

On Death

- I. Scripture refers to various things as death:
 - A. Spiritual death in trespasses and sin. **GEN 2:17; EPH 2:1.**
 - B. Separation from fellowship and accord with God. **JAM 5:19-20; EPH 5:14; 1TI 5:6; REV 3:1.**
 - C. Physical death. **JAM 2:26.**
 - D. Reproductive death. **ROM 4:19.**
 - E. The *second death* or eternal separation from God in the lake of fire. **REV 20:14; 21:8.**
 - F. Death of delusions of righteousness. **ROM 7:7-9.**
 - G. *Legal* death TO sin and practical *mortification* (depriving of life) of self and flesh. **ROM 6:2, 10-11; COL 3:5; 1CO 15:31.**
- II. Points A to E (above) speak of death in the sense of the *penalty* of Adam's sin which imposed a *bondage of corruption* upon the creation. **ROM 5:12; 8:20-22.**
 - A. Sin results in death. **ROM 6:23; JAM 1:15.**
 - B. Since death came from sin, and that from Adam, no Christian should believe in a theory which affirms death prior to Adam's sin.
 - 1. Such theories destroy the doctrine of salvation from sin and death by Jesus Christ, the last Adam. **1CO 15:21-22, 45.**
 - 2. If sin and death did not come by the first Adam, there is no reason for the last Adam.
- III. This study concerns itself with physical death. It will be helpful to remember that man is a tripartite being. **1TH 5:23.**
 - A. The entire person of the elect, including his body, is the purchased possession of God. **1CO 6:20; JOB 14:12-15; 19:25-27.**
 - B. The inward part of man (soul / spirit) lives on after the body dies. **LUK 16:22-24; REV 6:9-10.**
 - C. Cultures and religions worldwide have believed in life after death of the body.
 - 1. Christianity is unique in that it has a testimony of One who died and resurrected bodily to declare the certainty of life after death. **REV 1:18; 19:10.**
 - 2. This testimony changed the world by delivering men from the fear of death. **HEB 2:14-15.**
- IV. Death is an appointment which all must keep until the return of Christ. **JOB 30:23; HEB 9:27.**
 - A. Exceptions like Enoch and Elijah (who never died physically) or the saints which are *alive and remain at Christ's coming* (**1TH 4:15-17**) are still reckoned as *legally* dead and judged in Christ. **2CO 5:14; COL 3:3.**
 - B. The days of our lives on earth are by the appointment of God. **JOB 7:1; 14:5.**
 - 1. appoint: To determine authoritatively, prescribe, fix (a time, *later* a place) for any act.
 - a. determine: To put an end or limit to...
 - b. Man's lifespan is limited by bounds as are the seas. **JOB 26:10; 38:8-11.**
 - c. The days of man have a limit imposed by God.
 - (1) The lifespan of man has undergone great reductions since the time of the flood of Noah, decreasing rapidly from multiple hundreds of

years to less than 200 at Abraham's time (**GEN 25:7-8**); and eventually levelling off to an average of 70. **PSA 90:10**.

- (2) Dreams of super-longevity or immortality through science will not overthrow God's limitation.
 - d. The designs of rebels and fools to evade the punishment which sin demands amount to nothing. **ECC 8:8; ISA 28:14-15, 18; AMO 9:10**.
2. Only God knows the appointed *day* of death and He may alter it at His discretion. **GEN 27:2; ISA 38:1-5**.
3. We are justified in praying for the living but not for the dead. **2SAM 12:22-23**.
 - a. John commands believers to not pray for a brother who has *sinned unto death*. **1JO 5:16**.
 - b. This is a sin which is not private in nature and thus cannot be contained by the rule of **JAM 5:19-20**.
 - c. This sin results in death of fellowship and may result in the death of the body. **1CO 10:1-11; 11:30**.
- C. As a general rule, ungodly living will shorten one's life. **PRO 10:27; PSA 55:23; ECC 7:17**.
 1. It perplexed some prophets that some wicked men live long and prosper. **JOB 21:7; ECC 7:15; PSA 73:3-4**.
 2. Consider that God may be preserving them for use as His sword. **PSA 17:13-14**.
 3. Consider that God may be preserving them as useful providers for the righteous. **PRO 13:22; 28:8**.
 4. Consider that this life is all the "heaven" that the unsaved shall enjoy. **PRO 14:32; 11:7; PSA 73:17-24**.
- D. As a general rule, godly living will be rewarded with a lengthy life. **PRO 3:1-2, 16; 9:10-11; PSA 34:12-14; EPH 6:2-3**.
- E. God may bring about the death of the righteous prematurely as an act of mercy. **ISA 57:1-2**.
- F. Premature death may be simply owing to the general vanity of the bondage of corruption. **ROM 8:20-22**.
- G. Premature death may be owing to foolishness which produces natural consequences or divine punishment. **ECC 7:17; ACT 5:5**.
- H. One may choose to engage in high-risk occupations, hobbies, etc. which increase the odds of premature death.
 1. We do well to remember that every man must bear his own burden and accept responsibility for the outcome of what he sows. **GAL 6:5-7**.
 2. Let us not blame God for the bad outcome of our own choices. **PSA 107:17; PRO 19:3**.
 3. We ought not to presumptuously tempt God. **MAT 4:6-8**.
- I. Ultimately, the seeming unfairness of varying longevity is resolved in the sovereignty of God.
 1. It is His creation to sustain or dispose of as He pleases. **DEU 32:39; DAN 4:35**.
 2. We are to be reconciled to whatever life and burden God gives. **JOH 21:18-22**.
- J. It is the height of folly to assume we have plenty of time left in this world. **PRO 27:1; JAM 4:13-15**.
- K. It behooves us to *number our days*. **PSA 90:12; EPH 5:16; 1CO 7:29; JOH 9:4**.
- V. Death and the grave are the great leveller of men. They are the common home of all, good or bad.

They are unimpressed by earthly distinctions and accomplishments.

ECC 9:2-3; JOB 21:23-26; 3:16-19.

- A. The grave is man's *long home*. **JOB 17:13; ECC 12:5.**
- B. It is a land of darkness and disorder from which no sinner can will his spirit back. **2SAM 12:23; 14:14; JOB 10:21-22; ECC 8:8.**
- C. Then, the grand thoughts of man perish. **PSA 146:4 c/w JAM 4:13-14.**
 - 1. All of natural man's schemes and dreams are arrested by death. He will not carry on his ambitions "from the other side." Death is not like prison on earth for a mobster!
 - 2. The station and relationships of this world do not carry over. Consider the pagans who thought it proper to have their servants slain upon death so as to continue their service in the afterlife.
 - 3. The acquisitions of this world have no influence beyond the grave.
 - a. Consider the pagan Egyptians who would be buried with their treasures and implements which they supposed would be useful to them in the afterlife.
 - b. You can't take it with you. **PSA 49:16-17; 1TI 6:7; JOB 1:21; ECC 5:15.**
 - c. A lifetime devoted primarily to the acquisition of things without consideration to spiritual concerns may be arrested suddenly by a bitter end. **JER 17:11; LUK 12:15-21.**
 - d. "Only one life, 'twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last." **JOH 6:27; MAT 6:19-21.**
 - 4. It is not guts, grit, girth or goods that yield promise of the life to come, but godliness. **1TI 4:8; 2PE 1:5-11.**
- D. The grave is a temporary home for the dead body. **JOH 5:28-29.**

VI. Throughout history there has been an almost universal belief in an afterlife.

- A. Archeaological and literary evidence confirms this.
 - 1. Pagan, secular and Christian literature are replete with things about the afterlife.
 - 2. The Old and New Testaments constantly affirm life after the death of the body.
- B. That men carefully dispose of their dead and honor them suggests the idea of an afterlife.
- C. Belief in the afterlife is somehow tied to man's nature.
- D. C. S. Lewis wrote in his book, *Mere Christianity*: "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger: well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim: well, there is such a thing as water. Men feel sexual desire: well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. If none of my earthly pleasures satisfy it, that does not prove that the universe is a fraud. Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing. If that is so, I must take care, on the one hand, never to despise, or be unthankful for, these earthly blessings, and on the other, never to mistake them for the something else of which they are only a kind of copy, or echo, or mirage. I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country, which I shall not find till after death; I must never let it get snowed under or turned aside; I must make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others to do the same."
- E. The historical resurrection of the dead body of Jesus Christ unto immortal life proves that there is life after death. **ACT 17:30-32; 1CO 15:20-23; 1TH 4:13-14.**
 - 1. Therefore, physical death is not the end of everything for man. **HEB 9:27.**
 - 2. At this judgment the dead will be raised to stand before God and to be consigned to

their everlasting portion. **REV 20:11-15; MAT 25:31-46.**

3. It is the fear of this judgment that causes unbelievers to outright deny an afterlife or to block out consideration of it. **ACT 24:25.**
4. “It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree, helping each other to one or other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilization—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendours.” (C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*)
5. “When you sweep death under the rug, you will likely sweep the afterlife under the rug with it. By hiding death, you hide the afterlife, and by hiding the afterlife, you hide any hope you have in it.” (Ted Dekker, *The Slumber of Christianity*, p. 84.)
6. One's view as to time plays a powerful role in how he lives.
 - a. If one views the past as everything, he is handicapped to improve his quality of life and has no long term hope as an incentive.
 - b. If one views the present as everything, he is likely to replay the errors of history and be given over to complete hedonism.
 - c. If one views the future life as everything, he is likely to replay the errors of history, be disconnected from the present and manipulated by whatever he believes determines his future.
 - d. If one believes the past is real and instructive, and the present is preparatory for and evidence of a real future life, then he has wisdom, incentive and hope. This is the essence of Christianity.

VII. The gospel announces to believers that a hope is laid up for them in heaven, beyond this earthly sphere of existence. **COL 1:5.**

- A. In fleeing for refuge, believers lay hold of this hope set before them, a hope that enters into heaven itself where Jesus is. **HEB 6:18-20.**
 1. flee: To run away from or as from danger; to take flight; to try to escape or seek safety by flight.
 2. refuge: Shelter or protection from danger or trouble; succour sought by, or rendered to, a person.
 3. Our hope in heaven does provide an escape to a place of safety from the dangers and troubles of life.
 4. The hope is *sure and steadfast*, secured by the very truthfulness of God, and serves as an anchor to steady the believer and keep him from drifting.
 5. The hope that Christianity gives us keeps us tied to it.
 - a. Men will gravitate towards whatever it is in which they have hope.
 - b. This is why it is so important to ground hope in the faithful Creator rather than the failing creation.
- B. Heaven, where our hope is, is not something for us to give an occasional thought to. It is a place upon which we should set our affections. **COL 3:1-5.**

1. As for those who do not set their affections on things above, Ted Dekker had this to write: “You have no living hope because you imagine heaven to be far less interesting than the earthly vacation you have your eyes on, or the man you would like to marry.” (Ibid., p. 134)
 2. Having our affections set on heaven leads to mortifying sinful deeds and affections.
- C. This hope has a purifying effect. **1JO 3:1-3.**
1. If there is no resurrection of the dead, no afterlife, then hedonism, the philosophy which asserts that pleasure is the sole or chief good in life, makes sense. **1CO 15:32.**
 2. If there is no afterlife, then the Bible tells lies in both the Old and New Testaments. Why conform to the moral code of a book that violates its own code and lies?
 3. The resurrection and the judgment after death are incentives to repent (**ACT 17:30-31; ECC 12:13-14**). Why repent if there is no such thing as a resurrection and judgment after death?
 4. Without the Christian hope, men will give themselves to their own desires (**JER 18:12**). This explains materialism, philosophies of despair, free sex, and the drug culture.
 5. The great dilemma of mankind is that it wants the hope of an afterlife but it doesn't want a hope that means curtailing lusts in this life and so it places its hope in something else that accommodates its lusts.
- D. This hope has a healing effect.
1. People have actually died of despair.
 - a. Paul's despairing of life was mitigated by resurrection hope. **2CO 1:8-9.**
 - b. “To despair is to turn your back on God.”
(Marilla Cuthbert in *Anne of Green Gables*)
 2. The power of hope can be seen in the effectiveness of a placebo in those who expect that the supposed remedy will cure them.
 3. Consider how often we say to someone who is suffering, “It will be alright.”
 - a. We are trying to impart hope in order to alleviate the pain.
 - b. Even the wicked believe that “it will be alright,” but in the end they will be disappointed. **PRO 11:7.**
 4. Since the gospel is a message of hope, the gospel brings healing. **LUK 4:18; PSA 107:17-20.**
 5. Perhaps it is through the gospel of hope that we have access to the leaves of the tree of life which are “for the healing of the nations.”
1CO 2:7 c/w PRO 3:13, 18 c/w REV 22:2.
- E. This hope puts our present trials into perspective. **ROM 8:18; 2CO 4:17-18.**
- F. This hope fosters patience and a sound mind. **ROM 8:24-25; 2TI 1:7-10; 1PE 1:13.**
- G. The afterlife is described in terms of things we value and enjoy on this earth, things such as precious stones, health, peace, joy, food and drink, loving relationships, social gatherings, gardens, and communion with God.
1. If these things did not bring us pleasure on earth, then we would fail to grasp their analogy to heaven.
 2. Pleasures in this life can never bring lasting satisfaction. They are rather foretastes of what is to come and should be received as such.
 3. Those who look for ultimate satisfaction in the things of this earth will move from one relationship to another, from one place to another, from one job to another in a futile search to find the real thing.

4. When you view earthly pleasures as foretastes of better things to come, you cease expecting those pleasures to give you ultimate and lasting satisfaction.
5. We set ourselves up for disillusionment when we expect from this world what it cannot deliver. **PRO 13:12.**
6. One can enjoy this earth more when he moderates his expectations from it.

VIII. What happens when someone dies? Is that the end of existence or does something continue on? Do souls migrate after death or reincarnate? Do souls hibernate or “sleep” in an unconscious state when one dies? Is there a kind of “half-way house” after death for saints (e.g., purgatory)?

A. **LUK 16:19-31** provides insight which counters soul sleep, soul mortality, soul migration, soul detention, soul annihilation, reincarnation and purgatory.

1. Some (like Jehovah's Witnesses) affirm that this account is only a parable.
 - a. The text does not say that it is a parable.
 - b. The text does not use the common language of a parable, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto...,” etc.
 - c. Christ is not here using earthly things to speak of spiritual and eternal realities, as in parables. He is speaking of those great things themselves.
 - d. Proper names are used, unlike the indeterminate, “A certain man...” (**MAR 12:1**) which is common to Christ's parables.
 - e. Christ's parables used sensible, concrete things as analogies of spiritual things.
 - (1) Jesus never spoke parables such as, “A 4100-year-old man neglected his centaur...” or “An elf and a leprechaun were on a boat...”
 - (2) If conscious existence in hell is abstract nonsense, then it cannot be a parable of spiritual truth.
 - f. If conscious existence after death is heresy, then should we suppose that Jesus was using a heretical lie to teach a spiritual truth?
 - g. Ezekiel (among many harsh warnings) prophesied about conscious torment in hell (**EZE 31:14-16; 32:21, 30-32**). The rebellious unbelievers of his day wrote off his warnings as *parables*. **EZE 20:49.**
2. **v. 22.** The souls of the righteous upon death are promptly carried into glory, where they have conscious existence.
c/w **LUK 23:43; PHIL 1:23; REV 6:9-10; HEB 12:23.**
 - a. To the Jew, being close to Abraham was the sum of all good.
 - b. “Abraham's bosom” implies reclining with him at the heavenly feast.
MAT 8:11 c/w JOH 13:23.
3. **v. 23.** The souls of the wicked upon death are contrarily cast into the torment of hell where they suffer consciously without ceasing. Their only comfort comes from the fact that they are not alone. c/w **JUDE 1:7; EZE 32:30-31; REV 14:11.**
4. **v. 26.** There is no soul migration or reincarnation. Souls are consigned to one of two places of continual residence where they must stay until the Second Coming and Judgment Day. **REV 20:11-14.**
 - a. Some have speculated from texts like **MAT 11:13-14** that John the Baptist was a reincarnation of Elijah.
 - (1) Elijah never physically died. **2KI 2:11.**
 - (2) He furthermore was seen as himself on the Mount of Transfiguration. **MAT 17:1-3.**
 - b. Moses, who had died (**JUDE 1:9**), was still seen on that Mount as Moses,

- obviously in a state of conscious existence.
- c. Elijah and Moses on the Mount with Christ are typical of the *children of the resurrection* (**LUK 20:36**). All the elect, both dead and living, shall be caught up to meet Christ in the air. **1TH 4:16-17**.
 - d. Spirits of *devils* may leave hell to come to earth (**MAT 8:16; REV 16:14**) but not the souls of *men*.
 - e. The one occasion where a departed spirit returned momentarily to this world was a notable exception. **1SAM 28:11-20**.
5. Catholicism believes in Purgatory, which is "...a place between heaven and hell where sinners, through punishments, pay off the balance of the price for their sin before entering into Heaven. It is held that souls in purgatory can obtain earlier entrance into Heaven if they, while living, were devoted to Mary through the Rosary and the Brown Scapular, or through the Sacrifice of the Mass, or both." (Timothy F. Kaufman, *Graven Bread*, pp. 192-193)
- a. "So we presume all Catholics who die to be in Purgatory, although it may often seem more probable for a particular soul that it is in heaven or hell." (*Plain Facts*, p. 125, a Catholic publ.)
 - b. "We would appeal to these general principles of Scripture rather than to particular texts often alleged in proof of Purgatory. We doubt if they contain an explicit and direct reference to it." (*Catholic Dictionary*, p. 704)
 - c. Combining Purgatory with another error called the Treasury of Merit (which supposes that there is excess righteousness in Christ and the Saints that can be purchased by survivors of "purgatoried" Catholics to expedite their release to heaven), the Roman church has found a lucrative way of exploiting grief. But see **PSA 49:7-8; 1PE 1:18-19; MAT 23:14**.
 - d. The notion of a third destination after death (other than heaven or hell), the migration or transfer of departed souls, and the manipulation of the departed soul's circumstance by the living do not square with **LUK 16:19-31**.
 - e. Bless God for the liberating truth that eternal life is entirely a gift of God's grace according to His own will! **2TI 1:9-10; EPH 1:4-7**.
- B. **LUK 16:19-31** does show that there is conscious recognition between the inhabitants of heaven and hell.
1. Jesus had previously affirmed that the wicked's misery would be exacerbated by seeing the righteous dead in peace. **LUK 13:28**.
 2. That the rich man in hell saw Abraham "...afar off..." (**LUK 16:23**) may have implications for the hireling prophet, Balaam. **NUM 24:17**.
- C. **LUK 16:19-31** indicates that souls in hell or heaven have some knowledge of things on earth.
1. As to whether or not the departed saints have full cognizance of things on earth, we have limited information.
 2. Heaven is a foreign country, beyond the veil. We now only "...see through a glass darkly..." (**1CO 13:12**) into that land. Here are some considerations:
 - a. From **REV 6:9-10**, the souls of the martyrs are not totally ignorant of this earth.
 - b. **LUK 16:25** shows that Abraham had some knowledge of the affairs of earth, though God may have informed Abraham directly concerning the backgrounds of the two men (but this latter is not stated).
 - c. **ISA 63:15-16** appears to teach that Abraham was ignorant of the affairs of

his earthly brethren but the context implies that they were acknowledging the power of the *living* God to save as opposed to the powerless *dead* patriarchs.

3. According to **ISA 65:17**, the things of this earth are not to be remembered in the new heavens and earth, but this may not be absolute.
 - a. Similar terminology is used to describe the superiority of the N.T. church age over the O.T. in **JER 3:14-19**.
 - b. Obviously, N.T. apostles and believers have not forgotten everything about the ark of the covenant, etc.
 4. Conclusion: departed saints may have some cognizance of the affairs of earth, but just how or how much is sketchy.
 - a. Beyond what it is written, it is unwise to speculate, lest we be found "...wise in your own conceits" (**ROM 12:16**)" or "...intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" (**COL 2:18**).
 - b. It suffices us to know that we serve a God *before Whose eyes all things are naked and open*. **HEB 4:13**.
- D. **LUK 16:19-31** does not support the belief that prior to the resurrection of Christ nobody went to heaven when they died, that the souls of the righteous were "imprisoned" (soul detention) in a netherworld world called *paradise* or *Abraham's bosom*.
1. It is said that during His entombment, Jesus went down to this netherworld which is the same plane as hell and preached to the spirits of the righteous, facilitating their release. This is based largely on a faulty interpretation of **1PE 3:18-19**.
 2. The *paradise* which Jesus promised the thief (**LUK 23:43**) was not some netherworld of temporary detainment. Other scripture proves that paradise is in the very presence of God in heaven. **2CO 12:2-4; REV 2:7 c/w REV 22:1-2**.
 3. The spirit of the saint in the O.T. upon physical death returned upward to God. **ECC 3:21; 12:7**.
 4. Elijah (a sinner who did not die), went to heaven. **2KI 2:11**.
 5. Moses (a sinner who died) was seen in *glory* on the Mount of Transfiguration prior to Christ's resurrection (**LUK 9:30-31**). *Glory* is where Christ was later received (**1TI 3:16**), and it is the final destination of all the saved. **1PE 5:10; ROM 8:30**.
 6. The context of **1PE 3:18-19** helps discern the time-frame and circumstances of the preaching unto imprisoned spirits. See **1PE 3:20**.
 7. **1PE 3:18-20** is describing spirits who are NOW in prison that WERE disobedient in the days of Noah. God preached unto them while they were living men by His spirit, the Spirit of Christ. **2PE 1:21; 1PE 1:10-12; 2PE 2:5**.
 8. At the time of Peter's writing in the first century A.D., the spirits of the wicked rebels of Noah's day were still in prison in hell, reserved unto judgment, just like the fallen angels and the wicked Sodomites. **2PE 2:4-6; JUDE 1:6-7; 2PE 2:9**.
 9. **1PE 3:18-20** is simply teaching that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the Spirit of God (**ROM 8:11**), the same Spirit which delivered His words in the days of Noah.

IX. This section addresses the afterlife experienced between the death of the body and its resurrection.

A. In **PHIL 1:20-26** Paul expounds what life and death were for him.

1. For Paul, to live was Christ.
 - a. Paul's life was given and sustained by Christ (**GAL 2:20**), was directed by Christ (**1CO 9:21**), was an instrument of Christ (**ROM 15:18-19**), and

- aimed at Christ in all things. **PHIL 3:8.**
 - b. Christ was the sum of his life.
 - c. What is your life? Wherein does your life consist? **LUK 12:15.**
- 2. For Paul to die was *gain*. If Christ is our life here, then death will be gain for us.
- 3. If Paul lived in the flesh, the fruit or effect of his labour was to magnify Christ in his body. **PSA 71:14-18.**
- 4. Paul was in a great strait between departing the flesh to be with Christ and abiding in the flesh to serve the church of God.
 - a. strait: A narrow confined place or space or way generally. fig. A narrow or tight place, a time of sore need or of awkward or straitened circumstances, a difficulty or fix.
 - b. Paul was being pressed by these two alternatives and had difficulty deciding between them. He *wot not* (did not know) which to choose.
 - c. Paul desired to depart and to be with Christ, but it was more needful to abide here for the church.
 - d. Paul was thus torn between what he wanted and what was needful. Sound familiar?
 - e. This was a blessed strait because it was a strait between two *good things*: remaining here for the glory of Christ or departing and being with Christ.
 - (1) Would that all straits in Christian experience were straits between two good things! c/w **2SAM 24:13-14.**
 - (2) That both choices were desirable for Paul was only owing to his certain faith in Christ's life, His residence, and His promises. Thus, his physical death was not an unsavory option.
- 5. This departure and being with Christ is Paul's description of bodily death.
 - a. Paul's words concur with **LUK 16:19-31** in countering the doctrine of soul sleep.
 - b. Advocates of the doctrine of soul sleep apply the expression "to be with Christ" to the coming resurrection of the body.
 - c. Paul's *desire* (singular) had as its object *departing and being with Christ*. Would Paul desire to depart, if it did not mean being immediately in the presence of Christ?
 - d. Departing and being with Christ are placed in contrast to abiding in the flesh.
 - e. Paul would not be in a strait between the future resurrection and abiding here to help the church. At the future resurrection his help would not be needed!
 - f. Therefore, this language cannot be referring to entering the presence of Christ bodily at the resurrection.
- B. Paul desired death because it meant *to depart and to be with Christ*.
 - 1. Paul did not desire death as merely a means to escape suffering in this world.
 - 2. Many wicked men desire death to escape suffering. **JER 8:3; REV 9:6.**
 - a. This is the whole rationale for assisted suicide.
 - b. There is nothing Christian about desiring death merely to escape suffering.
 - c. The righteous Job desired death to escape his misery and later realized he had misspoken. **JOB 3; 42:1-6.**
 - 3. Being at peace with dying or bravely facing death of itself is no evidence of God's saving grace.

- a. Atheists and devil-possessed heathen have been at peace with death.
 - b. Soldiers who fornicate, get drunk, and blaspheme have died bravely for their country and yet upon dying went down into hell. **EZE 32:27.**
 - c. Atheistic Communists have died bravely for love of their cause and country.
 - d. Wicked people who have no fear of God may also not fear the judgment of God. They just block it out of their thinking. **ROM 1:32.**
 - e. Our Lord taught that those who are possessed of the devil experience peace. **LUK 11:17-22 c/w DEU 29:19.**
 - f. The devil can deceive men at the time of death just as he can during the course of their life on earth.
4. Asaph gave this description of the wicked, who prosper in this world: "For there are no bands in their death" (**PSA 73:4**).
 - a. They are not shackled like God's people are.
 - b. "Many of the godly have sore conflicts at their death. Their enemy then thrusts sore at them that they may fall; or that their confidence in their God may be shaken. But of this the ungodly know nothing. Satan will not molest them; he is sure of his prey; they are entangled, and cannot now break their nets; their consciences are seared, they have no sense of guilt. If they think at all of another world, they presume on that mercy which they never sought, and of which they have no distinct notion. Perhaps, 'they die without a sigh or a groan; and thus go off as quiet as a lamb' - to the slaughter." (Adam Clarke Commentary)
 5. One dies *wholly at ease and quiet* while another dies *in the bitterness of his soul*. **JOB 21:23-26.**
 6. A child of God who battles with sin and who knows the holiness and wrath of God, and the sinfulness of his sin has cause at times to be uneasy about dying.
 7. It is not so much how one dies that reveals grace in the heart. It is rather how one lives.
 8. If while living one desires death as a pathway to be with Christ, that shows God's grace in the heart even if at the time of death they are in bitter pain of body and mind.
- C. Death to the believer is a departure from the body into the presence of Christ. **2CO 5:6-8; ACT 7:56-60.**
 1. The believer leaves his body and goes to be in the presence of the glorified man Christ Jesus, Who is at the right hand of God in heaven. **MAR 16:19.**
 2. Something about a believer does not die when the body dies. **JOH 11:26; 2CO 4:16.**
 - D. On the day of the death of his body, the believer goes to be with Christ in *paradise*. **LUK 23:43.**
 1. The word *paradise* means *a park or a garden*.
 2. Sinful man was cast out of the garden of Eden, where the Lord walked. **GEN 3:8, 23-24.**
 3. Saved man at death goes to be in a garden with the Lord. What a blessed reversal!
 - E. **REV 6:9-11** teaches that saints are consciously in the presence of Christ between the death and resurrection of their bodies.
 1. John was beholding events that take place in heaven. **REV 4:1.**
 2. John was an eyewitness of the place Scripture calls *heaven*.
 - a. Jesus Christ also bore witness of this place. **JOH 3:12-13.**

- b. Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel saw it. **EXO 24:10.**
 - c. Isaiah and Ezekiel saw it. **EZE 1; ISA 6:1-5.**
 - 3. John saw under the altar the souls of martyrs.
 - a. Under Moses' law, the blood of the sin offering was poured at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering. **LEV 4:25.**
 - b. The death of a martyr is described as an offering to God. **PHIL 2:17; 2TI 4:6.**
 - c. Hence, the souls of the martyrs appear under the altar.
 - 4. These martyrs had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.
 - a. These souls died rather than abandon their faith.
 - b. Like Paul, they magnified Christ in their body by life and by death.
 - 5. John beheld the *souls* of them who were slain for their faith.
 - a. Their bodies were obviously dead at this point.
 - b. Man consists of spirit, soul, and body. **1TH 5:23.**
 - c. The soul and spirit are *within* the body. **JOB 14:22; PSA 42:4; ZEC 12:1; 1CO 2:11.**
 - d. At death, the soul and spirit depart the body which is the *tabernacle* of the soul and spirit. **GEN 35:18; ECC 12:7; LUK 8:55; 2PE 1:13-15.**
 - e. A man can be *caught up to paradise* while he is out of the body. **2CO 12:1-4; LUK 23:43.**
 - 6. These souls are told to *rest for a season*.
 - 7. These souls are told that others must yet be killed.
 - a. If others must be killed, then the general resurrection of the bodily dead had not yet taken place. c/w **2TI 2:16-18.**
 - b. After the resurrection, no more saints will be killed. **1CO 15:51-54.**
 - c. This counters the notion that there will be tribulation martyrs after Christ raptures the church out of this world.
 - 8. These souls are in God's presence; they are conscious; they speak; they hear; and they are consoled. They are such as Paul described in glory, "...the spirits of just men made perfect..." (**HEB 12:23**).
- F. The departed saints are *presently desiring the better country*. **HEB 11:13-16.**
 - 1. The passage is dealing with Old Testaments saint who *died in faith*.
 - 2. Yet these dead saints "...desire (present tense) a better country..." (**HEB 11:16**).
 - 3. They will not inherit that country without us. **HEB 11:35-40.**
 - 4. It will be after the resurrection and the judgment that all of God's elect will inherit the new heavens and the new earth, that better country.
- G. The departed saints are in a state of peace, comfort, and rest. **ISA 57:1-2; LUK 16:22-25; REV 14:13.**
- H. By contrast, death for the wicked is the beginning of endless torment. **LUK 16:22-23; JUDE 1:6-7.**
- I. Considering what this departure involves for the believer, no wonder Paul said this was *far better* than staying here.
 - 1. In life, Paul was consciously in fellowship with Christ through the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. How would a state of unconsciousness be far better than that and why would Paul desire it?
 - 3. Understanding what death would mean for him, Paul desired it!

- X. Death and the grave met their match in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was manifest to destroy the works of the devil, and did so. **1JO 3:8 c/w HEB 2:14-15.**
- A. Only Christ, by virtue of a perfect, sinless life had power to lay down His life and take it up again. **JOH 10:17-18; ACT 2:24.**
 - B. As a show of His mighty power, the bodies of many sleeping saints arose likewise. **MAT 27:51-53 c/w COL 2:15.**
 - C. In destroying the works of the devil, Christ took away:
 - 1. the dominion of death. **ROM 6:9.**
 - 2. the law of sin and death. **ROM 8:2.**
 - 3. the sting of death. **1CO 15:55-56.**
 - 4. the fear of death. **HEB 2:15.**
 - 5. the keys of hell and death. **REV 1:18.**
 - a. That fact that He liveth (present tense) now and was (past tense) dead, declares His resurrection.
 - b. That He is alive *for evermore* declares His immortality.
 - c. He thus holds the keys of hell and death.
 - (1) key: In pregnant sense, with reference to the power of custody, control, admission of others, etc., implied by the possession of the keys of any place; hence, as a symbol of office, and *fig.* the office itself.
 - (2) Christ holds authority over hell and death.
 - (3) The key that locks the damned in hell also locks the saved out.
 - d. The death and hell which were the bane of the creation shall be cast into the lake of fire at the Second Coming. **REV 20:14.**
- XI. Believers have the comfort and assurance that there is a bodily resurrection at the end of time, of which the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ is the firstfruits. **1CO 15:19-23; REV 1:5.**
- A. What was legally confirmed and personally realized by Jesus Christ shall then be fully brought to pass: death swallowed up in victory. **1CO 15:54.**
 - B. Those justified by Christ shall be resurrected at the *last day*. **JOH 6:39-40, 44, 54 c/w JOB 14:12.**
 - 1. This will be at His *coming again*, His *second appearing*. **JOH 14:1-3; HEB 9:28.**
 - 2. The resurrection will be general, *both of the just and unjust*. **ACT 24:14-15; JOH 5:28-29; MAT 13:30, 38-39, 47-50.**
 - 3. Mind how this contrasts the popular fable which holds:
 - a. Jesus' second coming is to resurrect the righteous only; the rest: left behind.
 - b. Life and death continue on earth during a great tribulation.
 - c. Jesus comes a third time to resurrect tribulation martyrs.
 - d. A thousand years later, Jesus resurrects the wicked dead.
 - C. The resurrection of the body was the hope of the believing ancients and patriarchs. **JOB 19:25-27; HEB 11:19.**
 - D. The resurrection of the body was the hope of O.T. prophets and martyrs. **ISA 26:19; HOS 13:14; HEB 11:35.**
 - E. The resurrection of the body is the true hope of Israel. **ACT 24:14-15; 26:6-8; 28:20; 1PE 1:3-4, 13.**
 - F. The resurrection of the body is the hope of all believers now, as ever. **1TH 4:13-18.**
 - G. The denial of the future bodily resurrection denies Christ, destroys hope and overthrows

faith. **1CO 15:12-19; 2TI 2:16-18.**

XII. This section addresses the afterlife experienced after the resurrection of the body.

- A. Paul describes the nature of our resurrected body contrasting it with our present body that is sown after we die. **1CO 15:42-44.**
1. Paul speaks of the burial of the body as a sowing.
 - a. This is in keeping with the resurrection of the body for when a seed is sown, something is expected to come forth.
 - b. Jesus described sowing as dying and burial. **JOH 12:24.**
 - c. The body is sown in anticipation of its springing forth.
 2. The same “it” that is sown is raised. Although what is raised is different from what is sown, it bears the identity of what is sown.
 3. The body is sown in *corruption* and raised in *incorruption*.
 - a. incorruption: Freedom from physical corruption or decay; incorrupt condition (a sound condition not infected by that which causes decay).
 - b. Note the word *freedom* defining incorruption.
 - (1) Corruption imposes bondage. It limits and weakens the ability and endurance of the body.
 - (2) To be raised in incorruption is to be gloriously liberated.
ROM 8:21.
 4. The body is sown in dishonour and raised in glory.
 - a. dishonour: The reverse of honour; the withholding of the tokens of esteem, respect, or reverence due to any one; the condition in which these are withheld or the contrary shown; a state of shame or disgrace; ignominy, indignity.
 - b. The honour heaped upon beautiful, strong bodies in youth is withdrawn with the aging and death of those bodies.
 - c. glory: *objectively*. Exalted praise, honour, or admiration accorded by common consent to a person or thing; honourable fame, renown. Resplendent beauty or magnificence. An effulgence of light such as is associated with our conceptions of heaven. A state of exaltation and splendour.
 - d. A state of glory is the opposite of a state of dishonour.
 - e. Paul speaks of this transformation of the body from dishonour to glory in **PHIL 3:21.**
 - (1) Our present body is vile.
 - (2) vile: Physically repulsive, *esp.* through filth or corruption; horrid, disgusting.
 - (3) It is a body of dishonour to be buried just as we throw vile refuse in a landfill to bury it.
 - (4) But it will become an exalted, radiant body like the body of Christ.
REV 1:13-16 c/w MAT 13:43; REV 22:5.
 - (5) It will be a sinless body in the image of God. **1JO 3:2 c/w 2CO 4:4.**
 - f. Furthermore, our bodies will be eternally renewed to the glory of youth like the glorified body of Christ.
JOB 29:2-4, 20; 33:19-26; PRO 20:29; PSA 103:5; 110:3.
 - g. This glory that will be revealed in us is such that our present sufferings are not even worthy to be compared with it. **ROM 8:18.**

5. The body is *sown in weakness and raised in power*.
 - a. As the body ages it becomes weaker until it succumbs to death which is the ultimate weakness, for the dead can do nothing. **ECC 8:8; 9:10.**
 - b. The resurrection body will have power such that the present body has never had.
 - c. The children of the resurrection will be *equal to the angels of heaven* who *excel in strength*. **LUK 20:36; PSA 103:20.**
 - (1) One angel slew 185,000 men. **2KI 19:35.**
 - (2) They can hold the wind. **REV 7:1.**
 - (3) They can fly swiftly. **REV 14:6; DAN 9:21.**
 - (4) They have more power than any earthly dignitary. **2PE 2:10-11.**
 - d. The resurrection body will not sigh. **ISA 35:10.**
 - (1) sigh: A sudden, prolonged, deep and more or less audible respiration, following on a deep-drawn breath, and esp. indicating or expressing dejection, weariness, longing, pain, or relief.
 - (2) The spiritual body will not tire.
 - (3) This condition will be attained when *death is swallowed up in victory* at the resurrection of the dead. **ISA 25:8.**
6. The body is sown a *natural* body and raised a *spiritual* body.
 - a. The body that is now natural will be made spiritual.
 - b. Although it will be spiritual, it will still be a body.
 - c. The body will not be made a spirit. **LUK 24:36-43.**
 - d. There is a natural body.
 - (1) natural: Having a real or physical existence, as opposed to what is spiritual, intellectual, fictitious, etc.
 - (2) When God breathed into the first Adam's nostrils the breath of life, man became a living soul. **GEN 2:7.**
 - (3) It was the man formed of the dust of the ground that became the living soul.
 - (4) Paul quotes these words to substantiate his point that there is a natural body. **1CO 15:45.**
 - [a] A natural body is a body with a soul.
 - [b] Without the soul, the body has no life.
 - [c] It could be said that the present body is a *soulish* body.
 - e. The soul and body belong together. It is sin that brought about their division at death.
 - f. The soul possesses the identity of the body it indwells and can be recognized as the person when disembodied.
 - (1) Though disembodied, Moses was recognized as Moses in the Mount of Transfiguration. **DEU 34:5-6; MAT 17:1-3.**
 - (2) The souls of both the rich man in hell and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom retained their form and identity though their bodies were dead and buried. **LUK 16:22-25.**
 - (3) The soul is that vital principle that causes the body to process its nutrients so as to produce tissue with its specific identity. This can be deduced from the fact that in the absence of the soul, the body decomposes and loses its identity. **ECC 12:6-7.**
 - g. The soul animates the bodily senses and appetites.

- (1) The soul has sensation and appetite, even in a disembodied state. **GEN 34:3; DEU 12:15; PRO 6:30; 27:7; ISA 29:8; LUK 16:22-24.**
 - (2) Without the soul, the body senses and craves nothing.
 - (3) The soul gives the body an appetite for the things needful to its survival and propagation.
 - (4) With man's fall, the bodily appetites have been put in control to the defiance of the will of God in satisfying them.
 - [a] Man's unregenerate soul and spirit advance the bodily appetites to the forefront. **EPH 2:1-3.**
 - [b] Therefore, Paul accurately describes the unregenerate man as being and walking *after* the flesh. **ROM 8:4-8.**
7. There is a spiritual body.
 - a. spiritual: Of or pertaining to, affecting or concerning, the spirit or higher moral qualities, esp. as regarded in a religious aspect.
 - b. The body will be given spiritual qualities such as angels, who are spirits, possess. **LUK 20:36.**
 - c. The body will be made like the resurrected body of Christ, which was not subject to the confinements of our natural bodies.
 - (1) Christ's body could vanish. **LUK 24:31.**
 - [a] Angels, whose primary mode of existence is spirit, can materialize and appear as men. **HEB 1:7; GEN 19:1-11.**
 - [b] Our resurrected bodies will be able to dematerialize at will.
 - [c] Christ's body, like an angel, could enter an enclosed space without an opening. **JOH 20:19.**
 - (2) Christ's body, like an angel, could defy the gravitational pull of the earth and ascend. **ACT 1:9-10.**
 - d. The spiritual body will not be given in marriage. **LUK 20:34-35.**
 - e. The spiritual body will be capable of beholding and conversing with spiritual and glorified beings which they cannot now do without special enablement. **NUM 22:31; 2KI 6:15-17; DAN 10:5-10; REV 1:17; 7:9-11; 22:4.**
 - f. Our present natural body in its fallen condition resists our efforts to pursue spiritual things. **GAL 5:17.**
 - (1) *Spiritual things* here refer to those things which may only be known by revelation of the Spirit of God. **1CO 2:9-14.**
 - (2) Occasionally when we are conscious of God and are receiving His word, our bodies will feel good. In this case we have bodily sensations induced by spiritual knowledge. **PSA 119:162; MAT 13:44; PRO 17:22.**
 - (3) Although our bodies may have spiritually induced sensations, the bodily appetites for this earth will assert themselves and pull us away from spiritual things.
 - (4) Imagine having a body that together with the soul and spirit will be wholly absorbed with the beatific vision of God and will never pull us from it. Such will be the nature of the spiritual body.
8. Although we are told these things about the resurrection body, it does not yet appear what we shall be. **1JO 3:2.**

- a. appear: To come forth into view, as from a place or state of concealment, or from a distance; to become visible.
 - b. We have not seen our glorified, spiritual body.
 - c. We are not given all details regarding our future body. For example:
 - (1) What need will we have for a navel?
 - (2) What need will we have for an immune system since there will be no disease to contract?
 - (3) What need will we have for sex organs since there will be no marriage?
- B. The resurrection of the body is an experience that all of God's elect from both the Old Testament and the New Testament will experience together. **1CO 15:22-23; 1TH 4:15-17.**
 - 1. This is the *better resurrection* spoken of in **HEB 11:35**. It is a resurrection to immortality never to die again. **JOH 5:29; LUK 20:36.**
 - 2. This is what Paul is referring to when he says of the Old Testament saints "...that they without us should not be made perfect" (**HEB 11:40**).
- C. After the general resurrection of all mankind from the dead, all the glorified elect of God will be granted entrance into the new heavens and the new earth. **MAT 25:34; 2PE 3:11-13; REV 21-22.**
 - 1. This will be the realization of the promise made unto the fathers. **HEB 11:8-10, 13-16.**
 - 2. This is the inheritance that belongs to those predestinated to be God's children **EPH 1:5, 11; ROM 8:17; 1PE 1:4; REV 21:7.**
- D. Life in the new heavens and earth will be characterized by the absence of death, sorrow, crying, and pain, all of which are the effects of sin. **REV 21:4.**
 - 1. The redeemed bodies of the saints will no more groan and travail in pain. **ROM 8:22-23.**
 - 2. The saints will experience the ultimate healing of the atonement. **PSA 103:3; ISA 33:24; 53:5.**
 - 3. **REV 21:4** will come to pass because of the sorrow, crying, pain, and death of our Lord Jesus Christ for us to save us from our sins.
 - 4. Christ's healing is an effect of His power to forgive sins (**MAR 2:1-12**). Remove sin (the cause) and the effects of sin will be removed.
 - 5. The miracles of Christ attested to His power to undo the effects of sin.
 - a. His miracles were acts of salvation as even His enemies acknowledged. **MAT 27:42.**
 - b. While on earth Christ saved men from spiritual, mental, physical, and circumstantial maladies, but most of all He saved men from sin.
 - c. Christ's miracles were an unveiling of the ultimate salvation in the afterlife where none of these maladies will be experienced.
 - d. Therefore, to see the miracles of Christ was to see the glory and salvation of God. **JOH 2:11; ISA 40:5 c/w LUK 3:6.**
 - (1) The glory of God that will be revealed in us at the second coming of Christ was manifested in these miracles. **ROM 8:18.**
 - (2) Compare the miraculous healings in **MAT 15:30-31** performed during Christ's earthly ministry with what will be experienced by the redeemed at Christ's second coming. **ISA 35:4-6.**

XIII. Life in the new heavens and the new earth will be the restoration of the Edenic condition before

man sinned and judgment was passed upon man and the earth.

- A. All the holy prophets have spoken of "...the restitution of all things..." (**ACT 3:21**).
 - 1. restitution: The action of restoring a thing or institution to its original state or form (In later use only in echoes of, or with reference to, Acts iii.21.).
 - 2. As there was originally a heavens and earth without sin and death, so will there be again. **GEN 1:31; 2PE 3:13; REV 21:4.**
 - 3. This is when the creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption, commensurate with the general resurrection at the Second Coming. **ROM 8:21-23.**
 - 4. This is the rest which remains to God's people which we presently enter into by faith. **HEB 4:9-11.**
- B. Man was originally placed in a garden. **GEN 2:8-10.**
- C. In this garden man could walk with God. **GEN 3:8.**
- D. Because of his sin, man was expelled from the garden of Eden. **GEN 3:23-24.**
- E. Ever since his expulsion from the garden, man yearns to experience again the bliss of the garden.
 - 1. Consider all the beautiful gardens and parks man has cultivated for his pleasure.
 - 2. Walk about your house and look at how your house is adorned with things that suggest a garden: the floral arrangements and potted plants; the pictures; the vases; the designs on tablecloths, dresser scarves, doilies, curtains, and rugs; the carvings on furniture; the designs on wallpaper; etc. It is as if you are trying to live again in the garden.
 - 3. Weddings are adorned with floral arrangements. But then the first marriage took place in a garden.
 - 4. Flowers and plants are present at funerals and adorn cemeteries.
 - a. Man died in a garden.
 - b. Christ rose from the dead in a garden. **JOH 19:41-42.**
 - c. Man hopes after death to live in a garden.
 - (1) To be with Christ after death is to be in paradise. **LUK 23:43.**
 - (2) The word *paradise* comes from root words meaning *park or garden*.
- F. Man will be given access again to the tree of life, which was in the midst of the garden of God. **REV 2:7; 22:1-2, 14.**
- G. The Old Testament tabernacle/temple, God's dwelling place on earth, is a picture of God's heavenly dwelling place. **HEB 8:5; 9:24.**
 - 1. In the tabernacle/temple man could walk with God. **EXO 29:42-45; LEV 26:11-12.**
 - 2. God's elect have a place prepared for them in the Father's house, where they will again dwell with God. **JOH 14:2-4; REV 21:3.**
 - 3. Consider how the ornamentation of the tabernacle/temple depicted a garden. **EXO 25:31-40; 1KI 6:10, 15, 18, 23, 29, 32, 34-35; 7:18-19, 22, 26, 36, 49.**
 - 4. Man restored to God's house to live with God will be restored to the garden.
- H. The church, which is the dwelling place of God, is portrayed in Scripture as a garden. **1TI 3:15; 1CO 3:16; SON 4:12-15.**
 - 1. The relationship of Christ to the church is a marriage. **EPH 5:22-25.**
 - 2. The love of the bride and groom in the Song of Solomon is described in terms of a garden.
 - 3. God walks in His church as He walked in the garden. **2CO 6:16.**

XIV. Recall that the afterlife is described in terms of things we value and enjoy on this earth, things

such as health, gardens, joy, peace, precious stones, food and drink, loving relationships, social gatherings, and communion with God.

- A. We have already considered the description of the afterlife as one of health and gardens.
- B. There will also be *enduring joy* experienced in the afterlife. **ISA 65:17-19; 35:10.**
- C. The afterlife will be an experience of unmingled and unending peace.
 - 1. **peace:** 1. Freedom from, or cessation of, war or hostilities; that condition of a nation or community in which it is not at war with another. 2. Freedom from civil commotion and disorder; public order and security. 3. Freedom from disturbance or perturbation (esp. as a condition in which an individual person is); quiet, tranquility, undisturbed state. 4. Freedom from quarrels or dissension between individuals; a state of friendliness; concord, amity.
 - 2. Our final destiny is one of peace. **PSA 37:37.**
 - 3. The righteous enter into peace when they die. **ISA 57:1-2.**
 - 4. Peace will be rendered to the righteous in the Day of Judgment, when the dead are raised and stand before God. **ROM 2:10.**
 - 5. There will be no war, civil disorder, or dissension in the new heavens and the new earth. **ISA 33:20; 65:17, 25; EZE 34:25; ISA 60:18-20 c/w REV 21:23 & 22:5.**
 - 6. This peace will endure forever. **ISA 54:10; EZE 37:26.**
 - 7. In the afterlife we will enjoy the full effect of the death of Christ on the cross to procure our peace. **COL 1:20.**
- D. The city of God where we will dwell is garnished with precious stones (**ISA 54:11-12; REV 21:10-21**). Imagine the sparkling beauty arising from the light of the glory of God reflecting off of or shining through these gems.
- E. Saints will partake of a sumptuous feast of food and drink in the afterlife. **MAT 26:29; REV 7:16-17; 19:9; ISA 25:6-8.**
- F. The afterlife is characterized as the loving relationship of marriage, the very first human relationship ordained by God. **ISA 62:4-5; REV 19:7-8; 21:2, 9-10.**
- G. One of the great joys of life is a social gathering of friends and loved ones. Our experience of the afterlife will be such a gathering. **MAT 24:31; 2TH 2:1; REV 19:9.**
- H. The afterlife will be an experience of unbroken communion with God. **JOH 14:1-3; 17:24; REV 7:15; 21:3; 3:12.**
- I. To see the Lord will be the ultimate experience of bliss in the afterlife. **JOB 19:25-27; ISA 33:17; 1JO 3:2; REV 22:4; 1CO 13:12; PSA 17:15.**

XV. **ISA 65:17-25** also gives a description of life in the new heavens and the new earth.

- A. As pointed out before, it will be characterized by joy and peace.
- B. Everybody will be of full age in the world to come regardless of the age of their death in this world.
 - 1. There will be no infant of days.
 - 2. There will be no old men that have not yet lived out their days.
 - 3. It will be as though a child died at age 100.
 - a. The child will be as mature as the old man who died at 100.
 - b. There are no 100 year old children.
 - c. Even before the flood when men lived hundreds of years, they were marrying and bearing children before they were 100 years old.
 - d. Hence, the language is metaphorical.
 - e. "Believers through Christ shall be satisfied with life, though it be ever so short on earth. If an infant end its days quickly, yet it shall not be reckoned

to die untimely; for the shorter its life is the longer will its rest be. Though death reign over those that have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, yet they, dying in the arms of Christ, the second Adam, and belonging to his kingdom, are not to be called infants of days, but even the child shall be reckoned to die a hundred years old, for he shall rise again at full age, shall rise to eternal life." (Matthew Henry)

- f. When we see the Lord and are like him, we will be fully matured.
1CO 13:11-12; 1JO 3:2.
- g. This applies only to saints, not to sinners, who will die accursed though they live to be 100 years old.

- C. We will engage in productive work on the new earth.
 - 1. We will build and plant.
 - 2. But there will be nothing counterproductive or wearisome about our work.
 - a. Nothing will deprive us of the fruits of our labor like enemy soldiers, thorns, bureaucracy, or the IRS.
 - b. No elements or enemy seen or unseen will destroy our work, leaving us to lament time and energy lost.
- D. There will be no delayed answers to prayer.

XVI. The dominion that was lost by Adam has been regained by Jesus Christ. **MAT 28:18; 1PE 3:22.**

- A. Jesus Christ is the *last Adam*. **1CO 15:45.**
- B. The first Adam is a figure of the last Adam. **ROM 5:14.**
 - 1. The first Adam represented the entire human race. In him they lost the dominion.
 - 2. The last Adam represents the entire election of grace. In Him they (the elect) regain the dominion. **REV 5:9-10.**
- C. Paul quotes **PSA 8:4-6** to prove that the world to come is subject to Jesus Christ rather than to angels. **HEB 2:5-9.**
 - 1. This Psalm teaches that all things are put under the feet of man who is made a little lower than the angels.
 - 2. The ONLY man who has all things under His feet is Jesus Christ. **1CO 15:27.**
 - 3. Therefore, Jesus Christ fulfils **PSA 8.**
 - 4. Since all things are under Christ and nothing is left that is not put under Him, the world to come is subject to Him.
 - 5. However, under Christ, the saints will exercise dominion also.
1CO 6:3; HEB 1:14; LUK 19:15-19.
 - 6. In the world to come the saved shall reign forever, enjoying the dominion that was lost in the first Adam. **REV 22:5.**
- D. **PSA 8:7-8** teaches that the animals have been put in subjection to Christ.
- E. When Christ has put the last enemy under His feet, there will be a new heavens and a new earth of perfect harmony. **REV 20:14-22:6.**

XVII. Consider what does not continue after the Second Coming.

- A. Sin (**1CO 15:55-56; REV 21:27; PHIL 3:21 c/w HEB 7:26**) and its adjuncts:
 - 1. Accusation, repentance, confession, remission, pardons, baptism.
 - 2. Cover-ups (hiding), backsliding, apostasy.
 - 3. Guilty consciences, regret, shame.
 - 4. Chastening and penalties.
 - 5. Rebukes, reproofs and warnings.

- B. Sin's consequences and effects:
 - 1. Death and hell. **1CO 15:54; REV 20:14.**
 - 2. Separation from God. **1TH 4:17.**
 - 3. Discord, strife, war, disorder, rebellion, etc. See Sec. XIV, above.
 - 4. Crimes against God and man. **MAT 6:20; HEB 10:34; REV 22:15; 21:8.**
 - a. This will mean no more locks, alarms or secured barriers. **REV 21:25.**
 - b. Human governments are for punishing evildoers (**1TI 1:9-10; 1PE 2:14**) and so all human governments end at the Resurrection. **1CO 15:24.**
 - c. There will not be legislatures, police, criminal courts or jails, taxes, etc.
 - d. There will be no elections or campaigns.
- C. Death (**1CO 15:26; REV 21:4**) and its adjuncts: funerals, graves, etc.
- D. The curse (**REV 22:3**) and its adjuncts:
 - 1. Thorns and thistles. **GEN 3:17-19.**
 - 2. Sorrowful conception. **GEN 3:16.**
 - 3. The cursed. **MAT 25:41.**
- E. Vanity (**ROM 8:19-20**) and its adjuncts:
 - 1. Corruption. **ROM 8:21.**
 - a. This means no more entropy, rust, aging, etc. **MAT 6:20; 1PE 1:4.**
 - b. Nor shall there be any bodily, spiritual, doctrinal or moral corruption. **1CO 15:52-54; REV 21:27.**
 - 2. Groaning, pain, sorrow, crying, tears. **ROM 8:22-23; REV 21:4.**
 - 3. Sickness, disease, infirmities, afflictions, weakness, dishonour, etc. **MAT 8:17; 1CO 15:43; 2CO 4:17.**
 - 4. Failure. **LUK 12:33.**
 - 5. Hunger and poverty. **LUK 14:14; 16:19-25; REV 7:16; JOH 14:2.**
 - 6. The natural body which bears the image of Adam. **1CO 15:35-38, 44-45, 48.**
- F. Persecution and tribulation. **2TH 1:4-10; ROM 8:18.**
- G. Imperfect fellowship.
 - 1. The wicked shall be separated out of the church. **MAT 13:41-43; 22:11-14.**
 - 2. There will be no strife among us. **JAM 4:1 c/w 2PE 1:3-5; 1JO 2:17.**
 - 3. There will be no separation from any in Christ. **EPH 1:10; 1TH 4:13-14, 17.**
 - 4. We will be forever in the Lord's presence in perfect fellowship. **1JO 3:2.**
 - 5. We will not be hindered by poor understanding. **HEB 8:11 c/w 1CO 13:12.**
 - 6. None shall ever suffer loneliness or alienation there.
- H. Church government as we now know it. **1CO 15:24 c/w EPH 4:11-13; REV 3:12.**
- I. The present heavens and earth and sea. **HEB 1:10-12; 2PE 3:10-12; REV 21:1.**
 - 1. This would include the present animal kingdom.
 - 2. The animal kingdom had previously been destroyed in the Flood. **GEN 8:21-23.**
- J. Time. **JOH 6:39-40.**
- K. Christ's enemies / the church's enemies (Satan, his angels and human agents). **1CO 15:25-27; 2TH 2:8-9; ROM 16:20; REV 20:10; MAT 25:41.**
- L. Bondage. **ROM 8:21; GAL 4:26.**
- M. Fear. **REV 21:8.**
- N. Manufactured temple (**2CH 6:18; REV 21:22**). The earthly temple was God's sanctuary; in heaven, God is our sanctuary.
- O. Created light. **REV 7:16; 21:23; 22:5.**
 - 1. The default condition of earth has always been darkness. **GEN 1:2.**
 - 2. The condition of the new earth is eternal light, no night. **REV 21:25.**

- 3. We will no more swelter under a blazing sun. **REV 7:16; PSA 84:11.**
- 4. Seasons as we now know them will end. **GEN 8:22.**
- P. Marriage (**MAT 22:30**) and its adjuncts: sex, childbearing, child training/discipline, divorce, etc.
- Q. Faith. **HEB 11:1 c/w 2CO 5:7; 1JO 3:2.**
- R. Hope. **ROM 8:24.**

XVIII. Consider what the righteous will experience forever.

- A. They will *endure* (last, continue in existence) forever. **PSA 89:28-29.**
- B. They will live forever (**JOH 6:51, 58; 11:25-26**) with continual access to the tree of life. **REV 22:1-2, 14.**
- C. They will be betrothed to God forever (**HOS 2:19**). Our relationship with God will never cease.
- D. They are preserved forever (**PSA 37:28; 125:1; 1JO 2:17**). They shall never be lost.
- E. They will live forever and not see corruption (**PSA 49:8-9**). They will be immortal and incorruptible. **1CO 15:52-53.**
- F. They will dwell in God's house forever. **PSA 23:6; 61:4.**
- G. God will lift them up forever. **PSA 28:9.**
- H. Their inheritance shall be forever and they shall dwell in it forever. **PSA 37:18, 29.**
 - 1. They shall have an eternal country and city. **HEB 11:16.**
 - 2. They will never be taken over by a foreign power or lose their rights and liberties.
- I. They are set before God's face forever (**PSA 41:12; 61:7; 125:2; 1TH 4:17**). They shall never be banished from His presence as will be the case with the wicked. **MAT 25:41, 46.**
- J. God will be their portion forever. **PSA 73:26.**
 - 1. This is placed over against the failing of flesh and heart.
 - 2. Life with God extends beyond the failing of life in this earth.
- K. They will worship God and sing His praises forever. **PSA 61:8; 89:1; 145:1-2.**
- L. They will rejoice forever. **ISA 65:17-19; 35:10.**
- M. They will keep God's law forever. **PSA 119:44.**
 - 1. God's law lasts forever. **PSA 119:160.**
 - 2. We will always have our Bible with us. **2JO 1:2.**
 - 3. The gospel is everlasting. **MAT 24:35; REV 14:6.**
 - 4. They will live under God's authority as servants forever. **REV 7:15; 22:3.**
- N. They will shine forever. **DAN 12:3.**
- O. They will have the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, forever. **JOH 14:16.**
- P. They shall possess the kingdom and reign forever. **DAN 7:18, 27; REV 22:5.**
- Q. Charity will continue forever. **1CO 13:8.**
- R. They will have pleasures forever. **PSA 16:11.**
- S. There will be profitable work without fatigue and no unemployment. **ISA 65:22; 40:31.**
- T. Consider how many of the experiences begin in this life, yet because they go on forever, death will not interrupt them.
- U. Indeed God's salvation, by which we are saved, will outlast the universe. **ISA 51:6-8.**
- V. How this contrasts with what the wicked will experience forever. **PSA 83:17; 92:7; REV 14:9-11.**