

## PAGE THREE – WHAT’S THE BIG DEAL?

Note: If you are starting with a new session, remind the group of the agreement to honor one another’s opinions and to keep shared ideas in the group. Check in with group members regarding and conversations they might have had with family or friends regarding their understanding of how science and religion look at issues of birth, life, and death.

Prior to gathering the group to review this third page, preview the slide show at the top of the page and become familiar with the following information:

*The slideshow displayed at the top of this page contains a number of images that represent the different ways that people view the issues of life and death. These are images that are among the many available in the media and on the Internet and are only a small representation of what youth might encounter. The group will view these images during this portion of the lesson. From the start of the slide show they appear as follows:*

*A picture of a typical manger scene,*

*A baby,*

*A tattoo of the crucifixion,*

*A graveyard with headstones,*

*A picture with the words, “He is Risen, the Lord is Risen Indeed,”*

*A landscape as seen through two binocular lenses,*

*A picture with the statement, “The Gospel is an announcement, not an argument. You share it, not shove it.”*

To begin this portion of the lesson, have page three visible to the group and together watch the video links on the page.

Discuss the following with the group, encouraging each member to offer a response:

When you read or hear the stories from the Gospel about Jesus’ life, do you think that they could be true? Why or why not?

What do you think about the Shroud of Turin? Could it be a religious relic that was once used to wrap the body of Jesus? Why or why not?

*Remind the group that the video noted offers new evidence that the Shroud is dated to have been from the time period when Jesus was alive, but doesn’t tell how it was created or to whom it belonged. While the evidence of its date may show that it could have belonged to Jesus, those testing the Shroud are not trying to prove Jesus’ divinity.*

How do you and/or your friends view life after death?

Do you think that it is important to believe in the resurrection? Why or why not?

How does a belief in Jesus Christ as God's Son affect or change your views about life and death?

*A belief in Jesus includes a belief in God being present in human form and bringing us salvation and eternal life. For some youth, there may be doubts about life after death, or about a belief in Jesus. Help the group understand that doubt and questioning is a healthy part of developing a faithful response to God.*

Next, have the group look at the slideshow at the top of the page, and ask that everyone wait until all pictures are viewed before making comments.

Invite the group to respond to the images and allow time for each member to add to the conversation.

Using the information provided at the beginning of this session, talk about each of the images. (Remind the group to be respectful of each other's response.) The white dots that appear at the lower right of the slideshow can be used to select and navigate through the images.

Ask the group to share what each image might mean to them, or how the image might cause them to respond to the issues of life and death. Use the following as prompts for discussion:

The manger scene appears in many places at Christmas, but most people don't think about the incarnation when they view the scene.

The graveyard might be a symbol of the ultimate end of life, or a symbol of a loved one being with God.

The tattoo of the crucifixion is a permanent marker of a belief in Jesus. What kind of response do you have when you see religious tattoos or statements on clothing?

The two focused areas of the landscape viewed through binoculars show only a part of the whole picture through two separate lenses. How might use of true binocular vision, or using both lenses at the same time, allow for a more complete view of the landscape? How does this compare to viewing life and death through both the scientific and religious lenses?

How does this statement about the Gospel being an "announcement not an argument" change the way the story should be shared? Have you experienced situations where someone tried to force a belief in God onto another person? What was your reaction to this situation?

Discuss with the group their experiences in talking to others about Jesus and a scientific understanding of how life begins and ends. What is most difficult, or easiest to talk about?

To close the session, talk about what these images might promote that is challenging or helpful to the conversation about scientific and religious views of life and death. Ask that they spend time at home looking at the website and researching other information about a scientific view of the life cycle, the Shroud of Turin, or other

ideas covered in the lesson. Ask each member to bring a copy of any images that represent their belief in incarnation and resurrection to the next session.