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Abide™

MINISTRIES

THE TREE OF LIFE—
LIFE AFTER DEATH
Retreat/ Group Companion WORKBOOK



THE TREE OF LIFE—LIFE AFTER DEATH

Retreat/ Group Companion

WORKBOOK

RICHARD T. CASE



Dedication

Linda and I dedicate this course to the memory of our daughter, Michelle, who passed away in 2022. She had experienced what was termed “long Covid”, and developed autoimmune problems, partially caused by her not taking care of her health and making poor choices. When she started to fail, we went to the Father and asked as we do with all issues of life: “What do You have to say about this?” He said she is coming home. Since we believed in healing, and had no doubt that God heals, we pursued this further to confirm what we were hearing and why, since separation from loved ones, especially what we thought premature, is most difficult to experience and understand. We did ask for confirmation. The Father provided it through a series of experiences whereby she told us she saw and talked to Jesus; and that she consented to “ascending” with Him. She also confirmed she saw angels. One afternoon there was a bright light that opened up through a completely cloudy day and shined directly on her—which we all clearly saw—it was brilliant. The Father showed us that He could have healed her at any time, so that we knew His will was for her to come home, which was best for her eternal life, and not to stay in sadness as we will be joining her “in just a moment”, as he helped us understand eternity is “a long time”. When we wondered about all this, He spoke to us to let her go and not carry any anger toward her or her choices. She is moving to a beautiful place with Him and to rejoice, while we grieve. After her passing, we had lots of questions about what life after death like is? was her life cut short and she will never experience the fullness of what we thought life to be here? and what can we then understand about life after death? After we started sharing this with others, we learned that these ARE the questions that all of us have, and why the Father asked us to share what we learned will all His children who will face these same things. By the Way, we have understood one important thing—there is not a season of grief, but moments of grief that are on-going, especially when there are moments of remembrance that trigger these emotions. Further, for us, we experience her memory specifically and often through being a place where we smell her usual perfume—especially when no one else around and it lasts for an entire walk that Linda and I take together. We know this is not her there with us (she is with God in the heavenly) but that God uses this to remind of us her, to rejoice at her while we grieve the separation, and that we will join her in life again, and why she does not forget us nor are we to forget the immediacy of her still. This course will discuss all these important questions and more, and provide important insight to all of us who do wish to understand life after death.

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THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIFE AFTER DEATH; THE DIFFERENCES BASED UPON OUR BELIEFS AND HOW WE LIVE NOW



“We all live on Earth as physical humans, created in the image of God, and then we all are appointed to death to pass into eternity.”

Read Genesis 2:7; 15–17:

⁷ then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat[a] of it you shall surely die.”

God said to Adam and Eve, you can eat of all the trees that I have created, but do not eat of the tree of what?

God warned Adam and Eve that if they were to “eat of that tree,” what would happen?

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Read Genesis 3:22–24:

²² Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” ²³ therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Instead of following His directions, they were tempted by Satan. They disobeyed God’s instruction and ate of this tree. When they did, as spoken by God, they died. What died?

But what about the Tree of Life?

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Read Revelation 2:7:

7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.'

To the churches, God said, "If you have an ear to hear, hear what I have to say." He was going to give them the privilege to do what? Eat of the "Tree of Life." When? Now. So, it still exists? Yes, it still exists. Adam and Eve were prevented from going back on the path in the garden to eat of the Tree of Life, but it does still exist. You, we, all of us can still eat of the Tree of Life. Let's dig in further.

Read Revelation 22:1-5:

The River of Life

22 Then the angel^[a] showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life^[b] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Everything will be destroyed, but there will be a brand new heaven and earth, as well as the Tree of Life. From this tree, what are we called to do?

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Read John 1:1–4:

The Word Became Flesh

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. **4** In him was life,^[a] and the life was the light of men.

Who is “the life?” Christ, the Word who became flesh, is the Life and the Light. The Life shines in the darkness.

Read John 3:14, 21; 3:36:

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

The key to life is Christ. He is the Life. We are to partake of that Life. He is the Light—the Life is the Light. For us to participate in it, what do we have to do?

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If we do, we will have life, but if we don't, what happens?

But what if you do partake of it, but don't walk into the life? What if you believe that all you need to know is that you will be with Him in eternity so you don't need to partake in the Tree of Life regularly? This raises the question then: What is the difference in eternity for those who choose Life, those who don't choose Life, and those who choose Life on their terms?

Read John 4:13-14:

¹³ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.^[a] The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

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Then, 1 Corinthians 15:45–49:

⁴⁵ Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”;^[a] the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall^[b] also bear the image of the man of heaven.

Then, 1 John 5:11–15:

¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

That You May Know

¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. ¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

Christ is the Tree of Life, and His desire is to be the giver of this Life. He wants this Life to flow through Him into you, where you are the recipient of the Life that He has for you. He wants this while you are here on earth and in eternity. Because the Tree of Life still exists, we are always in a position, just as Adam and Eve were, to keep eating of the Tree of Life. Today, we are called to do just that. Why?

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Read John 17:1-3:

The High Priestly Prayer

17 When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

He said He is the giver of Life. It is eternal life. This means experiencing the Father and the Son in your life today. Again, it is eternal life. You have to partake of it and receive it by eating of that Life. In doing so, you will experience and know the fullness of this Life of God here on earth. As He identifies this as eternal life, what does that imply?

Going one step farther, why would it change when we pass into the next dimension? Is it all over, or will it be significantly different?

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Read John 20:31:

³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Read Romans 8:9–11; 31–32:

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus[a] from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

God’s Everlasting Love

³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be^[a] against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

If God is for you, who can be against you?

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If it is eternal, how does that work?

Read John 8:12:

I Am the Light of the World

¹² Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Then, Proverbs 12:28:

²⁸ In the path of righteousness is life,
and in its pathway there is no death.

Then, Proverbs 15:24:

²⁴ The path of life leads upward for the prudent,
that he may turn away from Sheol beneath.

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Then, Matthew 7:14:

¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

You are invited to go and eat of the Tree of Life, but the only way you can do it is by being pure. How are we pure?

When are we pure?

The moment Adam and Eve fell, is the moment they died—lost their righteousness. God could not allow them to eat of the Tree of Life, so He blocked the path. Why did God respond this way?

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What does this means for us today?

Read 2 Peter 1:1–4:

Greeting

1 Simeon^[a] Peter, a servant^[b] and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

² May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Confirm Your Calling and Election

³ His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to^[c] his own glory and excellence,^[d] ⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

What does eating of the Tree of Life provide?

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Is this automatic given if you are a born-again believer?

Do you surrender your own will? Do you walk in the Spirit?

We have to be completely pure to be in His presence. This truth presents some very interesting questions:

1. Does it really matter how we live here—in the flesh or in the Spirit—does that matter?

2. Does it matter what we do here?

3. Wouldn't it be better if we went sooner, rather than later?

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Read 1 Peter 1:3–5:

Born Again to a Living Hope

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Then, Psalm 16:5–6:

⁵ The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.

⁶ The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.

Then, Ephesians 1:13–23:

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee^[a] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,^[b] to the praise of his glory.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

¹⁵ For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love^[c] toward all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated

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him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

God said you will receive an inheritance. The inheritance is Him, and it is imperishable. It is pleasant. But, the inheritance starts when?

There is no more suffering, or sorrow, or tears. The things that He has been giving you continue on the same pace that you have been receiving them. Why?

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Read Proverbs 13:12:

¹² Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

Read Psalm 33:18–22:

¹⁸ Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,

¹⁹ that he may deliver their soul from death
and keep them alive in famine.

²⁰ Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.

²¹ For our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.

²² Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

What is hope?

How does this relate to the Tree of Life?

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What is in eternity?

This, by definition, means what?

There are still things that are happening that have not yet been fully realized, but we still carry that hope. Because why?

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Read Proverbs 3:13–18:

- ¹³ Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who gets understanding,
¹⁴ for the gain from her is better than gain from silver
and her profit better than gold.
¹⁵ She is more precious than jewels,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.
¹⁶ Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.
¹⁷ Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all her paths are peace.
¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;
those who hold her fast are called blessed.

Then, Proverbs 8:32–36:

- ³² "And now, O sons, listen to me:
blessed are those who keep my ways.
³³ Hear instruction and be wise,
and do not neglect it.
³⁴ Blessed is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting beside my doors.
³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life
and obtains favor from the Lord,
³⁶ but he who fails to find me injures himself;
all who hate me love death."

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“Whoever finds Me (wisdom) finds life.” He said wisdom comes from the Tree of Life. What do you need wisdom for?

Where does that come from?

Read John 6:63:

⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

Then, Psalm 16:11:

¹¹ You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

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Read Psalm 36:5–9:

⁵Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.

⁶Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;
your judgments are like the great deep;
man and beast you save, O Lord.

⁷How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

⁸They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

⁹For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light do we see light.

When we pass into the next life, we no longer have any trouble, but what continues?

What is the Covenant?

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Read Psalm 3:1–6:

Save Me, O My God

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

3 O Lord, how many are my foes!

Many are rising against me;

² many are saying of my soul,

“There is no salvation for him in God.” Selah^[a]

³ But you, O Lord, are a shield about me,
my glory, and the lifter of my head.

⁴ I cried aloud to the Lord,
and he answered me from his holy hill. Selah

⁵ I lay down and slept;

I woke again, for the Lord sustained me.

⁶ I will not be afraid of many thousands of people
who have set themselves against me all around.

If we are guided with our steps, what does that imply?

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Read Psalm 21:1–6:

The King Rejoices in the Lord's Strength
To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

21 O Lord, in your strength the king rejoices,
and in your salvation how greatly he exults!

² You have given him his heart's desire
and have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah

³ For you meet him with rich blessings;
you set a crown of fine gold upon his head.

⁴ He asked life of you; you gave it to him,
length of days forever and ever.

⁵ His glory is great through your salvation;
splendor and majesty you bestow on him.

⁶ For you make him most blessed forever;^[a]
you make him glad with the joy of your presence.

Read John 10:10:

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

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Then, Psalm 103:1–5:

Bless the Lord, O My Soul

Of David.

103 Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!

² Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,

³ who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,

⁴ who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

⁵ who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Then, Ecclesiastes 5:18–20:

¹⁸ Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment^[a] in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. ¹⁹ Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. ²⁰ For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

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Read Psalm 27:1–5:

The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation

Of David.

27 The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold^[a] of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

² When evildoers assail me
to eat up my flesh,
my adversaries and foes,
it is they who stumble and fall.

³ Though an army encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war arise against me,
yet^[b] I will be confident.

⁴ One thing have I asked of the Lord,
that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord
and to inquire^[c] in his temple.

⁵ For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;
he will lift me high upon a rock.

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Then, Psalm 18:1–3:

The Lord Is My Rock and My Fortress

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who addressed the words of this song to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said:

18 I love you, O Lord, my strength.

² The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,
my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

³ I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my enemies.

Then, Psalm 56:1–4; 9–13:

In God I Trust

To the choirmaster: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. A Miktam^[a] of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

56 Be gracious to me, O God, for man tramples on me;
all day long an attacker oppresses me;

² my enemies trample on me all day long,
for many attack me proudly.

³ When I am afraid,
I put my trust in you.

⁴ In God, whose word I praise,
in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can flesh do to me?

⁹ Then my enemies will turn back
in the day when I call.

This I know, that^[a] God is for me.

¹⁰ In God, whose word I praise,

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in the Lord, whose word I praise,
¹¹ in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can man do to me?
¹² I must perform my vows to you, O God;
I will render thank offerings to you.
¹³ For you have delivered my soul from death,
yes, my feet from falling,
that I may walk before God
in the light of life.

Think of a trouble you have experienced, and consider how you felt at the very moment it was resolved. When God resolved it and it was done, how did you feel?



LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?



**“The life He set
before us is
life eternal. It
starts now.”**

Read Deuteronomy 30:11–20:

The Choice of Life and Death

¹¹ “For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. ¹² It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹³ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹⁴ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

¹⁵ “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. ¹⁶ If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God^[a] that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules,^[b] then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ¹⁷ But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, ¹⁸ I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹ I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life, that you and your offspring may live, ²⁰ loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.”

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

God said, "I set before you life and death, blessing or cursing." The life He set before us is life eternal. It starts now. It is to be experienced with the blessing of it now. There is a choice involved if we are to receive the life, understanding that it will have eternal implications. It is necessary that we choose it now. In making that choice, is it permanent?

Why

Read Proverbs 21:21:

²¹ Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness, and honor.

How do we follow righteousness?

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Read Romans 6:1–4:

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

6 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Then, Colossians 3:1–4:

Put On the New Self

3 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your^[a] life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Then, 2 Corinthians 4:7–15:

Treasure in Jars of Clay

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. ⁸ We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. ¹¹ For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death is at work in us, but life in you.

¹³ Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, ¹⁴ knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. ¹⁵ For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

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WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Then, Galatians 2:20-21:

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. ²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness^[a] were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

God said to choose life, and if you choose life, there is a daily action that you must go through. What is it?

Paul said that if we are going to live with Christ, we will always live at the same time with death. Death to what?

Are we going to be in Christ enjoying the life of Christ when we go to heaven?

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Read Proverbs 19:23:

²³ The fear of the Lord leads to life,
and whoever has it rests satisfied;
he will not be visited by harm.

Then, Psalm 34:11–14:

¹¹ Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
¹² What man is there who desires life
and loves many days, that he may see good?
¹³ Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from speaking deceit.
¹⁴ Turn away from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.

Then, Proverbs 16:17:

¹⁷ The highway of the upright turns aside from evil;
whoever guards his way preserves his life.

The fear of the Lord is what leads you to life. He said He would show us what that life looks like. So, how do you define the fear of the Lord?

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What exactly does that look like?

As you experience difficulty—which will be normal—choose to pursue God to receive His peace and shalom. Fear what He has to say, and do not be afraid of what He has to say. Have reverence for what He has to say. Do not reject it. Continue moving forward. Learn what it means, because if you do, you preserve the essence of your soul. What does this mean exactly?

Remember, His life lasts into eternity, which also means our soul lasts in eternity. What is your soul?

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Read Matthew 10:34–39:

Not Peace, but a Sword

³⁴ “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶ And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Then, Matthew 16:24–28:

Take Up Your Cross and Follow Jesus

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life^[a] will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. ²⁸ Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

Christ said that in order to gain life, you have to lose it. And if you lose it, you gain it. What do you need to lose?

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

If you love Him first and you have conflict with relatives, what must you do?

What will you receive?

Read Psalm 133:

When Brothers Dwell in Unity

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

133 Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!^[a]

² It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!

³ It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion!

For there the Lord has commanded the blessing,
life forevermore.

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Read John 5:19–24:

The Authority of the Son

¹⁹ So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father^[a] does, that the Son does likewise. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. ²² For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Read 1 Timothy 6:13–16:

¹³ I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before^[a] Pontius Pilate made the good confession, ¹⁴ to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

LESSON 2

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Read John 18:28–38:

Jesus Before Pilate

²⁸ Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters.^[a] It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. ²⁹ So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" ³⁰ They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you." ³¹ Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law." The Jews said to him, "It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death." ³² This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

My Kingdom Is Not of This World

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." ³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, "I find no guilt in him."

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Paul instructed us, saying that if you live the life of the confession of Jesus to Pilate, you will experience this life in eternity. What is that exactly?

Will God keep speaking to you when you are in heaven?

Read Acts 5:20:

²⁰ "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

What gives you the ability to speak "all the words of this life?"

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In doing this, what are you building?

Read John 10:10:

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Then, Psalm 111:2-5; 9-10:

² Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who delight in them.

³ Full of splendor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴ He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.

⁵ He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.

⁹ He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is his name!

¹⁰ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever!

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

When can you receive this super-abundant life?

Read Matthew 7:15–23:

A Tree and Its Fruit

¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

I Never Knew You

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Then, Revelation 22:12-17:

¹² "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes,^[a] so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵ Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

¹⁶ "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

¹⁷ The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

So, do we bear fruit or not? Do we experience abundance and enjoy the abundant life?

If there is no evidence of it, are we truly a believer?

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

As a believer, it is okay to ask: Are you sure that you are a believer?

Read John 14:1–6:

I Am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life

14 “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God;^[a] believe also in me. ² In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?^[b] ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going.”^[c] ⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:9:

⁹ But, as it is written,
“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—

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WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:9–10:

⁹ So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

When we die, we are going to appear where?

Read Matthew 5:17–20:

Christ Came to Fulfill the Law

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

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WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Then, Colossians 3:22–25:

²² Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters,^[a] not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵ For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

Keep in mind we are talking about believers. On what basis are we judged?

Read 1 Corinthians 3:5–22:

⁵ What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷ So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸ He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled^[a] master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³ each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

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¹⁶ Do you not know that you^[b] are God's temple and that God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

¹⁸ Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," ²⁰ and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." ²¹ So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours,

Then, Matthew 25:21:

²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.^[a] You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

As we have laborers build this place, we need them to follow what?

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Read Luke 6:20–23:

The Beatitudes

²⁰ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! ²³ Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

Then, Matthew 16:27:

²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Then, 2 Timothy 4:6–8:

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

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Then, 1 Corinthians 9:24–27:

²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵ Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and keep it under control,^[a] lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Then, Matthew 19:28–30:

²⁸ Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world,^[a] when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold^[b] and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

When you die and enter the heavenly life, where does God want you to be?

LESSON 2

WHAT HAPPENS, WHAT DO WE EXPERIENCE IN THE NEXT LIFE?

Read Revelation 22:1–5:

The River of Life

22 Then the angel^[a] showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life^[b] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.