

FOOTPRINTS

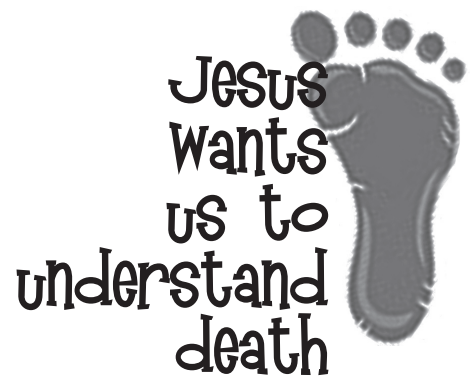
Leader's Guide for LESSON 15

For Kids

What Happens When People Die?

Welcome (7 Minutes)

As the parents/mentors and children arrive, give each a warm welcome. Encourage a young person to help you greet others as they arrive. Begin your group time together by inviting the participants to share by asking, "Where have you seen God at work in your life this past week?" (Acknowledge all responses.)



Say: Last week we learned that the remnant are God's faithful people in the last days before Jesus comes. Find someone who is not in your family to share with, and briefly tell about any opportunity you had to be faithful to Jesus this past week.

Use the "M.M." ball or the "T.A.G." ball (see Curriculum introduction for instructions) to ask the families about their use of *Mentoring Moments* for family worship at home **OR** to ask the participants to share something they have studied or learned during their T.A.G. time.

Goals for this lesson

By the end of this lesson, participants will:

- **Know** that people die as a result of sin
- **Feel** comforted that Jesus will bring an end to all death
- **Respond** by choosing to be at peace about death

*A disciple of Jesus is someone who lives every day
to love Jesus and bring others to Him.*



The Bridge (10 Minutes)

You need

- One balloon per person
- Permanent markers

Instruct participants to blow up their balloons, twist the end and hold it pinched. (Adults assist children as needed.) Participants are to draw a face on their balloons and give them names. Everyone then introduces their balloon to one or more persons. At a signal from the leader, everyone releases their balloon and watches what happens.

Debrief

Ask: What happened to your balloon? (It flew around the room.) Why? (It lost its air.) How is air inside a balloon like air inside people? (It is the same air; it fills the balloon like it fills our lungs.) What happens to a person when the air inside them is gone forever? (They die.)

Say: Balloons are “lifeless” until they are filled with air. The Bible teaches that a person is lifeless without breath. Job 27:3 says: “As long as I have life within me, the *breath* of God is in my nostrils. Let’s look at what the Bible teaches about death.

Prayer: Pray or invite a volunteer to pray for the Holy Spirit to direct this meeting.



Into the Word (25 Minutes)

Write this lesson's *Footprint* on the board:
Jesus wants us to understand death.

Activity

Based on Luke 7:11-17

Assign the following roles: director, narrator, Jesus, disciples, crowd following Jesus, widow, funeral group, dead son, two people to carry the dead son.

You need

- Two copies of the script
- Bible costumes (optional)
- Bibles
- Pens/pencils
- Marker board/markers
- Bottles of bubble solution/wands

Ahead

Write the Bible Discovery Scripture references for numbers 2-5 on separate slips of paper for distribution to the families. Be sure to include the number reference.

Instruct the participants to listen closely to the story so they can act out what is happening to their characters as it is read. Instruct those role-playing Jesus, His disciples, and the crowd following Him, to enter from one side of the room. Instruct those playing the widow and funeral procession to enter from the other side. The two groups are to walk slowly toward each other.

Director: Prompts everyone into action as the narrator reads.

Narrator: (Reads with great enthusiasm.)

It was a beautiful day as Jesus walked with His disciples to the little village of Nain. A large crowd followed Jesus. They wanted to stay near Him because they had found hope, healing and peace in Jesus' presence.

Director: Prompts Jesus and the crowd to begin walking together.

Narrator: Everyone walked with a bounce in their steps. Their voices created waves of excitement in the air so that even from a distance, all who heard could tell that their hearts were filled with joy!

Director: Prompts crowd following Jesus to chatter in a joyful, excited way.

Narrator: Along the way, they saw another large crowd walking toward them.

Director: Prompts members of the funeral procession to begin walking towards Jesus and his disciples.

Narrator: The group walked with slow, sad steps and their heads hung low. Their voices echoed in waves of moaning and crying so that even from a distance all who heard could tell that their hearts were filled with sadness.

Director: Prompt crowd to wail and mourn.

Narrator: This crowd was gathered for a funeral. A woman who had already lost her husband in death was now burying her only son. Her sorrow was very great and all who knew her shared her pain.

Director: Prompt funeral crowd to continue wailing. Make sure that Jesus and the widow are at the front of their respective groups.

Narrator: Jesus' heart ached for the mother and all who mourned with her. He said to her, "Don't cry." Then he spoke to her dead son and said, "Young man, get up!" At once the boy was alive again and sat up!

Director: Prompt the boy to sit up and the mother and son to hug each other.

Narrator: The crowd of people who had been crying suddenly broke into cheers of amazement and joy. The mother now understood the healing power of Jesus. She felt hope and peace in Jesus. Together both crowds of people walked into the village of Nain praising God with excited voices.

Director: Prompt all participants to act joyful and repeat phrases like "Praise God!" and "It's a miracle."

Debrief

Ask: How do you think the Mother felt? How might the son have felt? What do you think those watching thought? (Acknowledge answers.) What does this story tell us about Jesus? (He has compassion for those who grieve; He has power to resurrect dead people) What did Jesus know about death that gave Him a special peace? (It is temporary, not final.)

Write on the board: What the Bible teaches about death:

Bible Discovery

Distribute the Scripture texts to the families. Encourage family groups to assign a student to read the verse to the whole group when called on.

- 1 Read Genesis 2:16; 3:6, 19.** Did God cause death? (No. Death was the result of Adam and Eve's disobedience.)

Write on the board: Death is a result of sin

- 2 Read Genesis 2:7 and Psalm 104:29.** Instruct the family groups to read the verses and solve the math word problems.

Write on the board: 1. $\frac{\text{(Dust)}}{\quad} + \frac{\text{(Breath of life)}}{\quad} = \frac{\text{(Living being)}}{\quad}$
 2. $\frac{\text{(Living being)}}{\quad} - \frac{\text{(Breath of life)}}{\quad} = \frac{\text{(Dust)}}{\quad}$

Allow 2-3 minutes then discuss answers. What do these math problems tell us about death? (A person dies when the breath of life leaves him/her; when a person dies he/she returns to dust.)

- 3 Read Ecclesiastes 12:7.** Where does the breath go when a person dies? (It returns to God who gave it and our bodies return to dust.)

Write on the board: At death our breath returns to God

Activity

Instruct families to take turns blowing bubbles, being careful to watch what happens to the air they breathe into the bubbles.

Ask: How does this activity illustrate death? (Bubbles are like people. They both no longer exist when the air is gone out of them.)

- 4 Read John 11:11-14.** To what did Jesus compare death? (Sleep.)

Write on the board: Death is like sleeping

Say: When we fall asleep each night when we go to bed we don't need to be afraid that we might die. Jesus compared death to sleep because we are not conscious when we are asleep. Have you ever fallen asleep in the car or on the sofa and awakened the next morning in your bed? (Acknowledge answers.) How did you get there? (Someone carried you.) Why didn't you remember being carried? (Because you were not conscious.) That's how death and sleep are alike.

5 **Read Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.** Some people believe that a dead person is looking down at them or can see them and hear them. What does this text tell us?

Write on the board: Dead people don't know anything

Say: Think of a time when you were on a long trip and felt as if you would never get to your destination. You fell asleep, then the next thing you knew you were there! The hours felt like only a few moments and you were not aware of what was happening around you as you traveled along the way.

6 **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.** What good news does the Bible give us about death? (People will not stay dead forever.)

Say: The Bible teaches us that when Jesus comes again He will resurrect those who died believing in Him. They will go to heaven with Jesus to live with Him forever.

Write on the board: Jesus will resurrect the dead when He comes again

7 **Say:** Thinking about dying can be scary. But Jesus doesn't want us to be afraid of death. He wants us to look forward to His second coming with excitement. **Read Matthew 28:20 (last part).** Why don't we need to be afraid of death or dying?

Write on the board: Jesus is with us always

Review/Quiz

Steps to follow:

1. Review the summary points written on the board.
2. Cover or turn the board around and quiz the class by asking "What does the Bible teach us about death?"
3. Encourage parents to allow students to answer the questions and assist only if needed.



My Choice (5-8 Minutes)

Leader Share briefly a personal experience of finding peace in spite of the death of someone you care about and your hope in the resurrection of that person when Jesus comes.

You need

- One copy of *My Choice* handout for each family
- Pens/pencils

Distribute one *My Choice* handout to each family group.

Say: Parents and mentors, move your chairs into a family circle and follow the instructions on *My Choice* with your child. When you are finished with *My Choice* turn the paper over and continue with *My World*.



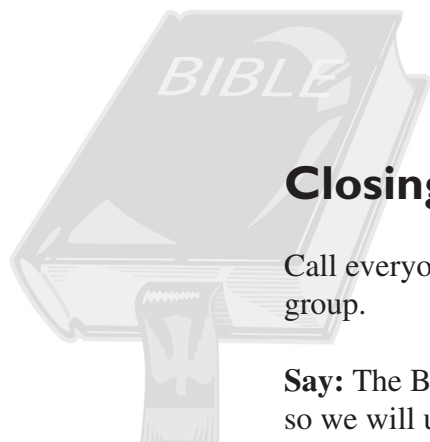
My World (5-8 Minutes)

Leaders: While the families are working together, the leader and co-leader pray for each of the parents/mentors and children.

You need

- One copy of *My World* handout for each family
- Pens/pencils

If some families finish early, as leader you can: 1) engage those families by asking them about their family circle time or 2) give a time “warning” to the other families such as, “Please finish in three more minutes.” Let them know they can finish their *My World* time together at home.



Closing (2 Minutes)

Call everyone back together as a large group.

Say: The Bible teaches us about death so we will understand what happens when people die. Jesus doesn't want us to be afraid.

Ask: Did you think of someone to help? (If they did not think of someone encourage them to call the church office for a name.)

Grace Point — Say: Next week I will invite you to share what you did to bring comfort to someone who has lost a loved one in death.

Say the *Footprint* together: **Jesus wants us to understand death.**

Close with a prayer or invite a volunteer to pray:

- thanking Jesus for the special peace He gives us about death and dying

Distribute *Mentoring Moments* and instruct the families to use these at home to build on the concepts developed in this lesson.

You need

- One *Mentoring Moments* handout for each family

My Choice

1. **Say** the *Footprint* together: **Jesus wants us to understand death.**
2. Parents/mentors **Review** with your child the points made in this lesson by going over the summary points one at a time and asking, “Do you understand what this means?” or “Do you have any questions about this one?” Clarify any points as needed.

1. Death is a result of sin.....Genesis 2:16; 3:6, 19
2. A living person is made up of the dust of the ground
plus the breath of life.....Genesis 2:7
3. At death the breath leaves the body and the person returns to dustPsalm 104:29
4. At death our breath returns to God..... Ecclesiastes 12:7
5. Jesus compared death to sleepJohn 11:11-14
6. The dead don’t know anything..... Ecclesiastes 9:5-6
7. Jesus will resurrect the dead who died believing in Him..... Thessalonians 4:13-17
8. I don’t need to be afraid of death
because Jesus is always with me..... Matthew 28:20

3. Parents/mentors **Share** briefly an experience you have had with the death of a loved one and the comfort you found in Jesus through that experience. If you have not lost someone close to you, share the Scriptures from this study that give you a feeling of peace in regard to death and dying.
4. **Ask:** Is there anything about death that scares you? What Scriptures from this study can help you with that fear?
5. **THE CHOICE – Ask:** Do you want to be unafraid of death and find hope in Jesus’ resurrection? If your child says “Yes,” affirm his/her decision. If your child is not sure or says “No” or “Not now,” **Say:** It’s all right if you need time to think about this or want to wait. **Ask:** Can you tell me why? Is it okay if we talk about this next week?
6. **Pray** as a family circle and thank Jesus for the Bible’s teaching about death. Ask Him to help you feel unafraid.

*A disciple of Jesus is someone who lives every day
to love Jesus and bring others to Him.*

My World

1. Use the study review sheet in *My Choice* to discuss the following:

A. Your class takes a field trip to an old building in your town that has been turned into a museum. During the tour, the guide tells you that a ghost sometimes appears to visitors in the building. A classmate says, "I sure hope we see it." How would you respond? What Scriptures from our study would help you?

B. Your friend's grandfather recently died. The grandfather was a Christian and your friend was very close to him. Your friend now talks about his grandfather being in heaven and watching over him. How would you respond to your friend? What Scripture from our study would help you?

C. You go to a neighbor's house after school one day. There are several people there and your friend brings out a game to play together and explains that it's a really fun way to ask questions and get answers from dead people in the "spirit world." How would you respond? What Scriptures from our study would help you?

2. **Ask:** What can we do as a family to help someone who has lost a loved one in death?

Brainstorm for names of people you could help. If you don't know of anyone, call the church office this week and find out who in your congregation has lost someone in death in the past few months. **Brainstorm** for ideas to bring that person comfort or support, such as going to visit him/her, sending a homemade card, etc?

Person:	Ideas:
1.	
2.	
3.	

Grace Point — Next week you will be invited to share what you did to bring comfort to someone who has lost a loved one in death.

Next Week Parents/mentors, you will be asked to share one reason that you are looking forward to Jesus' second coming.

What Happens When People Die?

Mentoring Moments for Lesson 15

Mentoring Moments are meant to extend the lesson you studied with your small group. Each *Mentoring Moment* choice contains a Scripture, an activity, discussion questions, and a prayer point grouped around a particular topic. They are perfect for use in family worship. If time does not permit the completion of the activity, using just the Scripture and discussion questions can provide a *Mentoring Moment* anywhere, even in the car.

Choice One

Scripture: Genesis 3:4

Activity: Plan a field trip to a local cemetery. Look at the inscriptions on the head stones. What do you learn about the people buried there?

For Discussion: How does a cemetery prove that Satan is a liar? Do people still believe that the dead aren't really dead? Explain your answer.

Prayer Point: Thank Jesus for giving you the truth in His word. Ask Him to give you a discerning mind so you will be able to know truth from error.

Choice Two

Scripture: John 11:11-14

Activity: Think about what falling asleep is like. Are you aware of the exact moment when you fall asleep? Is falling asleep a scary experience or a peaceful experience? How do you feel when you wake up? Do you think these might be some of the things Jesus was thinking of when he compared death to sleep? Can you think of any other ways they might be the same?

For Discussion: Faith, a sixth-grader, said, "I always get really sad when people and animals die. Right now it seems like a wall of death is closing around me because I have relatives who have either died or are dying. There are a lot of school shootings, and after September 11th I was really scared. In heaven there won't be any more death or killing, but the very best thing about it is that I'll get to be with Jesus." Does the idea of death being like sleep give you comfort when you think about dying? Why or why not? Do you know anyone who is afraid of dying? What can you say to help that person have peace?

Prayer Point: Thank Jesus for telling us that death is like sleeping and for giving us peace about dying.

Choice Three

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6

Activity: Find the obituary section of your local newspaper and read the obituaries of several people. What can you learn about the person who died? Why do you think people put in remembrance notices years after someone has died?

For Discussion: Why do you think people go to so much trouble to honor the dead? Does it help the person who has died? What difference does it make if dead people are aware of life on earth and what happens to those who are still alive? What if dead people could influence the lives of those who are still living?

Prayer Point: Thank Jesus for His promise that the dead are really dead and have no influence over what goes on for the living.

Choice Four

Scripture: Job 7:9, 10; 2 Corinthians 11:14

Activity: Do a little research into your town's history and see if any buildings are reported to be haunted.

For Discussion: When people say they have seen ghosts, do you believe them? Why or why not? What do you think they have seen? Would Satan want people to believe in ghosts? Why or why not?

Prayer Point: Thank Jesus for His word, which gives us the confidence to know the truth. Ask Him to send someone to you who needs to know the truth about what happens when someone dies.

Choice Five

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

Activity: Many elderly people who have lost a spouse are lonely. If you don't know someone in that position, ask your pastor or church secretary if they can suggest someone. Make an appointment to visit that person and keep the appointment.

For Discussion: Does the hope of a resurrection make the death of a loved one any easier? Why or why not? How can belonging to a community of believers help when someone dies? Are you doing your share as part of a loving church family to help those who experience the death of a loved one?

Prayer Point: Thank Jesus for the promise of the resurrection. Ask Him to send someone to you who needs encouragement following the death of a loved one. Ask Him to help you be a loving support to that person.