

The Great Divide Series# 4, Life and Death

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Recap:

Week One: The New Covenant... There is a new covenant!

Jesus' Life and Ministry was one of transition.

New Covenant in His Blood had its own new commandment:

John 13:34

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you..."

Jesus' blood ushered in a new covenant, a deal that God cut with God, in which all the obligations placed on humanity were fulfilled by Jesus the perfect Human, and all the blessings were bestowed upon Him. We partake of them as we realize our union with Him.

Week #2: The End of Injustice

We see Jesus with a passion and a zeal for the house of God consuming him, a love for the people of God that should have been in the house of God but through extortion and all manner of dishonest corruption, were discriminated against and marginalized.

We saw Jesus cleanse the temple on Palm Sunday, challenge and push back the injustice, and begin his all-out assault on the forces of darkness.

Good Friday: Communion Celebration and the facts of what happened that day culminating in "It is Finished" (John 19:30), and a new covenant established in His blood. (Luke 22:20). ***His blood speaks a better word!***

Intro: THE GREAT DIVIDE: LIFE AND DEATH

MORE IMPORTANT THAN ONE DAY'S CELEBRATION!

1 Corinthians 15:17

"And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins."

WITNESSING TO RESURRECTION WAS THE APOSTLES' TASK

Acts 1:22

"beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

Acts 4:33

"And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all."

THE RESURRECTION WAS THIER MSG

Acts 23:6

"Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead."

Same thing in Jesus' ministry, it was when he raised Lazarus from the dead in **John 11:45:47a, 53.**

The opposite of religion and religious practice is not irreligion, or license... its LIFE.

Galatians 6:15

"Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation."

RESURRECTION WAS JESUS' OWN MSG.

John 14:6

*"I am the way, the truth, and **the life...**"*

John 11:25-26

"Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

LIFE IS WHAT JESUS CAME TO GIVE US:

We break it up, describe it, pull out and analysis its components... but all that Jesus came to do for us, do in us, and give us, is LIFE.

John 10:10

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

Acts 13:29-39

*And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers. 33_God has fulfilled this for us their children, **in that He has raised up Jesus...***

WHAT IS RESURRECTION ALL ABOUT: THREE POINTS

3 Points:

1. What happened to Jesus
2. What happened to us,
3. What this means

1. WHAT HAPPENED TO JESUS!

Good Friday Jesus died...

Matthew 27:50-53

*"And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split **52** and the tombs broke open.*

What happens next? Jesus knows it is finished. He knows he has the victory, so he gives up His Spirit as a conqueror.

1Peter 3:18-19

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits..."

He doesn't go down to hell and suffer punishment at the hands of the devil. He goes to this place of the dead a conqueror, he goes and he preaches.

1 Peter 4:5-6

"...For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit."

What does he preach to these souls? He tells them...

John 11:25-26

"...I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

He tells them the same thing he told the living...

John 14:6

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me."

And what happened?

Matthew 27:50-53

*"...The earth shook, the rocks split **52** and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. **53** They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people."*

He ascended up out of the grave in victory and brought many with Him.

Ephesians 4:8-10

8 Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men." 9 (Now this, "He ascended"—what does it mean but that He also [d]first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

He led captivity captive and brought many out of the grave with Him. Luke tells us...

Acts 2:24

"But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."

He rises up out of death, with the keys of death and Hades (Rev. 1:18). He stops up through the earth, grabs his body on the way, hangs around long enough to say hi to Mary before Ascending to the highest heights of heaven. He ascends through the heavens, the angels and the host of heaven are watching. You can hear the angels saying to each other...

Psalms 24:8-10

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.

He ascends through the gates, goes through the everlasting doors to the highest part of heaven, takes his seat at the right hand of the Father, seated at God's right hand, forever the victor over sin, sickness, death, devil, and curse.

He receives as heaven's conqueror and humanity's champion, the Promise of the Father, the long-awaited promise made to Abraham...Promise of the Holy Spirit that he would pour out 50 days from then.

Acts 2:32-33

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear."

JESUS CROSSED THE GREAT DIVIDE BETWEEN DEATH AND LIFE. HE DID IT FOR US AND HE DID IT AS US. IN HIM, WE TOO HAVE CROSSED THE GREAT DIVIDE BETWEEN DEATH AND LIFE.

Jesus appeared to John in the Book of Revelation and told him...

Revelation 1:17b-18

*"Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. 18 I am the Living One; **I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!** And I hold the keys of death and Hades."*

Because His resurrection was our resurrection... we too can have that same consciousness over the power of death that Jesus has.

2. WHAT HAPPENED TO US.

Ephesians 2:1,4-6

*"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins...But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **made us alive with Christ** even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus..."*

When were we made alive with Christ? When we were raised up with Him.

Romans 6:4-11

"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection... 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What does it mean to reckon... consider it in order to make it so? No, consider it so because it is so. In other words, "do the math."

What happens when you see that *His Resurrection* was Your *Resurrection*?

Fear leaves your life and with it, all forms of bondage.

Hebrews 2:14-15

"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

You see that...

John 5:24

*"...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."*

That's why...

John 11:25-26

*"...He who believes in Me, **though he may die, he shall live.** 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me **shall never die...**"*

There is a consciousness you can live with where you know that you are a possessor of eternal life... not you're going to go to heaven when you die, but that you have eternal, divine life in you right now.

Romans 8:11

"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."

3. WHAT THIS MEANS

(i.) All things are new - including me and you!

2 Corinthian 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

In His resurrected body he has reconstituted the very cosmos. A cosmos that now responds to that life wherever it is found.

Romans 6: walk in newness of life

(ii.) A New Purpose and Ministry

With this new existence, we have a new, redeemed and repurposed ministry. The qualification for our priesthood is now not rules, regulations, not even skills, knowledge or aptitude, but our participation in his indestructible, resurrection life.

Hebrews 7:15-17

*And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, one who has become a priest **not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life.** For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."*

As priests, qualified and set apart by possessing resurrection life, we have a ministry of life not death...

2 Corinthians 3:6

"He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."

We too like Jesus have been given words of life to share...

John 6:63

"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."

We are speak and share words of life and resurrection as *"...blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life..."* **Philippians 2:15-16**

Literally in the midst of a pandemic we can hold out words of life. We can witness to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. We can point out that Jesus was *"...declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."* **Romans 1:4**

And at Easter, as we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, our Resurrection, we can also say that...

2 Cor. 5:14-19

*"...the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. 16 Therefore, from now on, **we regard no one according to the flesh.** Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

BE RECONCILED TO GOD!