

Discussion Questions

March 31, 2024

Acts 2:22-24

Jesus' Victory Over Death



1. Read Acts 2:22-40

Summarize the main points of Peter's Sermon.

How could Paul say that those present were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus when most were in a different country at the time?

2. The sermon addressed the fear of death as shown through the book "Denial of Death." In what ways, to quote George Herbert's poem, is death no longer an executioner but a gardener for those who follow Christ?

3. Read 1 Corinthians 15:54-55

Can you share a personal experience where facing death (yours or someone close) brought fear or anxiety?

How does faith in Jesus change that perspective?

4. Consider the response of the people in Acts 2 when they were "pierced to the heart" upon hearing Peter's message. Share an experience where you had a similar conviction or realization of the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

5. Read Acts 2:36-38

What are the 4 steps Peter tells them to take?

Discuss each of these 4 steps, what they are, and why Peter gives them top priority.

6. In what ways could your understanding and confidence in Jesus' victory over death grow, coming more in line with a truly biblical understanding of physical death (your own or a loved one)?

Acts 2:22–24 (NLT)

People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. 23 But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip.

1 Corinthians 15:54–55 (KJV)

Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

1 Corinthians 15:14 (NIV)

And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

1 Corinthians 15:57 (NLT)

But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ernest Becker - Denial of Death

man is a worm and food for worms...

..[man] has an awareness of his own splendid uniqueness in that he sticks out of nature with a towering majesty, and yet he goes back into the ground a few feet in order blindly and dumbly to rot and disappear forever. It is a terrifying dilemma to be in and to have to live with.

Anxiety is the result of the perception of the truth of one's condition. What does it mean to be a self-conscious animal? The idea is ludicrous, if it is not monstrous. It means to know that one is food for worms. This is the terror: to have emerged from nothing, to have a name, consciousness of self, deep inner feelings, an excruciating inner yearning for life and self-expression—and with all this yet to die. It seems like a hoax... What kind of deity would create such complex and fancy worm food? Cynical deities, said the Greeks, who use man's torments for their own amusement.

The most that any one of us can seem to do is to fashion something—an object or ourselves—and drop it into the confusion, make an offering of it, so to speak, to the life force.

George Herbert - Time (17th Century)

Christs coming hath made man thy debter,

Since by thy cutting he grows better.

And in his blessing thou art blest:

For where thou only wert before

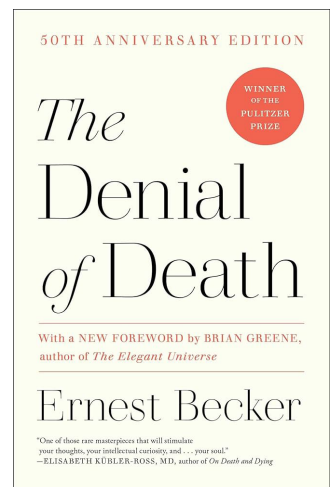
An executioner at best;

Thou art a gard'ner now, and more,

"death used to be an executioner, but Jesus has made death a gardener."

Tim Keller

The worst thing that can happen [death], is the best thing that can happen"



Philippians 1:21

TO LIVE IS CHRIST, to DIE IS GAIN

Acts 2:36 (NLT)

So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!

Acts 2:37 (NLT)

Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"

Acts 2:38 (NLT)

Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:39 (NLT)

This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away - all who have been called by the Lord our God.