

No. 36 Is This Life All There Is?

PLEASE NOTE: Comfort those troubled by the apparent futility of life. Clearly explain what the Bible teaches about death and the resurrection hope, and motivate the audience to reach out for the prospect of everlasting life. If you wish, you may use the artwork provided to illustrate points where indicated

LIFE IS SHORT AND OFTEN UNSATISFYING (3 min.)

Many are frustrated by the apparent meaninglessness of life

The pursuit of wealth, fame, or power often proves disappointing (Ec 2:11, 15, 16)

Our short life span limits what we can accomplish; all too soon we are gone (Ps 103:15, 16)

[Image 1]

Is this what our Creator intended for humans?

WE WERE CREATED TO LIVE, NOT TO DIE (5 min.)

Jehovah God created humans with the prospect of living forever on earth [Read Genesis 1:28] (w17.02 4-5 ¶6-7)

Adam and Eve and their offspring were meant to enjoy unending, purposeful lives in paradise conditions; God mentioned death only as punishment for disobedience (Ge 2:15-17) [Image 2]

Because Adam and Eve chose to disobey God, death is a sad reality today (Ge 3:17, 19; Ro 5:12) [Image 3]

WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT DEATH? (5 min.)

People have long hoped for life after death [Comment on local beliefs]

Many believe that humans have an immortal soul

Some think the good go to heaven; others believe that souls are reborn

The Bible teaches that no part of a person survives death [Read Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10]

The dead have completely ceased to exist (Ps 146:3, 4; Ec 3:19, 20)

Is there hope for those who die?

WHAT IS THE RESURRECTION HOPE? (12 min.)

God will use his Son, Jesus, to resurrect the dead, restoring them to life

A limited number of resurrected ones will rule with Jesus in heaven (Lu 12:32; Re 14:1, 3; 20:4, 6)

The vast majority will be raised to life on earth [Read Acts 24:15] (w15 8/1 6) [Image 4]

Billions will then have the opportunity to gain everlasting life (Joh 5:28, 29; Re 20:12, 13)

The resurrection is not a fanciful, unfounded hope

By resurrecting Jesus, God provided a guarantee of what He will do in the future (1Co 15:20-22)

Jesus' disciples were certain of his resurrection, and they lived accordingly (1Co 15:3-8, 12-14, 31, 32)

Other Bible accounts of resurrections strengthen our confidence that God can raise the dead (w15 8/1 4, box; bhs 74 ¶12)

Because of the resurrection hope, we can be certain that this life is *not* all there is!

Our all-powerful Creator can remember and re-create every detail about a person, even someone who has long been dead (Isa 40:26; Mt 10:30)

The resurrection hope makes coping with death less painful (1Co 15:55)

We can confidently look beyond our brief lives now to the prospect of everlasting life

WHAT MUST WE DO TO ENJOY EVERLASTING LIFE? (5 min.)

In the near future, the present wicked system of things will come to an end

Millions will survive the end of this system and escape ever dying

Afterward, the earthly resurrection of the dead will begin

To gain everlasting life, we must come to know God and his Son and obey them (Joh 3:36; 17:3)

Jesus plays the central role in God's arrangement for gaining life (Joh 11:25, 26)

The hope of gaining everlasting life, either by surviving this system's end or by being resurrected, can free you from the frustration of an aimless life (1Co 15:32)

Instead, you can live with meaning and purpose, eagerly awaiting the fulfillment of God's promises (Isa 25:8; Re 21:3, 4)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section.

Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]

TO BE COVERED IN 30 MINUTES

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S-34-E No. 36 1/20