

- Hey, I'm really excited to share some truths today from God's Word, but before we do, I wanna take a moment and just acknowledge the power of what we got to see at 31 different locations as hundreds and hundreds of people are being baptized going public with their faith in Jesus. In fact at my campus I saw a dad who was baptized, who baptized his children. Generations are being changed by the power of Jesus. And I wanna just highlight a few different names of people at different locations that have come to faith in Christ. Out of Life.Church in Albany, New York, Troy and Marla, who are recently married, found faith in Christ together, baptized as husband and wife. We congratulate you on the work of Jesus in your life. Out of Life.Church Hendersonville, Tennessee, Jay, congratulations! Free of drugs! Free of alcohol! You are not hostage. You are free by the grace of Jesus, baptized today. And from Life.Church Northwest, Oklahoma City, Pastor Ronnie Brumley, congratulations on the honor of baptizing your dad, Kenneth, today. We celebrate with you. Life.Church, these are just a few stories of over 1,300 individual stories of the grace of Jesus. Can you feel it? We're not praying for revival, church, we are living in the middle of one. In fact, today we're starting a new message series that I know is gonna impact a lot of lives in a really, really special way. If you wouldn't mind in all of our Life.Churches, would you mind standing to your feet for the reading of God's Word. We're gonna start this message series in 2 Corinthians 5. Our title is "One Minute After You Die". What happens one minute after you die? I'm curious. How many of you would say I don't really like thinking a lot or talking a lot about death? A lot of you say that? I know Amy doesn't like to talk about what would happen to me when I always tell her, here's what I want you to do, she says, I don't wanna talk about it. The truth is you don't really die.

- That's right.

- Did you realize that?

- Yes.

- Your physical bodies will cease to exist but you never cease to exist. You will live eternally somewhere. This is what Scripture says. 2 Corinthians 5:1, for we know that when this earthly tent, what is the earthly tent? That's a metaphor for our bodies. We know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down, that is, when we die and leave this earthly body, we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God Himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies. How many of you grow weary sometimes in our present bodies? And we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and we sigh, but it's not that we wanna get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. Verse 6 says, so we are always confident. Look at the person next to you and say I'm confident. So we are always confident even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. Yes, we are fully confident. Say it again, I'm confident. And we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. Another translation says to be absent from the bodies is to be present with the Lord. So what is our goal? Why do we exist? What is our assignment while we're in these earthly bodies, in this tent, or even when we are away from this earthly body? Verse 9 tells us, so whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to accumulate a lot of money. Did I mess that up? Our goal is to become YouTube famous. Our goal is to get a record number of likes on our latest post with the perfect

filter and the dream caption. Our goal is a house with shiplap. I don't even know what that is but evidently, to some of you it's a really big deal. I practiced saying shiplap because I could mess that up so easily. So what is our goal? Whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please Christ.

- [Woman] Yes, sir.

- Our goal is to live for Him. Our goal is to do what lasts eternally. Verse 10, Paul, says, for we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We'll come back to this thought. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body. Ultimately we need to remember whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please Christ. Let's all pray together. Father, we ask that over the next few weeks that the power of Your Word would transform our hearts, that our goal in all that we do would be to live for You, to please You, to honor You. We pray this in Your Name, the Name of the One who is above every Name, the Name of Your Son, Jesus. And everybody said.

- Amen.

- Amen, Amen, Amen. Why don't you high-five about three people around you and say your life matters. We'll cover some big topics and what I wanna do is I wanna let Scripture do a lot of the work. We're gonna look at a lot of Bible. Can you handle that? If you can handle it, say I'm ready.

- [Congregation] I'm ready!

- You asked for it so get ready. We're gonna look at a lot of Bible. We had some people ask, I've bundled with some people, why are we talking about death? It's not a fun subject. Why are we talkin' about eternity and such? I wanna try to answer this question as we start this message series because it's really, really important. Why are we talking about what happens after one minute after you die? The reason is because what you believe about eternity determines how you will live today. What you believe about eternity, it determines how you live today. If you believe that you are an accident, there is no God, there is no eternity then you're gonna live a selfish life, a life driven for the pleasures of this time and everything is gonna be about now. If in turn you believe that you are created by a God for His glory, you will live somewhere eternally, it will shape the way you live. What we believe about eternity will determine how we live today. You will live somewhere. Your physical body will cease to exist at some point. Your soul will continue to live. Next week we're gonna talk about the horrors of hell. Is hell a real place?

- Yes, it is.

- What happens in hell? Who goes to hell? Why did God create a hell? Did you just play cards with a bunch of fraternity brothers in hell? Is the real suffering what happens in hell? We're gonna talk about heaven in the upcoming weeks. Who goes there? What do you do there? Is it this boring long worship service? Will you sing for thousands of years? Do you have new bodies? Do you recognize people? What do you do in heaven? We're gonna talk about that. Today what I wanna do is lay a foundation for our message series One Minute After You Die. And I wanna talk about three things that happen immediately after this life is done. Three things that happen after this life is done. We've

talked about the first thing is number one, our physical bodies die. Scripture says this, our physical bodies die. Hebrews 9:27, just as people are destined to what? Let's all say it loud, just as people are destined to die once. Let's pause there for a moment. I wanna make sure you understand that according to recent studies, the studies are conclusive, one out of one people die. You're gonna die. You're gonna die somehow. I don't know how. Hopefully I don't die from a shark attack. I was recently at the beach and I saw what I thought was a shark, it was only a dolphin, but I ran like a girl because I thought it was a shark. I watched Jaws when I was a little kid. To this day I am scared to death at sharks. I did research about shark deaths because I had nothing to do during the week 'cause I only work on Sundays. Actually I work twice as much as most pastors. I work Saturdays and Sundays. I work really, really hard but I have nothing to do the other week so I researched shark death. So what I found was very comforting. I found that you're more likely to die from getting hit in the head by a champagne cork than you are at shark death. That brings me great comfort. You're more likely to die by getting hit on the head by a falling coconut. You're more likely to die as a result of bad handwriting. It's true. You ever had a doctor that just scribbles and then you go take the wrong medicine? You're more likely to die from falling off the toilet. Some of you, you should be aware as you're leaning to the right looking at Instagram. You're more likely, I don't know. You're more likely to die getting your head stuck in a vending machine trying to get out your Doritos than a shark attack. I just had to tell you that. It brings me great comfort in knowing the truth, and you know the truth, and the truth will set you free. You're gonna die. You've come from dust, your body will go back to dust. You are nothing but dust. Look at your neighbor and say, you're nothing but dust. I said that years ago when a kid went home and said, Mom, Pastor Craig said I'm but dust. Not what I said. You gotta love fourth-grade boys and 50-year-old men, they all think the same. Scripture says this, just as people are destined to, say it with me, just as people are destined to die once and after that to face the judgment. We're gonna come back to this thought. So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many. And He will appear a second time not to bear sin but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him. What's gonna happen after you die? Our physical bodies will die. The second thing is our souls separate from our physical bodies. Our physical bodies stay behind. Our soul continues to live. Jesus said this in Matthew 10:28, do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Don't fear people, but live in a reverend fear of God. When your body ceases to exist, your soul continues to live. In other words, at your funeral one day, and there will be a funeral. After they say, and you go on the ground and everybody else goes to Aunt Alma's house and they're eating potluck dinner, you will never be more alive than you are at that moment. Your soul still lives even though your body ceases to exist. Jesus illustrated this truth in John's Gospel when he was talking to Martha who's incredibly upset because Lazarus, her brother, had died. Lazarus had been dead for four days. And I love what the King James Version says about his body. The King James Version is so proper, so holy, so righteous, so beautiful, it said, his body stinketh. I didn't say it's stinky, but the King James Version says it's stinketh. And this is what Jesus said to Martha. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life. "The one who believes in Me will live even though they die; "and whoever lives by believing in Me will never die." What happens to the soul of a follower of Jesus after the body dies? Well, the Bible isn't clear on all of the details what happens immediately, but what we do know is to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. We do know that there were two criminals on the cross next to Jesus that were both guilty. They both needed forgiveness. One recognized his need and called on the grace of Jesus. And that one criminal cried out, "Jesus, remember me "when you come into your kingdom. And by the grace of Jesus,

not by any works this guilty man could have done, but Jesus answered him and said, "Truly I tell you, today. "Today when your body ceases to exist, "you will be with Me in paradise." Where exactly is that? What exactly is that? We're not completely clear but what we do know is it's way better than this earthly life. Paul wrestles with what do I want, do I continue to live here and make a difference or do I go do what is better for me? This is what he said in Philippians 1:20. He said, "I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ "whether I live or die." He said, "For me, living means living for Christ "and dying," Paul said, "is even better. "But if I live," he says, "I can do more fruitful work for Christ. "So I really don't know which is better. "I'm torn between the two. "I long to go and be with Christ which is better for me, "but for your sakes is better than I continue to live." To be in this body is to be fruitful to share the love of Jesus but it's better to be away from this body than to be in the presence of Christ. I don't know which one I wanna do. I really wanna be with Jesus, but for your sakes, it's you and me, I maybe will stay here. What happens one minute after we die? We know our physical bodies die. Our soul continues to live and separate from our body and then at some point, number three, we will all face judgment. Peter said it this way, 1 Peter 1:17, Remember that our heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time as temporary residents. Remember, this world is not your home. You're just passing through. This is just a short period of time in the eternal scheme of things. At the end of this life, we will be judged or we will be rewarded. Let me show you in Scripture two different judgements and talk about each one. The first is called the great white throne judgment. The great white throne judgment. Mos scholars believe that the great white throne judgment is only for non-believers and I agree with as my opinion that that assessment is true. This is what Scripture says in Revelation 20:11, John, who was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, had a vision given to him by the Holy Spirit of the things that were to come. And he said this is what I saw. He said, I saw a what? Let's say it aloud. He said I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And anyone's name who was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire. What is the lake of fire? We'll talk about that next week. What is this Book of Life? Here's the amazing news. What we know is that Jesus is the Son of God. He was born without sin. He's called the Lamb of God who is slain for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus died in our place. When you come to place like the criminal on the cross, when you recognize you have a need and you call out on the grace of Jesus, you are saved not by works but you're saved by the grace of Jesus through faith in Him. And when you call out on Him, your name is written in a book; it's called the Book of Life, with the Lamb's Book of Life. When your name is in His book, Scripture says your name can never be blotted out. Your name can never be erased. It could not be taken away. There is no White-Out, there is no eraser. Your name is in His book. And when your name is in His book, you are His child at the great white throne judgment. If He looks for that book and your name is not there, Scripture says your next move, your next place of residence is not a place that you will like nor you will enjoy. Jesus says this, one of the most sobering verses to me in all of the Scripture, it's rocked me for years, it's shaken me for decades. It's made me unsettled, uncomfortable, it's a very challenging verse. Matthew 7:21, Jesus said, "Not everyone who calls out to Me, "'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. "Only those who actually do the will "of my Father in heaven will enter. "On," on what day, say it out loud. On judgment day. "Many will say, 'Lord! Lord! "'We prophesied in Your Name and cast out demons "'in Your Name, we performed many miracles in Your Name.'" In our world it might be, I wasn't charged on Easter

every now and then in Your name. I gave the little guy ringing the bell money at the salvation army during Christmas. I was nice to people. I was better than a lot of the religious hypocrites. And I tried really hard. I did good works. I did these things. Verse 23, Jesus says, "But I will reply, "I never knew you. "Get away from Me, you who break God's laws."

- [Woman] Amen.

- We weren't in a relationship. There's two judgements. The first is known as the great white throne judgment. Is your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life? The second judgment is called the Judgment Seat of Christ. Paul was talking to the Corinthian believers. These were followers of Christ and this is what he said to them. He said, "For those of you who are followers of Christ, "we must appear before the judgment seat of Christ "so each of us may receive what is due for the things done "while in this body whether good or bad." what is the judgment Seat of Christ? It comes from the Greek word bema. And the bema is taken from the Greek Olympics. And what was the bema? After, let's say, a race the winners would come before the judge who would stand on the bema or sit on the bema and the winners will, there's first, there's second, there's third. The judge would then give out the rewards or the prizes or the awards and say here's the crown, or here's the reef for first place, here's for another one. The bema seat was not a place to judge did you qualify; the bema seat was the place to say we celebrate the fact that you finished the race, that you were faithful and here is the reward for what you have done. It's very important to understand that the Judgment Seat of Christ is not a judgment for your sins. This is a judgment for those who are followers of Christ, your sins were judged and forgiven by Jesus. This is a place where if Jesus acknowledge us, what you did on earth is rewarded in heaven. Now, you may say, but I'm confused. I thought that you said we're not saved by works, we're never saved by works. You can't be religious enough. You can't try hard enough. You can't read yourself of enough bad stuff. The problem is by nature we are sinners. And our sin separates us from a holy God. We are saved by the grace of Jesus, and only by the grace of Jesus and only by the grace of Jesus, we are saved by grace. We are saved by grace. We are saved by grace but we are rewarded for works. We're saved by grace but we are rewarded for works. And the reality is when you're truly been transformed by Jesus, when you're no longer what you were and you suddenly are a new creation, you recognize you didn't bring anything significant to the table, you've only been changed by the love of Jesus, suddenly you don't have to work for your salvation, you want to live for the glory of Jesus. Because of what He did, you are no longer the same. You're saved by grace. But you are rewarded in heaven for how you live for your works. What you do now matters eternally. What will you be rewarded for? What will you be judged by? Let me just share with you a few of those things. You'll be judged by and rewarded for how you treat people, how you cared for the least of these, how you cared for the outcasts, the poor, the broken, the marginalized, the hurting. You'll be judged by your motives. You'll be judged by the words you speak. Some of you, if you just thought a bad word right now is because your words. Put some tape over your mouth sometimes. Just sobering thought. You'll be judged by how you endure suffering and rewarded if you endure suffering well. You will be rewarded or judged by what you do with what you have. Did you use your resources to be a blessing or did you hoard it all for yourself? You will be rewarded when you bring people to Christ. There's a crown, Scripture says, for those who are soul winners. For those of you that led someone to Christ and baptized them this weekend, you will be rewarded by Jesus for what you did. Imagine this. Imagine. Imagine. Your life is over. Boom, one day it's gonna happen. Your

physical body ceases to exist. Game over! All the stuff you have is left behind. And you stand before Jesus. And imagine you can't even stand, you fall to your knees, you kneel down. And then He takes a crown perhaps and places it upon your brow, and He says, well done, my good and faithful servant. Well done. When you served kids every week, you made an eternal difference in their lives. You didn't even know it. But there are so many of them that are here today because what you did years and years ago, you prayed and you prayed and you prayed. You were the brightest light in your office. When everyone else laughed at you, you were faithful. No one else saw when you did what was right. You could have done what was easy but you did what was right. Jesus will say, I noticed. I noticed. You didn't have much at all but you always gave. You always tithed. You always used what you had to meet the needs of other people. I noticed. Well done. You shared your faith. Jesus will say to some of you, you visited Me when I was in prison. You comforted Me when I was sick. You gave Me food when I was hungry. You gave Me water when I was thirsty. And you'll be disoriented, Jesus, when did I do that? When did I do that? And He'll look at you. Jesus will look at you and say, what you did into least of these you did unto Me. What we believe about eternity and that's how we live today. I debated or not as to how real to be before you about this at my own current state, but I'm just gonna be as raw as I can be. When it comes for living for eternity I have not been doing a great job lately. I honestly had not been doing a great job. I'm a pastor and I do my job, but there's a life I live apart from my job. And the life I live I haven't been all my game. And I'll try to unpack it because I've really been looking at this and trying to examine the why. And here's what I thought. The mistake I made it says I thought the longer I walked with Christ, it's been a long time now, the longer I walked with Christ, the easier it would be to be eternally minded. Here's the mistake I made. I didn't see there's an opposite force and that is the longer I live on earth, the more my roots tend to dig in to this world. And I find myself today carrying way too much about the things of this world. It disgusts me.

- Yeah.

- I care about what people think rather than being obsessed of what God thinks. About the only place I interact with people that aren't Christians regularly is the gym. And for years I'd go to the gym and there would be three, four, five, six, seven people that I'd be sharing my faith with and I'd lead several to Christ all the time. Now, I go to the gym, I want people to leave me alone. I wanna get my workout and get my thing and get out of there. It disgusts me. The more comfortable my life becomes, and it's more comfortable today, the more I crave more comfort. And the more I crave more comfort, the less I'm living for the things that matter the most. And I hope that doesn't disappoint you but that's just kinda where I am. So with everything in me I'm fighting against the gravity toward the things of this world. What used to take maybe 10, 15 minutes in the morning to kinda reset myself spiritually, it just takes longer now. I have to spend more time in His Word. I have to spend more time in prayer. It's kinda like, I don't know about this, if you guys ever follow maps, I get lost all the time. I panic, I freak out. Turn in 500 yards, it's like turn now. And then it's like, recalculating. Recalculating. And that's the way I am. I'm like moving towards the things that matter and then I get distracted and then I get distracted again. And so I have to let the Holy Spirit recalculate, recenter. I have to continue to break the roots and the love for this world so I can continue to live for what matters. Here's what I do. I give until I'm more uncomfortable. Because trusting the things of this world feels so good to have them so I break that by giving sacrificially. I pray for longer than feels normal because after a while you start to say this a waste of time? No, this recenters me. This recenters me. I

start to pick people out and just say I'm gonna pray for these people that I don't even know and what it does is it gives me eternal perspective. I spend longer in God's word because I need it because it's recalculating; it's recentering. The pull of this world is so strong. It is so temporary. One day your heart will beat for the last time. And at that point, there's no do overs. That's why in my world I have to fight to keep the eternal goal front and center. Jesus, whether I'm in this body or wherever I am my goal is to please You. My goal is to please You. If you find yourself more concerned with this world, whatever it is, football, shoes, the degree, the new house, popularity, the car, the next vacation, whatever it is, cut the roots off to the things of this world, the things that will not last and do not matter. Let the Spirit of God recalculate, bring you back to spiritual center. You have one goal, you're just passing through here. So whatever we do, whatever we are, our goal is to please Him.

- [Woman] Amen.

- Father, we ask that over the next few weeks, by the power of Your Word and the ministry of Your Holy Spirit, You would recalculate us to an eternal mindset. God, help us recognize the power of the truth that what we believe about eternity will really impact how we live today, that we keep our eyes on the price living for You glorifying You. All of our churches, as you keep praying today, I wonder how many of you would say I'm not happy about it but, Craig, I can be a little bit like you. I am a follower of Jesus but I think my roots had been getting deeper in this world and I wanna break those roots and be more eternally focused in the way I live. Would you lift up your hands right now? Lift them up high, lift them up high, lift them up high. Father, I pray for those that You're speaking through today. I pray, God, that we would take this wake up call seriously, God, that we wouldn't just hear a message and go on out and live the way we've lived, that we wouldn't just be hearers of Your Word but, God, we'd be doers of Your Word. Shake us, God. Disrupt us, God. Recalibrate. Take us back to Your truth. God, I pray for those that maybe even recognize they've drifted a long way from center. Desperate times calls for desperate measures. God, help us to change, to redirect, to refocus, to center around Your truth, not just to make slight adjustments, but God, overhaul us spiritually. Putting You first in all that we do. God, every day, help us to center in Your Word, focus on Your truth, live for Your price. May our goal every single day may not be about this world, but be about impacting about what matters to You eternally. May our goal be to please You in all that we do. As you keep praying today in all of our different churches, nobody looking around, I wanna just talk for a moment. If you've been around me for a while, I hope you'll know that my goal is never to use fear as a motivator. What is it that draws us to God is His loving kindness, it's His grace. It's His goodness. It's the love of God that draws sinners to repentance. But I would be, it would be incomplete for me not to share with you the totality of God's Word. There will be a time when Jesus will say to some people, some of you here, I didn't know you. I didn't you. You might say, but I went to Life.Church. I watched online, I listened to podcasts, I did good things, but He will say, I did not know you. How is it that we're made right with God? Let me be crystal clear. We're never made right with God by our religious works, by our efforts, by what we do or what we don't do. The good news is so good because Jesus did for us what we are not able to do for our self. In God's love for us, He became one of us in the person of His Son Jesus, who is without sin, therefore He was qualified to be the eternal sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. He shed innocent blood on the cross, died in our place, rose from the dead, why? So that anyone, and this includes you, who calls out in His name would be saved, forgiven, transformed. It doesn't matter how dark your life is, it doesn't matter how much you've done wrong,

when you call on the Name of Jesus, He hears your prayers and He forgives your sins. And all of our churches there are those of you, you recognize you have a need. When you call on Him, at that moment He forgives your sins, you become brand new. The old is gone, the new has come. All of our churches, those who say yes, I need His grace, yes, I need His mercy, I turn from my sins, I turn toward Him, I give my life to Jesus, that's your prayer. Lift your hands high now. All over the place lift Him up. Lift Him up if you will. I wanna just meet you eye to eye, back here, one, two, three, four of you. God bless you, guys. Right back over here as well. Lift Him up, leave them up. Sort of praise God for you. Right back over here, both of you right here, praise God for you. Right back over here. Oh, my goodness, gracious! Right over here on this side say yes, Jesus! Yes, I call on You. Church Online, you click right below me. Others today who say I need His grace, I give my life to Him, would you all pray with those around you. Everybody pray, nobody prays alone. Pray, Heavenly Father, I trust You and give my life to You. Jesus, save me. Forgive all my sins. Be my Lord. Be my savior. Fill me with Your Spirit so I can live for You, follow You, fulfill the goal to please You in all that I do. Break the roots that hold me to this world. Center my spirit to live for You. My goal is to please You and all that I do, You save me by grace. Now I give you my life. In Jesus' Name I pray. Somebody celebrate today, somebody worship the goodness, the grace, the beauty of who God is.