



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 13: Alive

Suggested Week of Use: November 26, 2023

Core Passage: Mark 16: 1-14

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### News Story Summary

The consequences of a simple clerical error hit home for Elise Allen and her family earlier this year. In a mix-up, Elise, a young teen from Maryland, was mistakenly declared dead by a government agency, setting off a chain reaction of events that was difficult to unravel. The girl's mother first recognized the problem when the family's medical and dental insurance companies began denying claims for Elise. That's when her mom started navigating a maze of government agencies in an effort to prove that her daughter was not dead. According to some legal observers, the Allen family's dilemma is not isolated. Some lawyers even specialize in restoring the "alive" status of individuals declared deceased. According to the Social Security Administration nearly three million people are reported dead each year. However, between 7,000 and 12,000 of those individuals are still alive. While it takes some work, the SSA does have measures in place to help living people get their name off the department's "deceased" list.

**For more about this story,** search "Maryland girl mistakenly declared dead."

### Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, share the story about Elise Allen being declared dead. Ask: *How would you respond if you found out that the government had declared you dead?* Allow adults to share their thoughts. Remind the group that this happens more than we might think. Ask: *What do you think is involved in helping a "dead" person come back to life?* Discuss responses. Explain that this session wraps up the study of Mark's Gospel with his account of Jesus's resurrection. Note that Jesus wasn't just reported dead. Say: *He actually was dead and buried in a tomb, but He also didn't need the government to give Him life again.*

### Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, remind the group of Elise Allen's story. Allow volunteers to suggest similarities between her family's emotions and the emotions felt by Jesus's disciples in Mark 16. Ask: *How would you have felt in the disciples' situation?* Emphasize that they knew Jesus had died on the cross, but they also saw Him after the resurrection with their own eyes. Affirm that Jesus's resurrection can be hard to understand and accept, but God calls us to have faith in Him. Encourage adults to evaluate how Jesus's resurrection affects their lives each day—and to make any adjustments that He reveals to them. Challenge them to let His resurrection make a difference in who they are and what they do as believers.