

# A Grieving Family

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[ 0 : 00 ] All right, well, let me just adjust this so it's sort of, there we go, that was easy.

All right, well, thanks for your clap that Jono promised me and that's better, that's better. Tonight we are in our third week of our series, Changed by Jesus, and tonight we're looking at this story of Lazarus, of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

And so we're going to be looking at life, it's a story about life and we're going to be thinking about our hope, the hope that we have as Christians of a life that never ends.

But, there's a big but tonight as well, and that is that. In order to look at life, in order to look at our hope of eternal life, we have to face up to the reality of death.

We have to stare in its big, ugly eyes and remember that it is a real thing, a painful thing, a sad thing.

[ 1 : 23 ] And we have to remember that we've been changed by Jesus, that death is not the hopeless thing that it once was. And we're going to be talking a lot about that, about our hope, about our hope for resurrection.

But I just wanted to sort of flag where we're going and flag that we're going to be looking at death because I don't want to offend any of you. I don't want any of you to think that I'm making light of death, that I don't think that death is sad, that I don't think that death is a bad thing, a horrible thing, a thing that I wish that did not happen.

But I do want us to be thinking about hope. So I hope that I walk that line well tonight of talking about our hope and how our attitude should be towards death as we look to what Jesus has done for us.

But I also want to acknowledge just first up that death is a horrible thing, a sad, sad thing. And so hopefully we walk that line well.

How about I pray and then I'll tell you a story. Father God, we thank you for this story we have in your word about the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

[ 2 : 38 ] We thank you for the things that it teaches us and the things that it foreshadows in your own death and resurrection. And God, I pray tonight that as we're thinking about death and life, that you would encourage us and challenge us in the way that we live, given that you promise that if we have our faith in you, we will be raised to life on the last day.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Well, when I was eight years old, 1992, almost 20 years ago now, which is scary, I was in year two and my school went on a camp.

It was my first ever school camp. We went on this camp. I lived in New South Wales back then and we drove out to the bush and we went to this fantastic campsite. I remember putting my bags on the bunk and being really excited with all my friends.

And then as the day went on, we went for a swim. We walked across this paddock from where our cabins were and we went for a swim. And there was also some tennis courts.

And I remember being eight years old that I got kind of bored of swimming fairly fast. So I wandered across to the tennis courts and I got kind of bored of that as well. And so I came back to the pool and I remember talking to some of my friends by the side of the pool.

[ 4 : 04 ] And we got up and we went to the edge of the pool. I don't know why we went to the edge of the pool. And we looked down and there was my friend under the water, dead.

And we called my teacher over and I'll never forget, she came running over and she jumped in the water right in front of me.

And I'll never forget the sight of her pulling his head out. I've told this story a million times and never cried before. I'll never forget, she pulled him up, pulled his head up out of the water and he was blue.

And she started doing CPR and the whistles were blowing and we gathered around and we were scuttled out of there as fast as we could go. And I remember sitting back up at the cabins and we were playing some volleyball and the ambulance came in and we all cheered. He's going to be okay. He's going to be okay. The ambulance is here. But he wasn't okay. He died. He drowned. He was eight years old.

[ 5 : 15 ] Dead. And so there it was, staring me in the face, an eight-year-old boy, death.

The reality of death. My friend was dead. He wasn't going to get admitted to communion with me in a few weeks like he was supposed to. He wasn't going to come to my party.

He was dead. And death is serious. It is a real thing. For some of us, it might not have affected us yet, but it will. And when it does, it can be hard to deal with.

There's emotion there from that death 20 years ago that I didn't even really know was there until just then. And we can let death govern our lives, can't we?

I know that most of the teachers who were there on that day didn't stay teachers at that school for much longer. They were all out of there by the end of the year. I don't know if they went to other schools or if they just had to give the profession away.

[ 6 : 18 ] Death had started to rule their lives. The family of the boy who died. Unimaginable pain and suffering and emotional toil as they tried to sort through their marriage.

I remember my dad trying to minister to them. Very difficult. And myself, I left that school eventually and moved to Tasmania.

And so the school that I went to obviously never ran a camp again while I was there. I don't know, maybe they still don't run camps. Who knows? But my new school knew nothing of death on camp. And so it did run camps. And I was in year five and we went down to southern Tasmania. And for some reason they wanted to go for a swim, even though there's snow on the mountains and it's freezing.

And we all went for a swim, except me. Except me. Because I sat as far away from the pool as I could, afraid really to let a splash hit me.

[ 7 : 23 ] Because I knew that I could die. That I wouldn't be going home. And I can remember every year we did another camp and it always involved water sports. And I always, always avoided them.

I even avoided ropes courses. I avoided everything. Because I was determined not to come back. Well, I was determined to come back, wasn't I? I was about to say determined to come back, not dead.

But I was determined to return to my family. And I think we live in a world that is afraid of death. That doesn't know what to do with death. That tries to push us back into youthfulness. We want to look as young as we can and we want to pretend that death isn't just hiding around the corner. But it is. And if we don't know what to do with it, if we don't know how to handle it, then we can be governed by it, by fear of it.

[ 8 : 26 ] But we know as Christians that death is not the end, don't we? And that's what this story is going to show us tonight of Lazarus. Death is not the end. Death is something ultimately not to be feared.

Jesus has come and he's changed how we look at death. He's changed the nature of death. He has defeated death. This story is about life and it's about resurrection.

And we're going to look at those themes tonight. But we're also going to be, as I've said, touching on this reality of death. But it's not what it's about ultimately.

It's about life. I've coined this phrase for tonight. And that is that death is but a life stage. Death is but a life stage. And I just want you to keep that in your mind because that's what we're going to... That's the attitude I want us to end up with. All right? Death is but a life stage. Now, this passage is long and lots happens and we can't look at everything.

[ 9 : 36 ] So, I've picked three questions that we're going to look at to try and help us unpack what's going on here. And then I'll try and give us a bit of application for how we're going to live.

So, my three questions are, firstly, how can sickness and death have anything at all to do with the glory of God? How can sickness and death have anything to do with the glory of a good God? That's the first one. And the second one, what does it mean for Jesus to be the resurrection and the life? That's what he claims there.

I am the resurrection and the life. What does that mean? What's he talking about? And then the third thing, because I think it's important, is what is with Jesus' emotions here?

Why is he getting angry at people for being sad? It's said there a couple of times, Jesus was angry in himself. He was angry. Why? Why is he angry?

[10:35] It seems a little bit unfair. Their brother died. Come on, Jesus. Cut them some slack. Why is that? So, they're the three questions. How can sickness and death have anything to do with the glory of God?

What does it mean for Jesus to be the resurrection and the life? And why is Jesus getting angry with people? What is with his emotions? We'll start with the first one, strangely.

How can sickness and death have anything to do with the glory of God? Now, if you look on your pieces of paper, verse 4, Jesus says this, This sickness will not end in death, but it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

And if you were here last week, you might remember our story of the blind man from John 9. And in that story, in verse 3 of chapter 9, Jesus said something a bit similar.

He said that the man's blindness was there so that God's work might be displayed in him, that God's glory somehow might be shown through this man's blindness.

[11:42] And John, I sort of touched on this question last week, so I don't want to spend too long on this one, but it's there and not all of you here last week and it's a hard one to get our heads around. And what I don't think Jesus is saying is that Lazarus was sick in order that God would be glorified in the sense of in order that God would receive praise, though that may have been a side effect.

Right? Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, they're going to praise him for that, okay? That's definitely part of it. But I don't think it's the main part. Because in John's Gospel, when it talks about the glory of God, it's often talking about how we see God revealed, how God reveals himself to us. The prologue of John, where it talks about the word becoming flesh and dwelling among us and showing us what God is like. In the Gospel of John, which is where this story is found, glory is actually about revelation.

And so this sickness doesn't exist so that we might praise God, though that may be a side effect, but it exists to show us what God is like, what he's like when he confronts death, what Jesus is like. It shows us who Jesus is. It shows us that Jesus is a man with power over death, with power over more than just the other things we've seen, more than just power over blindness, more than just power to multiply food.

[13:23] Jesus is the man with power over death. He is the God man because only God has power over death. And I could talk more and more about why there's sickness in the world and why God allows it, and it doesn't seem very fair for there to be sickness and death, and I don't really care what God's like, I just don't want my family to be sick or whatever it is.

But I think that as we face sickness and as we face death, we're forced to really look again at Jesus, to really understand who he is, to see his compassion, to see the way he confronted the evils in his world and the way he cast things out and brought compassion to people.

Jesus shows us what God is like and in that way reveals God's glory. Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

That's what he says in this story. He's the victor over death and suffering. Suffering and death reveal to us the glory of God because they drive us to see who Jesus really is, to see what God is really like, a God of compassion and love who thought that evil and suffering and sickness was all so bad that he made a way to fix it.

He hung himself on a cross and took all of the suffering, the pain, the sin on himself so that we could have resurrection and life.

[15:15] I could say much more about that, but I think it leads us nicely into my second question. What does it mean for Jesus to be the resurrection and the life?

So if you look again at your piece of papers, verse 25, the story's moved on a bit and Jesus is now talking with Martha and he's talking with her about her resurrection hope.

That actually starts at verse 21 and then in verse 25, Jesus says this, I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live.

Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die, ever. Now we know from the conversation that Martha already believes in the resurrection on the last day.

She's already said that. That's what I believe, that we'll be raised on the last day. And that was a fairly standard Jewish belief. We had the Old Testament reading from Ezekiel where it's prophesied

that God is going to put flesh and bones and breathe life into these dry bones in a valley.  
[16:27] So the Jews sort of expected that, though not all of them were sold on the idea of resurrection. But the vast majority, I think, were sold on the idea of resurrection at the last day.  
But right here in this moment, Jesus is doing something massive. If you were a Jew who lived 2,000 years ago and you're hearing Jesus say this, it would be massive.  
He's doing something massive with your belief in resurrection in the last day. Because here in verses 25 and 26, he's moving that belief of some form of resurrection on the last day into himself. He's saying, it's through me. That that belief you have is going to be fulfilled. It's through me that there is resurrection and life.  
It's through Jesus alone that resurrection happens. It's through Jesus alone that life is given. At the end of the world, anyone who believes in him, well, everyone will be raised and those who believe in him will spend eternity with him, raised from the dead.  
[17:47] And I don't know about you, but I believe that resurrection is actually the key to our belief as Christians.

So you cannot be a Christian without believing in resurrection. There are many people who try. They try to be Christians without believing in Jesus' resurrection, let alone our resurrection. But I would put it to you that they are not Christians, that you cannot be a Christian without a belief in resurrection and that this story is foreshadowing for us both our resurrection and Jesus' resurrection.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, and if you want, you can turn to it because I'm going to quote a few passages from it, but you have to get it out of the Black Pew Bibles. 1 Corinthians 15, he says this, verses 12 to 14.

Now, if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection from the dead, then Christ has not been raised.

[19:07] And if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation is without foundation and so is your faith. So is your faith.

If Christ has not been raised, then we will not be raised and our faith is pointless, useless. Jesus was raised from the dead.

That's what you believe when you become a Christian, among a couple of other things. But the main thing is that Jesus was raised from the dead. There's no good just believing in a dead guy. There are plenty of dead guys to believe in, but we don't believe in a dead guy.

We believe in a living God who was raised from the dead. And this miracle that he performs here in John 11 is foreshadowing his power over death.

When Lazarus comes out of the grave because Jesus asked for that to happen, we see that Jesus has power to raise people. Sure, Lazarus dies again one day, but Jesus himself does not.

[20:17] And that's the resurrection that we share in. Jesus does not just have the power to restore sight to the blind. He does not just have the power to cast out demons or to provide lots and lots of food for people.

He does not just have the power to provide you with some form of moral compass to live your day-to-day life. No, Jesus has power over death. Jesus has beaten death.

He died. He's not dead anymore. You will die. And if you're a Christian, one day you won't be dead anymore.

You'll be raised. And you have to believe that as well to be a Christian. Because if you don't believe we're going to rise from the dead, then you can't believe Jesus rose from the dead.

That's what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15 again. Let me read it from verse 16. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised.

[21:25] And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless. You are still in your sins. Therefore, those who have fallen asleep in Christ, that is, our dead Christian friends, those people we love dearly, have also perished.

If we have put our hope in Christ for this life only, we should be pitied more than anyone else. It's no good having a Jesus who's a great teacher and can lead you on some moral path.

If that's what you think, then you are to be pitied. That's what it says here. Because you're just going to end up rotten away like the rest of them.

If it's not true, if you didn't raise, if we're not going to be raised, we're all to be pitied. I'm to be pitied, you're to be pitied. What kind of life is that to live in vain hope of something that never happens? Foolish. You know, I went to Tutankhamen's exhibition yesterday and it's worth going to if you want and they have all this belief about resurrection and living in the underworld and all these symbols and whatever and you know what?

[ 22 : 50 ] Most of the time I'm thinking, fools. Fools. What fools? I mean, you can't just put things in jars and figurines around and expect them to come to life in the afterlife.

What fools? What idiots? You know, now that's probably some sort of cultural bias on my part or whatever but that was their hope.

Their hope was that those little figurines that I was looking at in some sort of heat compressed container so they didn't go off or whatever happens to old things that they would come alive and help them in the afterlife.

That was their hope and now three and a half thousand years later or whatever it is I'm looking at them in Australia in a box. Poor them. Fools.

That's what we're like if there's no resurrection. If there's no resurrection. If Jesus was not raised we're to be pitied. But it's true.

[ 23 : 56 ] Isn't that right? It's true. Jesus was raised from the dead. He's got power over death because if you see this story if you believe this story is true and there's many there's very good reason to then we've seen he's got power to raise people from the dead.

And not only that we're going to find out a few chapters later that he himself has been raised from the dead and he's going to raise us from the dead. There is nothing to be pitied about being a Christian.

Nothing. Because we have belief in resurrection. Nothing can hold us back. If we believe in Jesus then even if we should die we will live.

That's what Jesus is saying in verse 25. That's what he's saying for us. That's what it means for us. If we believe in him then even if we die we will live. Even if our friends and our families who believe in Jesus die they will live.

They are asleep. Death is but a life stage. They are awaiting a final day where they'll be raised to new life.

[ 25 : 32 ] But that sort of gives us there's sort of a question whoa a question here that needs to be worked out because after he said this even if you die you will live Jesus then says in verse 26 everyone who lives and believes in me will never die ever.

What is going on there? That does not seem to make sense does it? Because he's just said if you die you will live. And then he said but if you believe you'll never die.

Come on Jesus we don't have memories we're not that dumb that doesn't make sense. What are you talking about? I think you've got to remember that he's making a two part statement here.

He's saying I am the resurrection and he's saying I am the life. and the first part even if you die you will live he's talking about what it means for him to be the resurrection and the second part if you believe in me you will never die ever he's talking about life.

Because the Christian faith isn't actually all about that resurrection hope. It's got something to do with our life now.

[ 26 : 57 ] Having life now. Many many times the Bible talks about you were dead but now you are alive because you've had you've believed in Jesus.

as Christians in some sense we experience eternal life now.

It's not just a future hope though the future hope is fantastic but now we receive life. We live a new kind of life now.

We heard about Brenton tonight and the new life he lives because of Jesus. Jesus in John he's always saying things like this he says in chapter 8 verse 51 that if anyone keeps my word he will never see death and Jesus was a smart guy he knew that people who heard that were going to die but he's not talking about flesh and bone death he's talking about spiritual life about a life that is awakened in us when we first put our faith and trust in him and it's that life that part of our life that we have now as Christians that goes on when we're raised from the dead Jesus Jesus asked Martha if she believes that he's the resurrection and the life and what he's doing there is he's asking her about her personal belief her personal faith do you believe

Martha that I am the only one who can grant eternal life and the promise of resurrection later and Martha says in verse 27 yes Lord I believe and so this story becomes for us and for her like a parable it's real but it's like a parable in that it's a way Jesus shows us some other reality it's a way that he shows us that he is the one who has the power to give life now and forever Jesus is the resurrection and the life that's one of the key parts to our faith do you believe it really truly believe in your heart that you have life now and will be raised from the dead because as we'll see soon that's going to have a massive impact on the way you live your life massive let's quickly touch on my third question why is

[ 29 : 58 ] Jesus getting angry at people for being upset why did he cry what's going on here look at verse 33 after he's talked with Mary we see that she's very upset and that she's crying and Jesus we're told was angry in his spirit and deeply moved and then a couple of verses later we read Jesus wept and then again the next verse or the one after Jesus says the Jews see him crying and they say oh look he really loved Lazarus and then others say he could have stopped him dying and when Jesus hears that he's angry in himself again we read so what is going on why is he angry because someone died and people are sad and we've got

Jesus here being angry and that's uncomfortable I think there's a couple of things we can say here the first is that if you look at the words that are spoken just before Jesus is said to be angry in himself or angry they both times we reveal a lack we see a lack of faith a lack of real true understanding in who Jesus is so first time we get Mary in verse 32 saying Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died what a limited and the second time it's the Jews who probably were professional mourners who'd come along because that's still

I think in a lot of sort of Middle Eastern cultures you get the professional mourners in to properly respect your dead relative so they've got these professional mourners here and they see him crying and they say couldn't he who opened the blind man's eyes also have kept this man from dying Jesus could be angry frustrated at their lack of understanding they don't understand who he is they don't understand that he is the resurrection and the life I don't think he's angry that they're sad or upset but I think he is sad that their grief seems so hopeless Jesus if you'd been here my brother would not be dead now he's dead and I've just got to wait to the last day

Paul says in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 13 that if we know in our hearts the truth about Jesus and the resurrection that he promises for all of us who believe in him then we ought not grieve like the rest who have no hope that is when someone who's a Christian dies when someone who is a believer in God dies there is hope sure it's sad sure it's upsetting but it's not hopeless and I think Jesus might be angry at the hopelessness that he sees here but I think Jesus may also have been overwhelmed and angry at the sin the sin that has caused death to come in the world the sin that is rocking his friends the sin that would have caused pain to his friend

Lazarus before he died some people think that there's no way Jesus is crying here because of the grief of his friends because they say he's about to raise him from the dead right that just doesn't make sense why would Jesus cry about something he's about to fix that doesn't make sense but I don't know I think it does make sense because confession time sometimes when I'm alone in a room watching a movie and it's sad I may not man up as much as I should and let a tear trickle from the side of my face and I think the roof must be leaking you know has anyone got sad in a film got sad in a film Jono's man enough to admit it you know we get sad in films sometimes maybe not everyone gets sad in a film but people do right people get sad in films now I'm not saying that this is like a movie for

[ 35 : 31 ] Jesus but what I'm saying is that we all know when we're crying in a film that it's actors who we don't know who aren't real like they're not real people it's not real sad it's not it's not his real mum you know Tom Hanks is not a real you know mentally challenged guy who can run really fast and can't ever get the woman he loves you know it's not real that's the movie I cried in once it's not real it's not real but it's emotional we're emotional beings and it's moving and I think it would be a callous reading and a callous man who thinks that Jesus standing in the middle of real emotion of people he loves even though he knows he's about to raise Lazarus out of the tomb can't be moved by the emotion can't be weeping for the way that sin has sent these friends of his to great depths of despair

I think that's perfectly reasonable I think that's reasonable for Jesus to feel that way to be deeply moved by the situation so Jesus wept he wept over their unbelief he was angry about their unbelief he was angry about the sin in the world and he wept about that too and the effects that it had on the

people he loved now sometimes I think maybe we might be a bit like Mary and Martha in that we believe we know that Jesus is special we know that he's powerful we even know that he can raise people from the dead on the last day but when push comes to shove when we get to the reality of death in our own life maybe sometimes we reveal a lack of faith some sort of unbelief because we live in a world where we all know death is a reality all of us will experience it many of us most of us have all of us know that our time on earth in this state is limited and we all know that in Jesus our life will go on forever but do we act like that do we act like we've got limited time here do we act like we have the promise of eternal life or do we live in fear of death like I did after my school camp and on every school camp since where I wouldn't take a risk where I wouldn't go in the water do we live like there is no resurrection I think death and resurrection ought to motivate us they ought to motivate us to action as Christians I experienced personal death again last year when my grandma passed away and as I was reflecting on the death of my gran I wrote a few things on my blog and I thought I would read a couple of them to sort of try and make my point

I said this in death the rubber hits the road for the Christian faith the fact of the matter is the Christian faith promises that for some there is more to life than this life death is either a hopeless look back at the past or a hopeful celebration of God's grace for life and ongoing life sadly and this is my biggest regret in all of it I felt neither hope nor hopelessness but ambiguity I never really asked my gran what she believed and so I do not know what happens now I'm left to regret being too timid to talk to her and to rest on God hopefully being more gracious than I but I don't know I just don't know it's ambiguous I think I always thought that I would have more time that I would get a chance to sit on the couch with my gran and nut out the finer points of the faith

I think that I didn't really expect her to die even though she was 93 I always thought that she'd go into hospital and I'd know and I'd fly down or something and we'd be able to sort it out on a bedside or you know I always thought that I would have a chance but I live in Melbourne and she lived in Hobart and she fell over and I was in Melbourne and she never woke up again and I never got that conversation death sneaks up on us even when someone is 93 years old for me at least death snuck up on me I didn't expect her to die she'd always been there she'd probably be there for a bit longer but she's not she's gone we always think there's more time we always think well if I do it this time I might offend them or it might make things awkward so I'll wait for next time but death life is limited we have limited time on this earth so death ought to motivate us to action

[ 41 : 33 ] I kept writing and I wrote this as well one day I will die so I ought not waste my life life's too short to worry about pleasing everyone or being too cautious mistakes are inevitable being a people pleaser is almost inevitable at least for me but I think the reality of death ought spur me on to make sure I do the important things first to make sure that I am strong in areas I need to be strong and gracious where I must be gracious death ought motivate us to action our life is short but I think too often death motivates us to inaction you know if I'm walking down the street and I see something dangerous a situation where I need to get involved or where if I do get involved it might open up opportunities for me to share my faith if I see someone who needs my help what do I do if it's dangerous I stop and I think hmm that person might need my help but I might die

I don't know what will happen I might die and so what do I do often I keep going I don't stop I don't help because I'm afraid I'm afraid that I might die but you know what I've I've been really convicted with as I've been writing this sermon is that you know what I might die but that that would be okay that would be okay now Lisa might not think it'd be okay she'd be very sad I'm sure in the future I might have children and they might not think it's okay but and I know that they'd be sad but but not I hope not desperately so there's no need for them to be hopelessly sad because they just need to remember that I'll only I'd only be asleep the Bible has this beautiful way of talking about death as sleep death is inevitable as well that's the other thing you need to remember death is inevitable if I take no risk if

I never help anyone if I try and preserve my life at all costs well tomorrow a plane might fall out of the sky and land on my head unlikely but it might I might die tomorrow taking the most cautious life I can possibly take I might live the most risky life in the world and I might live till I'm 110 there's no way I can know but I do know this one day I'm going to die and that is okay do you believe that do you believe it's okay it's not not sad it's not not devastating for the people you leave home but it's not hopeless it's okay to die if you're a Christian because we have a great hope if someone points a gun at my head or something and says do you believe are you a Christian if you say yes I'm going to shoot you now they're there and they think I've got all the power in the world over this man I've

got my gun in his head and I'm asking if he's a Christian and I have power to end his life wow but you know what he hasn't got any power he has no power Jesus has all the power because Jesus has beaten death so if he's standing there with a gun in my face saying do you believe in Jesus yes does he shoot me maybe but that's okay because Jesus will raise me from the dead on the last day not because I'm awesome not because I said yes because my faith and trust were in him and so resurrection ought to motivate us to action when death motivates us to action because we've got limited time resurrection motivates us to action because we don't need to fear death when death tries to slow us down the world fears death more than anything else I think death is final death is the end but it's not death is but a life stage Jesus was resurrected and we will be resurrected if we trust in him if you walk out of this building with your faith in Jesus and you're killed in a car accident on the way home we will be devastated we will cry we will come to your funeral and weep but it won't be without hope because we know if your faith was in Jesus that you'll be raised on the last day so let us get active let us take risks for what is the worst that can happen we die but that that is okay it is okay it is sad but it is okay it is not the end it is just a life stage I just want to quickly finish by telling you this story about when I became a Christian when I became a Christian it was on a camp and funnily enough the camp was called Aquatics and Aquatics as the name suggests has a lot to do with water it was Aquatics the sailing camp and so every day we go down to the beach and they'd go sailing and or if you didn't want to go sailing you could go kayaking if you didn't want to go kayaking you could go swimming and if you didn't want to do any of those things which is what I was in my position because I didn't want to die you sat on the beach kind of bored because all the action was in the water and anyway I've been reflecting this week and thinking about death and about my own faith and whatever I realized the sort of beautiful poetry that there is in this story of how

[ 47 : 40 ] I live my life so afraid of dying in the water because I'd seen it happen right in front of me not even meters away centimeters away from my face and I went on this water camp and as I was taking risks and pushed to take risks and I eventually went out in a sailboat with one of the leaders it was at the same time that I was coming to a to an understanding of who Jesus was that he had died to make a way for me to come to God and that with him I would live forever no matter what happened I don't need to be afraid of death anymore and don't get me wrong I've got to preach this to myself every day because that that situation is real it affects me still now I'm still prone to to be afraid of death but I try and preach this to myself every day death has been defeated I will rise again death is but a life stage if we believe in Jesus even though we die we will live we will be raised on the last day to live with Jesus forever let's not be afraid let's live our lives knowing that if we die before Jesus returns then we are merely asleep

I want to finish by reading you something again from 1 Corinthians 15 a great passage which talks about our resurrection hope Paul finishes it by saying this verse 54 death has been swallowed up in victory where oh death is your victory where oh death is your sting the sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law but thanks be to God he gives us the victory over death through our Lord Jesus Christ Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen