

By dying in our stead, Jesus defeated the power of death

Death, the penalty of sin, is a thing that holds us in bondage. Whether we think about it much from day to day, all of us recognize that life in this world is clouded by the fear of death. The Hebrew writer tells us the Son of God took upon Himself mortal flesh and blood that “through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery” (**Hb. 2:14,15**). *By dying in our stead, Jesus defeated the power of death.*

Jesus Christ came into the world to deal with the problem of sin and death. He said, “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (**Jn. 10:10**). Strange though it may seem, Jesus did this by dying. By dying a death He did not deserve — taking upon Himself a punishment that should have been ours — He made it possible for God to forgive our sins, remove the punishment of death from us, and give us everlasting life. Jesus conquered our death by dying in our stead, and in doing so He solved a problem we could never have solved on our own.

One thing we need to ponder frequently is that Jesus did not sacrifice His life simply to avert our punishment. The “life” He came to provide is not simply life as we have always lived it, only without the punishment. No, Jesus died to make possible for us a life that consists of living for Him! Paul pointed out that “the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised” (**2 Cor. 5:14,15**). So the death of Christ for us gives us a whole new reason for living. In Christ, we live for Him — and in living for Him we live a life that is qualitatively different than any other life we could live.

The proper response when we recognize that we owe our life to Christ’s death, is to dedicate to His glory the very life He has given us. A familiar old hymn says it this way: “Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small; love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.” As those who have been rescued from death and blessed with eternal life, let’s devote this week to life in Him. Let’s live for Jesus.

Monday: John 12:27-33

Key Idea: Jesus came into the world to die for our sins.

Questions for Family Growth: For what “purpose” did Jesus say “I have come to this hour”? What did Jesus mean when He talked about being “lifted up from the earth”? In **Mt. 20:28**, why did Jesus say He came? Consider **Gal. 3:13**.

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 10:8**.

Tuesday: Hebrews 2:14,15

Key Idea: Through His death Jesus destroyed him who had the power of death, the devil.

Questions for Family Growth: What is the “power of death” and how did Jesus “destroy” him who had that power? According to **v.15**, what did Jesus “deliver” us from? What is said about death in **1 Cor. 15:24-26**?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 10:9.**

Wednesday: 1 Peter 3:18

Key Idea: Jesus died for our sins that He might bring us to God.

Questions for Family Growth: Why did we need someone to “bring us to God”? How did Jesus do that by dying for our sins? What does **Hb. 2:9,10** say about how Jesus became the “author” (NKJV) of our salvation?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 10:10.**

Thursday: 2 Corinthians 5:14,15

Key Idea: Jesus died for us that we might live for Him.

Questions for Family Growth: What does it mean that “one has died for all, therefore all have died”? What does it mean that we should no longer live for ourselves, but for Him who died for us? What does **2 Tim. 1:8-10** say about “death” and “life”?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 10:11.**

Friday: Romans 6:1-4

Key Idea: To be saved from sin, we must die and be raised with Christ.

Questions for Family Growth: What does it mean that “all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death”? What is the “newness of life” that we should walk in? Consider **Gal. 2:20** and **Col. 2:12.**

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 10:12.**

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