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**Lesson 5 | May 28th, 2023 | “God Has Made Death a Natural Part of Life”**

**Ministry Updates**

**Lesson 3 Recap**

**We Gather Together:** (*Selected verses from Ephesians 2 )*

Pastor: As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins

**Group: Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.**

P: But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5**made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions

**G: it is by grace you have been saved**

P: For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God

**G: not by works, so that no one can boast.**

P: For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,

**G: which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

**Opening Prayer**

**Schedule for Our Study | “10 Lies About God”**

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| April 23rd  | There are Many Ways into God’s Presence  |
| April 30th  | I Don’t Need the Bible or Worship to Be Right With God |
| May 7th  | God Helps Those Who Help Themselves |
| *May 14th*  | *Confirmation Sunday (Cake Reception)*  |
| *May 21st*  | *Congregational & Voter’s (CV) Meeting*  |
| **May 28th**  | **God Has Made Death a Natural Part of Life**  |
| June 4th  | God is Distant and Disinterested in What Happens  |
| *Break for Summer... August 20th Tentative Fall Kick-Off* |

**Introduction**

**Focus:**This lie about God is an interesting one. A person can understand why someone might want to believe it. If death is a natural part of life, then we should embrace it rather than run from it. However, this contradicts the human experience. The vast majority of people want to live and will go to every length and expense to eke out a few more moments here on this earth. In *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith*, the character named Yoda said, “Death is a natural part of life. Rejoice for those around you who transform into the Force. Mourn them do not. Miss them do not.” In other words, “Get over it!” This lie is a coping mechanism for death. As always, we will see that the Bible has a far better answer for death!

**Death is Natural?**

1. Death is separation. What kind of death does each verse describe?

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| **Ephesians 2:1 –** As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Ecclesiastes 12:7** – The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Matthew 25:41 – “**Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels’ “ |

*What makes spiritual death so hard?*

 *What makes physical death so hard?*

 *What makes eternal death so hard?*

**Why Death?**

1. In your own words, how did all three kinds of death make their way into our world?

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| **Romans 5:12** - **12**Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—­­­­­­­­­­­­­The death rate is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%**Genesis 3:22-23** - And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.*Why did God banish Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden?*  *Did God initially create humanity with an end/death as part of the plan?***Ecclesiastes 3:11 -** He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.*Why is the lie “Death is a natural part of life” so dangerous?*  |

1. A pastor once told about a hospital visit to a member of the congregation who had delivered a stillborn baby. The hospital chaplain called him over to give him advice on what to say. He advised, “Simply explain to the mother that this is the natural course of things in nature. You see it with cows and pigs all the time. It’s simply part of the cycle of life.” If the pastor had followed that advice, how might the mother have reacted? Think of at least two possibilities.

**God’s Plan for Death**

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| **1 Corinthians 15:20-22,55-58 -** But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. **21**For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. **22**For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. **55**“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” **56**The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. **57**But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **58**Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. God’s plan is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Hebrews 9:27,28** - Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, **28**so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.**Luke 23:43** - Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”**John 5:24-29** – **24**“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. **25**Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. **26**For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. **27**And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.**28**“Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice **29**and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. |

**Group Discussions**

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| ***Below are common questions about heaven. Let’s discuss what we know and what we don’t!***1. What will heaven be like?
2. Will we recognize people we knew on earth?
3. What will our relationship with our loved ones be?
4. Will we be sad if a loves one is not there?
5. Are there degrees of glory?
6. Will we know what’s happening here on earth?
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**Closing Activity | A SONG**

*Next Week: Final Bible Study until Fall: LIE -* God is Distant and Disinterested in What Happens

**Closing Prayer**