

What Happens One Minute After You Die? Part I

The Bible declares that you will live somewhere in an eternal condition:

- Your body will cease to live, but your spirit & soul [mind, will, emotions] will continue to live.
- In weeks to come: – WE WILL DISCUSS THE REALITY OF HEAVEN AND HELL.
 - Is hell a real place? Who goes to hell, what happens in hell, why did God create a hell? So, you just play cards with friends you know in hell or is there real suffering?
 - Is heaven a real place? What do you do there, is it one long boring worship service, who goes there, do you recognize people there, do you have a body?
- Today we will see what the Bible says about:
“What happens one minute after you die whether you are a Christian or a non-believer?”

None of us like to think of dying and leaving this world, our loved ones and the things we enjoy.

Typically, most folks don't want to talk about the reality of death because we don't really understand what will happen to us after we die.

Sylvia and I have talked several times about making arrangements should something happen to one or both of us. We've talked about funeral arrangements: burying versus cremation, services and burial plots.

BUT, when it came to sitting down with a funeral director to make definite plans; it was not as easy to talk about because the reality of death and separation from this life and each other flooded in.

Scripture tells us what we can expect!

1. **For the Christian:** 2 Corinthians 5:1-6 AMP

“For we know that if the earthly tent [our physical body] which is our house is torn down [through death], **we have a building from God**, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our [immortal, eternal] celestial dwelling, so that by putting it on we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened [often weighed down, oppressed], not that we want to be unclothed [separated by death from the body], but to be clothed, so that what is mortal [the body] will be swallowed up by life [after the resurrection]. Now He who has made us and prepared us for this very purpose is God,

who gave us the [Holy] Spirit as a pledge [a guarantee, a down payment on the fulfillment of His promise]. So then, **being always filled with good courage and confident hope, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord.**”

2. **For the un-believer:** John 8:21, 24 AMP

“Then He said again to them, ‘I am going away, and you will look for Me, and **you will die [unforgiven and condemned] in your sin.** Where I am going, you cannot come.’ That is why I told you that you will die [unforgiven and condemned] in your sins; **for if you do not believe that I am the One [I claim to be], you will die in your sins.**”

Romans 6:23 “**When people sin, they earn what sin pays – death.** But God gives His people a free gift – the eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Revelation 21:7-8 AMP

“He who overcomes [the world by adhering faithfully to Christ Jesus as Lord and Savior] will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. But as for the cowards and **unbelieving** and abominable [who are devoid of character and personal integrity and practice or tolerate immorality], and murderers, and sorcerers [with intoxicating drugs], and idolaters and occultists [who practice and teach false religions], and all the liars [who knowingly deceive and twist truth], their part will be in the lake that blazes with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

The reason we need to talk about what happens one minute after you die is that it will affect the way you live right now:

**WHAT YOU BELIEVE ABOUT ETERNITY
DETERMINES HOW YOU LIVE TODAY.**

People who believe they are just an accident, that there is no God or eternity will live a careless and selfish life driven to fulfill only the pleasures this world has to offer.

- Everything will be about **NOW**.

But if you believe God created you for His glory and that you will live eternally, it will affect the way you live now and your beliefs about eternity:

- You will care about your eternal destiny – where are you going to spend it?
- You will care if others are ready for eternity, and be moved with compassion to do something about it.
- You will gain God’s perspective for people as of eternal value.

THREE THINGS HAPPEN AFTER THIS EARTHLY LIFE IS OVER THAT ARE COMMON TO THE BELIEVER AND THE UN-BELIEVER:

1. Our Physical Bodies Die

Hebrews 9:27 “It is appointed to everyone that they must die once. Then they are judged.”

Genesis 2:7 “The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground...”

Genesis 3:19 “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground; for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust shall you return.”

The current monetary worth placed on the basic “elements” of the individual human body is **\$4.50**:

- **\$3.50** for the skin and the remainder of the worth assigned to the major elements — **\$1.00**.

Almost 100 years have passed and the difference is only 16 cents from calculations made a long time ago!

But your life is of more value to the Lord than just your physical body.

“It is appointed to everyone that they must die once. Then they are judged.”

v. 28 “So Jesus Christ was offered as a sacrifice one time to take away the sins of many people. He will appear a second time, but not to offer Himself for sin. He will come the second time to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.”

So, we all face death and after the physical death – we will face a judgment.

- We will talk in weeks to come of the difference of judgment for the believer vs. the un-believer.
- It is common that no person will get out of this life alive [unless you’re raptured].

1 Corinthians. 15:50 “I say this that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; something that will ruin cannot have a part in something that never ruins.”

2. Our spirit & soul separate from our physical bodies

- Our physical bodies stay behind, our spirit & soul continues to live.
- Jesus said in Matthew 10:28
“Do not be afraid of those who can only kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. The only One you should fear is God, the One who can send the body and the soul to be destroyed in hell.”
- After your funeral when everybody returns to the church for the repast or to the relative’s house for dinner, you – the deceased, will never be more alive than you are at that moment- your soul still lives even though your body is deceased.

Jesus illustrated this truth when He spoke to Mary and Martha about their dead brother Lazarus in John 11: 25-26

“Jesus said to her, I AM the Resurrection and the Life, even if they die. And everyone who lives and believes in Me will never really die.”

There are a few insights from both Jesus and Paul as to what happens to the soul of a believer when they die:

- For the believer in Christ, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord
- 2 Corinthians 5: 6, 8 - “Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord...we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”
- As Jesus hung on the Cross between the two criminals, one of them cried out to Jesus and believed on Him. Jesus’ response to him was:
Luke 23:42 – 43 - “Truly, this day, you shall be with Me in Paradise/a place of future happiness/Eden.”
- Philippians 1:20 - Paul in his struggle with life to stay or go be with the Lord, said to the Philippians: “To me, the only important thing about living is Christ. And even death would be for my benefit.”

To be in this body is to be fruitful in sharing the love of Jesus and His message, but to die is even far better to go and be completely in the presence of the Lord for eternity.

What happens to the soul of the un-believer when they die?

- Some believe in the **annihilation** of the body, soul/spirit of those who are un-believers.
- Psalm 37:20 “The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”
- They will not be consumed, this is teaching that saints of the Lord shall inherit the earth and the wicked shall have no part in it, not be consumed into annihilation.

Luke 16:28-35 Jesus Himself tells the eternal fate of two men:

- The rich man and Lazarus [the poor man].
- **The rich man died** and is found to be in torment – he was in great pain, so he had feeling; he was aware of where he was, in torment of hell – so he had consciousness; he saw Abraham, so he could see he was not in a good place & called out to Abraham to have mercy on him – so he could communicate; he asked him to send Lazarus to dip his finger in water to cool his parched tongue – so he had memory from on earth of events; I am suffering in this fire!
- **Lazarus** – was in Abraham’s bosom - In the case of Lazarus, the reserved place is special because it is beside Abraham, the father of all the righteous. The phrase may be synonymous to the paradise promised to the thief on the cross Luke 23:43.

Together these passages support the conviction that a believer enjoys immediate bliss at the moment of physical death.

One minute after we die: Our physical body will be separated from our spirit & soul.

THEN AT SOME POINT

3. We will all face judgment!

1 Peter 1:17 “You pray to God and call Him Father, but He will judge everyone the same way – **by what they do**. So while you are living/visiting here on earth, you should live with respect for God.”

This world is not our eternal home; we are all just passing through.

Your life on earth is a short period of time in the eternal scheme of your eternity.

Psalm 90:12 “So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.”

Number = “to properly weigh out, count, prepare.”

At the end of your life, you will either be JUDGED OR REWARDED

We will see next week what the difference between being judged or rewarded is.

- The Lord does not assign or send anyone to either Heaven or Hell, we determine our destiny by our choice to either receive the goodness and grace of the Lord through Jesus Christ or we reject and turn down the offer of eternal life with the Lord