

April in Review:

April 3:

Bowl Bash

April 10:

God's Not Dead 2

April 17:

Grieving the loss of a Christian - Alex Kacere

Just one day before April 17, we lost a brother in Christ, Joe DeWitt. He was a youth leader to our guys and a finance to one of our girl small group leaders. As I tried to process my own grief and wrestled with what I was going to say to a group of High School and Middle School Students, I feel like God led me in the direction of exploring what the word had to say about Death vs. Sleep.

I. Determining the difference:

Biblically the word "death" or "dead" has a different meaning than "sleep" and we are going to attempt to figure out the difference of the two words.

II. Death or Dead

We focused on three different passages to find out what the Word had to say about these words.

Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."

Colossians 2:13: " And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses"

Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"

In all of these passages, Paul talks about death and being dead as a pre-life to Jesus that is rooted in Sin. Sin and death are always together in the scripture, whether it is a past life before Christ being dead in trespasses or it's the wages of sin nature being death, death is imminent where sin is present.

III. Sleep

We did the same investigation when trying to figure out what the Word say about being asleep.



John 11 - in the story of Lazarus' death and Christ raising him from the dead Jesus says in verse 11, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up."

Acts 7 - In the story of Stephen the first martyr we also see the same dialect when Luke recalls his passing.

Verse 60: "And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

1 Corinthians 15:12-23: "Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope[b] in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ."

1 Thessalonians 4:13-16: "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first."

There are many more scriptures to explore and they are all cohesive in the idea that with Christ one does not die but falls asleep and is called into resurrection to Christ.

IV. Encouragement

Even as we mourn the bodily death of our brother, we can rejoice to know that he fell asleep and is raised to life with Jesus.

**April 24:
Rise Up - Joe Holman**

Joseph Holman's Outline

Biblical Leadership:

#RiseUp

We are all called to be leaders... look at Moses, Joseph, Joshua, Deborah

1. Moses – Exodus 3:10-11

a. Speech impediment...

b. If you think you don't have the skill

2. Joseph – Genesis 41:37... Genesis 39:6?

a. Thrown into prison...nowhere to go

b. If you think you are not in the right place

3. Joshua – Joshua 1:7-9

a. Joshua had to follow Moses but also had to deliver his people

b. If you think you can be as good as others

4. Deborah – Judges 4:4-6

a. Deborah had to lead an Army

b. If you think people will not listen

What are your fears of leading?

Failure? Embarrassment? Exclusion?

Have we not all experience the thoughts... "I can't do that" (fill in the blank with your thoughts)

- "I delivered your people from Pharaoh God, I can't even speak clearly?"

- "I'm in prison God how will I be able to save your people?"
- "If Moses can't do it how can I bring your people to the promise land?"
- "Lead your Army to victory? I am a woman I can't lead this army."

These thoughts of fear, of trepidation, of not being worthy are so common and can be so crippling.

**But we are fortunate we have a hope, an encouragement, and a direction.
Like God told Joshua "be strong and courageous for I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD"**

Our strength is not found in us.

We have no reason fear the world if we fear God

Joshua had no reason to fear FOR I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD AND I WILL BE WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.

Jim Elliot story... Ecuador

How could these mere men and women just as insecure, sinful, and fallible as you and me be such leaders with such courage and such boldness... such obedience?

They had a foundation.

Matthew 7:24-27

2 volunteers...one is the house and one is the weather

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it"

Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice... it is they who build their house on a rock.

It is because Moses, Joseph, Joshua, Deborah had built their house on the Rock that led to God using them in such a great way.

You gotta get ready so you can be ready!

How do we get ready? We abide in Him

2 John 1:9

“Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.”

1 John 3:24

“Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.”

John 15:5

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

We need to learn to abide in Christ and put it into practice.

Through this we may build a foundation that can withstand the fears of failure, fears of loneliness, and fears of loss.

This week many of us got to see someone we care about experience a very close loss. We also got to see Katelin lead in this time. We know that she abides in Christ and we know that he blessed her with a great peace. God was with her... remember Joshua... wherever we are He is with us.

Not just History examples but day to day times of Sons and Daughters of the living God RISING UP and leading for CHRIST.

Are you building your foundation? Are you going to be ready when God calls your number? Are you going to be the one that leads an army...as a woman...3k years ago... are you going to be the one that talks of God's goodness when all seems lost?...are you going to say no I know where I am going...I cannot take the life of someone who does not know him.

Will you get ready... will you abide in him...will you lead as Christ calls us to?