

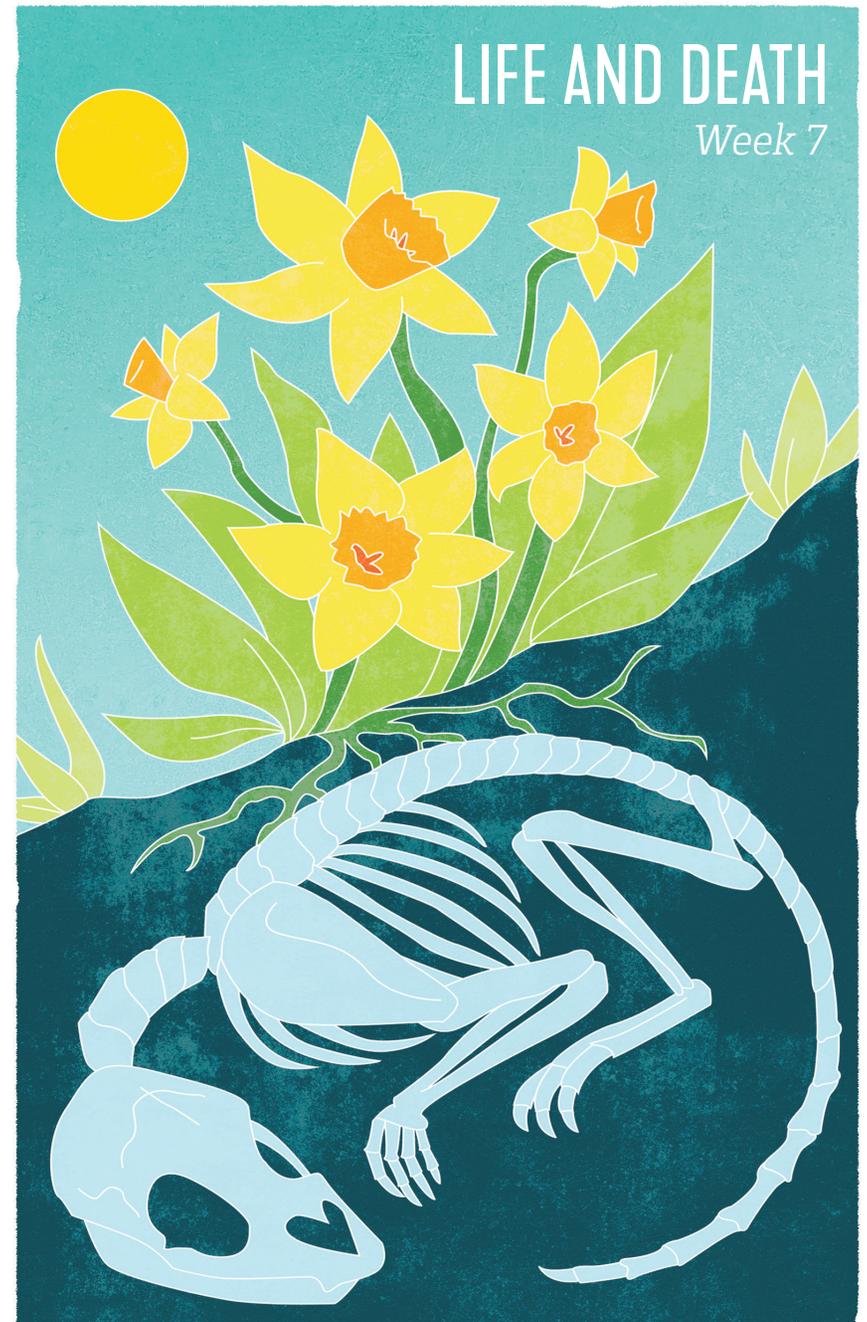
Apply

Right now (Come and see):

In this story, Jesus compares his upcoming death on the cross to being a grain of wheat that must fall to the earth and die in order to accomplish its purpose of multiplying and bearing fruit. Jesus highlights several things that his death on the cross would accomplish: God would be glorified, people would be drawn to Jesus, and “the prince of this world” (a title that Jesus used for the devil and the forces of darkness) would be cast out. Which of these three things feel like especially good news to you? Are you aware of any ways that spiritual darkness or evil has affected your life or your family? If so, could we take a few minutes to pray for you, that God would reveal his power over darkness in your life?

This week (Go and do):

Just as Jesus was willing to choose sacrifice over comfort, his followers are invited to forsake “the comfort of the stalk” and lower ourselves in order to multiply the new life of the Kingdom of God. Jesus said that “Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be.” So, the question for us as followers of Jesus is always, “where is Jesus calling us to follow him”? Let’s take a minute to pray and listen, asking God to show us where he’s calling us to follow him. As we pray and listen, you may have a specific place come to mind (a dorm, a neighborhood, a coffee shop) or you may have a group of people come to mind (your soccer team, your sorority sisters, specific classmates or friends). Remember, Jesus is already present and active in each of those places and in the lives of those people. As his followers, we are invited to join him! If you feel like Jesus is inviting you to follow him to a specific place or people, how will you take time to do that this week?



John 12:20-36 (NIV)

²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. ²¹ They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. "Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus." ²² Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus. ²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

²⁷ "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." ²⁹ The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. ³⁰ Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. ³² And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." ³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die. ³⁴ The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?" ³⁵ Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. ³⁶ Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light."

When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

Intro

In today's story, Jesus has just entered Jerusalem, where he is one week away from being executed on a cross. When Jesus arrived in the city a group of people from Greece were eager to meet with him. For Jesus, this was a sign that his death was soon approaching, so he began to teach about what it means to lay down life in order to bear multiplicative fruit.

Discuss

1. Let's unpack the grain metaphor that Jesus is using. Why is it necessary for a grain of wheat to "fall into the earth" in order to bear the fruit of multiplication? Is any of that possible while a grain of wheat remains on the stalk?
2. How does this metaphor relate to what Jesus is about to go through?
3. What implications does Jesus make for his own followers? How would you feel if you were one of Jesus' followers hearing this?
4. According to Jesus in this passage, what are some of the things that will be accomplished through his dying on the cross?
5. Jesus uses another metaphor about darkness and light. What do you think it means for "darkness to overtake you"? What does it mean to be children of light in the midst of darkness?