KNOW JESUS SEES AND CARES?

CULTURAL CONNECTION

None of us fully understand why bad things happen. We ask, "If God is good, why does evil exist? Why hasn't Jesus come back already? Why do people die—'good' people, young people, and those who still have so much to give to the world?" Knowing the answers wouldn't take our pain away, but we struggle with these questions anyway because we want a reason for the pain. Ultimately, we want to know God's heart. While God's mind and plans are so far above anything we can understand (Isa. 55:8-9), we can trust a few general truths about God: God is good. Since God is good, He allows us free will, and sometimes we choose sin and evil. Since God is good, His timing seems slow because He wants more people to experience His grace, mercy, and forgiveness (2 Pet. 3:9). Since God is good, He invites us to trust Jesus for salvation and promises that we'll spend eternity with Him—and all other believers who have died before us. He is good. And one day, all that is wrong and evil will come undone because of His goodness.



DAY ONE

GENESIS 3:8-13,19,22-24



What do you do when you mess up? We can easily fix or hide our mistakes with the help of an eraser, the delete key, or a filter. Mistakes in life aren't so easy to handle, and many leave us wishing we had an undo button for reality, too.

No one knew that feeling better than Adam and Eve. God had given them a specific command: Don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:17). The enemy slithered in and caused them to question God's goodness and God's very words. Adam and Eve chose their desire to eat from that tree over God's plan for them, and they gained knowledge they were never meant to have: awareness of their inadequacy, shame over their nakedness, and fear of God. Without any way to erase their sin, Adam and Eve hid.

Though we may not physically hide from God, we hide when we're caught in sin too: We lie; we try to cover up our mistakes without coming clean; and we run from God, putting distance between us and Him. Here's the thing: None of us can hide from the penalty of sin (death), and none of us can hide from the Giver of life (God). So, we might think God's question, "Where are you?" (Gen. 3:9) is a little odd. But God didn't ask this question because He lacked knowledge; God asked because He was establishing a pattern of coming to us, of taking the first step, of calling us out to face our sin and see our need for forgiveness. God always sees us; He always seeks us; and He always finds us. And when He does, because of Jesus, believers receive grace and experience the joy of eternal life with God instead of eternal judgment and suffering. What a gift to know that when we sin, we don't have to hide in the shadows of our shame. We can respond to the Holy Spirit, whose voice draws us out of our sin and into the light.

- **WHAT CONSEQUENCES DID GOD GIVE ADAM AND EVE FOR THEIR DISOBEDIENCE (VV. 16-19)?**
- **WHEN FACED WITH HIS SIN, ADAM TRIED TO BLAME EVE, THEN GOD. WHERE DO YOU PLACE THE BLAME WHEN YOU SIN?**

PRAY

GOD, THANK YOU FOR LOVING ME FIRST AND COMING TO FIND ME WHEN I WAS LOST IN MY SIN. WITHOUT YOU, I KNOW I'D BE HOPELESS. THANK YOU FOR THE GIFT OF JESUS AND THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE.



DAY TWO

GENESIS 3:14-19; LUKE 19:10

Everyone has different opinions on how to treat wounds and sicknesses. Some might say a deep cut needs stitches, while others might claim duct tape will do the trick (we don't recommend this). Some believe the best way to get rid of a cold is by taking over-the-counter medicine to reduce symptoms while others consider rest, hydration, and sunlight the best cure. Truthfully, however varied their opinions, only health professionals have the qualifications and knowledge to treat our wounds and illnesses accurately. Our best work is mostly guesswork. The same is true of our sin sickness.

In Genesis 3:16-19, God pronounced sin's consequences: Adam and Eve worked before the fall to steward God's good creation, but now they (and all humans) would experience grueling, back-breaking labor and wrestle with the earth to meet their needs; they would endure pain, relational separation from God, and one day, death. However, just before those consequences were pronounced, God gave Adam and Eve a glimpse of hope in what's considered the first mention of the gospel: One day, Eve's offspring would strike down the serpent (Satan; see Gen. 3:15). That offspring is Jesus; He is the cure we need (Mark 2:17).

Like Adam and Eve, we can do nothing to save ourselves. No one throughout history has been powerful enough to do that but Jesus, who chose not to save Himself but to die to save us. Jesus explained that the purpose of His presence on earth was to find and save the lost—all of us (Luke 19:10). He accomplished that through His life and ministry on earth, His death on the cross, and His resurrection from the dead. Because of Jesus, we have hope that sin and death are not the end. In Him, we have life and have it fully (John 10:10).

- **WHAT HAVE YOU TRIED TO DO IN THE PAST TO STOP DOING A CERTAIN SIN? WHY ARE OUR EFFORTS NOT ENOUGH?**
- **HOW DOES KNOWING JESUS COULD'VE SAVED HIMSELF FROM PHYSICAL DEATH BUT CHOSE NOT TO SO WE COULD HAVE ETERNAL LIFE CHANGE YOUR VIEW ON SIN AND LIVING FOR GOD?**

PRAY

LORD JESUS, THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE
FOR ME, FOR WHAT YOU'RE STILL DOING FOR ME.
HELP ME TO BE MORE CONSISTENT IN SHOWING YOU
GRATITUDE AND IN LIVING FOR YOU INSTEAD OF
GOING MY OWN WAY.



DAY THREE

JOHN 14:26; ROMANS 8:26-27

Looking away or walking away from chaos and drama takes effort. Maybe you're trying to see why traffic is backed up on the way home from school, watching helplessly as a fight breaks out in the hallway, or seeing someone being attacked on social media. Maybe you wonder, "Isn't someone going to do something about this?" Or you glance around for the flashing blue lights of a police car, the commanding presence of a coach or teacher, or the rescuing comment to stop the online drama. We want someone to do something about the pain we see and experience.

Life is full of pain. You could be reeling from the death of a loved one, the absence of a parent, the gossip and backstabbing from a good friend, the loss of a dream, or the pressure to excel in school or sports. Sometimes, we don't even have the words to describe the stress and pain we're feeling. Trying to ask for the help we need can feel overwhelming and intimidating when we're hurting.

Thankfully, Jesus has seen our pain and has done something about it—whether our pain comes from sin we committed, sin committed against us, or the effects of sin on the world and people around us. Not only did He offer us a way to one day be free from the pain of sin and death, but He also sent us His Spirit as a guarantee of this promise and as our Helper and Comforter. Though Jesus Himself isn't physically walking with us right now, He has given us His presence through the Holy Spirit who lives within us, teaching us, helping us remember what we've learned, and praying for us when we don't have the words.

- **WHERE DO YOU NEED THE REMINDER THAT JESUS HAS SEEN YOUR PAIN AND HAS DONE SOMETHING ABOUT IT?**
- **WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO LEAN INTO THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PRESENCE AND COMFORT IN YOUR CURRENT SITUATION?**

PRAY

**JESUS, THANK YOU FOR DOING SOMETHING ABOUT
MY PAIN AND THE PAIN I SEE IN THE WORLD.
REMINDE ME WHEN I'M HURTING THAT I HAVE THE
HOLY SPIRIT LIVING WITHIN ME, ALWAYS READY TO
HELP ME AND PRAY FOR ME.**



DAY FOUR

ROMANS 12:15; 2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-5

If you've ever been on a roller coaster and quickly figured out that you are not a roller coaster person, you know how endless those loops, heights, drops, and upside-down moments can feel. You know what it's like to feel trapped until the ride is over and the attendant tells you it's safe to unfasten the restraints or release the lap bar. Maybe you stumble toward the platform and promise yourself and anyone else who will listen that you will never ride a roller coaster again.

Life can sometimes make us feel like we're on a roller coaster of struggles and wins, grief and rejoicing. But these heights and drops in life, just like those on a roller coaster, aren't endless, even if we imagine them that way. God promises that one day, He will wipe our tears and take away death, grief, and pain because the way of our fallen world will pass away (Rev. 21:4). Jesus promised we'd suffer and struggle, but He also promised us hope because He has overcome the world (John 16:33). And that hope is our endless anchor that steadies us when life hurts (Heb. 6:19).

While we hold on to that "one day" hope, God calls us to help others hold on to it too. We might feel like we have nothing to give when we're struggling, but that's not true. God calls us to give empathy, compassion, and hope—out of the empathy, compassion, and hope He has filled us with through salvation in Jesus and the presence of His Spirit. Out of His endless supply, we can pour into others, drawing their attention to Jesus and His comfort even through our own struggle and pain.

- **WHEN HAS YOUR GRIEF OR PAIN FELT ENDLESS? WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR US TO REMEMBER THAT OUR GRIEF AND PAIN AREN'T ENDLESS?**
- **WHAT DO YOU THINK IT ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE TO "WEEP WITH THOSE WHO WEEP" (ROM. 12:15)? DOES SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE NEED YOU TO DO THIS FOR THEM?**

PRAY

FATHER, THANK YOU THAT THE STRUGGLES OF LIFE AREN'T ENDLESS. THANK YOU FOR THE HOPE YOU'VE GIVEN ME FOR THE FUTURE IN JESUS. PLEASE SHOW ME HOW TO COMFORT OTHERS WITH THE COMFORT YOU HAVE GIVEN ME.





DAY FIVE

1 CORINTHIANS 15:20-22,50-58

Stopping by a welcome center when you enter a state or national park is always a good idea. Rangers stay up to date on weather conditions, road closures, wildlife sightings, fire risks, and trail maintenance. They can help you choose a trail that fits your experience level or your desired outcome—whether you want a physically challenging hike or a relaxing one. They’ll give you a map and some advice and send you on your way. Park rangers can do all this for you because they’ve gone where you’re going; someone else went ahead of them to show them the way, and someone before that mapped out the best paths to take.

Having someone to follow into the unknown is helpful, and death might be the biggest unknown we face. Death comes to all of us, unless Jesus returns before we die. So, death is a “common” experience, yet it can feel so intimidating. We can learn the truth about death and what it means for followers of Jesus, but we don’t know the specifics of what we’ll see and where we’ll be in the moments after we die. But we do know that death for believers isn’t final and that when we’re “away from the body,” we’re “at home with the Lord” (2 Cor. 5:8).

We can be confident in all of this because Jesus is the “firstfruits” of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20). The firstfruits are the first and best of the group. He has gone before us in life, in death, and in resurrection. When Jesus tells us He is the only way to have eternal life with God, we can trust Him because He has been there, He has made a way, and He will lead us safely home.

- **WHO WOULD YOU FOLLOW ANYWHERE, NO MATTER WHAT? WHY?**
- **HOW DOES JESUS’S GOING BEFORE US IN DEATH AND RESURRECTION GIVE YOU HOPE FOR THE FUTURE?**

PRAY

FATHER, HELP ME TO TRUST THAT YOU MEAN WHAT YOU SAY. THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME VICTORY OVER DEATH THROUGH JESUS. SHOW ME HOW TO LIVE LIKE I BELIEVE MY HOME IS ULTIMATELY WITH YOU.