

Death

Death is a fact of life. Unless the Lord should come in our lifetime, we will all one day die. In this lesson we will focus on what the Bible teaches us about dying and what comes after. We will look at what the Bible says about what happens after death. We will focus in the difference in the death of one ready for eternity and one not ready for eternity.

What does the Bible say about dying

Genesis 3:19 “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Our physical bodies only last for a few years. Once we die our spirit leaves our body to await Judgement Day. Our physical bodies then decay over time. Once we die our physical bodies are of no use, and are not necessary. Whatever our spiritual body is like, and however it works, we will have no further need of our physical bodies.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.” Our time on earth is limited. No matter how long someone lives it is nothing compared to eternity. All of our life’s will pass by quickly and in only a few years they will be gone. The only real reason for this life is to get prepared for eternity.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” Our time on earth is fleeting and will quickly end. Our only real purpose in this life is to get ready to meet God. Will we be ready? Doesn’t that come down to the choices we have made in this life on earth?

Philippians 1:21-23 “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” Paul had the right attitude. This earthly life should be spent, as a Christian, doing what one can for the cause of Christ. Then, whenever one does pass away they are ready for eternity in Heaven, which is better than this life. However, to gain that Heavenly home we must use this life to get ready for it, otherwise we will never be in Heaven.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” If we too can make this same statement Paul did, then we know we have lived our lives well here on earth and are ready for a home in Heaven when this life is over. If we can’t make this statement then we need

to use our time to evaluate what we must change in our lives so that when we die, we are ready to meet God, and gain a home in Heaven.

Judgement will come after death

Acts 17:31 “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” God has set a day for Judgement on which we will all face our eternal judgement, based on our obedience or lack thereof. However, God gave us His standard, the Bible, so that we can be prepared for Judgement Day, but the choice is ours if we make ourselves ready or not.

Romans 2:2 “But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.” We will all be judged by the Truth, God’s standard the Bible. We have it and we have the choice to follow or not follow that standard. We will be judged accordingly.

Hebrews 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:” We will all die, and we will all face judgement, the question is will we be ready? Will God send you to Heaven or Hell? It all depends on if you have lived in obedience or disobedience to Him.

Revelation 20:12-15 “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” We can either be found in the book of life on judgement day and enter into Heaven or be cast forever into the lake of fire. Those are the only options.

For a faithful Christian death is

Psalms 116:15 “Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.” and **Revelation 14:13** “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” God knows who His people are and they are important to Him. Don’t you want to be precious in God’s sight? Live according to His Word and you are. All Christians are saints, even though the doctrines of some denominations might make you believe otherwise. All faithful Christians will spend eternity in Heaven. Our obedience or lack of it in this life matters in the next. Our following or not following God in this life, is rewarded or punished in the next.

John 14: 1-6 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by

me.” While we can not truly have any idea what Heaven will be like until we get there, we know it exists. Jesus Himself tells us it is there. Jesus tells us we can only get there through Him. Jesus also tells us He will have prepared Heaven for all of the faithful. Anyone and everyone that is a faithful Christian can go to Heaven. One must however be a faithful Christian.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58 “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Whatever our spiritual bodies are after faithful Christians die and Judgement Day passes, will be what inherits a Heavenly home, not our earthly bodies that decay over time. For the faithful Christian death does not have a sting and the grave does not have a victory, because they will be eternally in Heaven. Yes, we will miss our loved ones when they die, and we will mourn them. However, those that are Christians, are truly going to a better place.

Philippians 1:21-23 “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” While living their daily lives Christians should be spreading the Word to those that will listen. Once a faithful Christian passes from this earthly life, eternity with Jesus awaits them.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” All obedient Christians, living or dead, on Judgement Day will be with the Lord from that day forward in Heaven. Don’t you want to be among them?

Revelation 2:10 “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Even though Christians will face difficulties and trials here on Earth, all the faithful will gain an eternal crown of life in Heaven.

For the lost death is

Matthew 25:31-46 “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” After we die the Bible tells us there will be a Judgement Day in which all of mankind will be divided into two, and only two groups. One group is rewarded with eternal life in Heaven that God has long prepared for them. The second group is punished with eternal fire, in Hell. We are told both group’s actions, while on earth, are the reason they are sent to Heaven or Hell. Hell is a real place that those who have failed to live as God would have them live will spend all of eternity in. While, we in our human minds don’t fully know what Heaven or Hell will be like, the Bible does give us some level of description of both places, in a way our human minds can comprehend. Hell sounds horrible and it is eternal.

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Unrepented of sin leads to eternity in Hell after death. However, God’s faithful will be in Heaven though out all eternity. In this life we choose, by our obedience or disobedience, where our eternal home will be.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” After death we will face judgement at the time God chooses, whenever that is, Jesus will punish all that have not been obedient to the Gospel with eternal destruction in Hell. This is actually very easy to understand. Obedience to the Word of God leads to Heaven. Disobedience to the Word of God leads to Hell. When Jesus comes which group do you want to be in, the obedient or

disobedient? Right now while you live and breathe you can get yourself into the obedient group. One second after death your choice is set for all eternity. (Someone that has lost their mental capacity, due to accident or illness, would be in the same category as someone that had died. One second after they lost their mental capacity their choice is locked in for all eternity.) Unless of course, because we do not know when Jesus will return, He returns in our lifetime. Should Jesus return in our lifetime then our choices for all eternity are already set by our own actions. Because we do not know when Judgment Day will be, is why it is so important to get ready for it now. Tomorrow may be too late.

Jude 5-7 “I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” God has given us many examples that He will not accept the disobedience. He has promised that He will reward the faithful with Heaven and the unfaithful with Hell. Knowing that God means what He says what will you do, be obedient or disobedient?

Revelation 21:8 “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Hell sounds like a horrible place to spend eternity. Everyone that is living a life of disobedience to God will be in Hell for all eternity. However, everyone that lives a life obedient to God can avoid Hell and go to Heaven. Which do you choose?

Conclusion

Clearly, we will all die someday unless the Lord returns during our lifetime. We can and either die ready for eternity in Heaven, or face eternity in Hell. Those are the only two options. Today, if you are not ready for eternity in Heaven, please take the time now to change that so your soul will not be lost.