

# Easter Eggs More to Come

**We cannot truly *live* until we are ready to *die* (Matthew 27:52-53).** This certainty is highlighted by one of the Easter eggs – a small detail – in the account of Jesus' crucifixion. As Jesus yielded up His spirit on Good Friday, an earthquake takes place that opens the tombs of many dead. And after the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday, the bodies of many saints who had died were raised. They come out of their tombs that the earthquake opened, go into the holy city, and appear to many. They come out after Jesus was resurrected because He was the *first fruits* of those who have died (1 Corinthians 15:20). Like Jesus, we will all be resurrected when He returns. At that time, we will be judged first with how we responded to Jesus (to life or to death) and then those in Jesus will be judged secondly and rewarded for how they lived this life. It is the promise of our resurrection and the rewards of heaven that give us courage to walk in faith now and to sacrifice in this world. It is our future thinking of heaven and our readiness to die that empowers us to live in faith on earth (Philippians 1:21-24).

## GET THINGS STARTED

To what degree are you afraid of dying, and would you say you are ready to die? What gives you that sense of fear or readiness? What do you think it means that part of the mission of the church, and especially Beltway Park, is to help people get ready to die?

## GO DEEPER

1. From Matthew 27:52-53, why might it be significant that many tombs of the saints were opened on Good Friday, but they did not come out of their tombs, go into the holy city, and appear to many until after Jesus was resurrected on Easter Sunday? What does it mean that Jesus is the *first fruit* of those who have died, in 1 Corinthians 15:20?
2. In Philippians 1:21-24, why could Paul say confidently that *to live is Christ and to die is gain*? What is Paul's point about resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:19-21, if in Christ we only have hope in this life?

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

How much do you think about heaven and the day of judgement? To what degree does heaven and the promise of eternal rewards affect your faith and the way you live now? How should they affect your life now? What needs to change so that you are spiritually ready to die, so that you *think heaven back to earth*?

## PRACTICE IT NOW

**Take time as a group to intentionally pray for a mind and heart set on heaven, on things above (Colossians 3:1-2).** Ask God to increase your ability to think heaven back to earth, and the day of judgment at the resurrection back to today. Pray that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:10), and that you will be ready to die so that you can truly live now.