

WEEK 1: Jesus Is The Resurrection & The Life

Can you think of an unanswered prayer that turned out to be a blessing? In the verses below we see two grieving sisters who both say to Jesus, "If you had been here, my brother would not have died." However, Jesus' response is probably not what these women expected. Jesus says that He is glad that He was not there. He knew that what He was about to do would cause them to believe and glorify God more than if he had been there before their brother had died.

Read John 11:1-44

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" **John 11:25-26**

Jesus makes this *I am* statement to Martha before raising her brother, Lazarus, from the dead. Jesus proclaimed that not only is He able to raise our bodies from death, but for those who believe, He is able to raise our bodies to new life now. He also proclaimed that life now and in eternity comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

Read 1 John 5:11-12

Reflection: Do you believe that everyone who lives and believes in Jesus shall never die? Do you believe that Jesus can raise you to new life now? Why or why not?

WEEK 2: What's In A Name

Does your name have a story or meaning behind it? Most parents today don't consider names for their children based on what the name means. Instead they usually choose what is popular or sounds good to them. However, Hebrew names were chosen very carefully. They believed that a person personified the name that they held. In our last lesson we learned the meaning behind God's name, *I am*.

Name changes occur many times throughout Scripture and all signify the difference between a life without God and a life with God.

Abram became Abraham - *exalted father* to *father of a multitude of nations*.

No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. **Genesis 17:5**

Jacob became Israel - *deceiver* to *he who strives with God and man*.

Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." **Genesis 32:28**

Saul became Paul - his Roman name, Paul, is used from **Acts 13** forward instead of his Hebrew name, Saul, to show his ministry to the Gentiles.

But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him. **Acts 13:9**

Each man listed above left behind their old life, where they walked in their own way, in order to walk into their new life, where they walked in God's way.

Reflection: Was there a noticeable change in your life when you became a follower of Christ? Write down three words that describe you before and three words that describe you after Jesus became your Lord and Savior.

WEEK 3: Standing Outside the Promise Land

When was a time when you stood in your own way of success? Many proclaim Jesus is their Lord but refuse to walk in His ways. They still believe that the world has something better to offer them. The result is believers who aren't experiencing new life because they insist on walking their own way. They believe they are safe from the wrath of God, but they never experience the resurrection and the life.

Read Hebrews 3:7-19

where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.' **Hebrews 3:9-10**

Not only did the Israelites wander through the wilderness for 40 years, but they wandered from God's ways. They constantly complained and looked back with regret for leaving Egypt. As a result of their disobedience, many never entered into the land that God had promised them. The writer of Hebrews is warning followers of Jesus to learn from the Israelites' mistakes. Unbelief leads to rebellion, sin and disobedience. Those who believe will receive God's promise of new life.

Reflection: Is your unbelief keeping you from receiving God's promise of new life? Is there an area of your life that you are not surrendering to God and it shows?

WEEK 4: Walking In New Life

What's something you really enjoy doing, but you know it's bad for you? Before Christ, our lives were controlled by our old nature under Adam, that elevated self over God. Sin was our master and we had no way to combat it. Scripture tells us that when we follow Christ, our old self is put to death and buried. We become dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 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. **Galatians 2:19-20**

Read Romans 6

> *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.* **Romans 6:4**

In Christ, our bodies and lives can be used to bring glory to God. Through Jesus we are justified at the time of salvation and then through the Holy Spirit we are sanctified, made holy, throughout the rest of our lives. Jesus Christ has removed the penalty and power that sin once had over us. Now we must believe this, letting go of all past, present and future shame, and submit to God's will for our lives. In order to dwell with God we must walk into our new life of sanctification.

Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. **Romans 6:13**

Reflection: Is there sin still enslaving you? Are you holding on to any past shame? How can you personally put your sin and shame to death and step into new life with Christ?