

2. Preparing for Eternity

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Subtitle: Clarifying the three kinds of death

- Most people have a fear of dying – they are not sure what happens on “the other side”
- Multitudes of people are still un-prepared for “the other side”
- Many Christians do not possess a “working knowledge” of Bible truths around the subject of death, dying, etc.

Hebrews 2:14–15 (NLT) *Because God’s children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. 15 **Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.***

- When we repent of our sins & commit our life to Jesus Christ, we are no longer in bondage to the fear of dying

Last week’s main points:

A. The Bible speaks about different kinds of deaths:

- i. Physical death
- ii. Spiritual death
- iii. Second death

B. The story of the Rich Man and Lazarus

- i. Abraham’s Bosom
- ii. Hades: hell
- iii. A great gulf fixed

C. Jesus Christ liberated the righteous souls from Abraham’s Bosom & took them to heaven

D. Born again people go straight to heaven when they die

1. What is Death?

- Death is the “separation”:
 - Of a person’s spirit & soul (inward man) from their physical body
 - Of a person’s spirit & soul from the physical realm
- Our physical body gives us the “licence” & ability to live & operate in the physical realm
- There is no such thing as (disembodied) human spirits roaming the earth

- Once a person has died, their soul leaves the physical realm and is taken either to:
 - Heaven
 - Or hell
 - (There is no third option)
 - Purgatory is a lie
 - Re-incarnation is also a lie

Hebrews 9:27–28 (NLT) *And just as **each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, 28** so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him.*

- The words “to die once” are reference to physical death
- Jesus Christ has also “died once”, to take away the sins of many people
- He will come again (Second Coming), to bring salvation to all who eagerly wait for Him

2. Three different Kinds of Deaths:

- Physical death** – separation of a person’s spirit & soul from their physical body:
 - i. The person’s body is buried (or cremated)
 - ii. The person’s spirit & soul is taken to either heaven or hell
- Spiritual death** – separation from God because of sin (Isaiah 59:2)
 - i. All unsaved people are spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1&5)
 - ii. All born again believers are spiritually alive (Eph. 2:1&5)
- Second death** – eternal separation from God in a place called “the lake of fire”

John 5:24 (NKJV) *Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has **passed from death into life.***

- When we commit our life to Jesus Christ & become born again, we cross over from spiritual death and come into spiritual life
- At the point of our spiritual conversion, the Holy Spirit takes out our old spirit filled with death, and gives us a new spirit filled with life (2 Cor.5:17)
- Death is a condition, not a state of non-existence

John 5:24 (MSG) *It's urgent that you listen carefully to this: Anyone here who believes what I am saying right now and aligns himself with the Father, who has in fact put me in charge, **has at this very moment the real, lasting life and is no longer condemned to be an outsider. This person has taken a giant step from the world of the dead to the world of the living.***

(Mark 13:13 (AMP))... *he who patiently perseveres and endures to the end will be saved (**made a partaker of the salvation by Christ, and delivered from spiritual death.**)*

3. What is the Second Death?

Revelation 20:4–6 (NKJV) *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. **5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.** This is the first resurrection. **6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.***

- This describes a scene after the Second Coming of Christ, when Jesus Christ returns to earth to set up His Thousand Year Reign
- His followers will reign with Him for a thousand years
- Vs. 5. *the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.*

Revelation 20:11–15 (NKJV) *Then I saw **a great white throne** and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. **12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God,** and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And **the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.** **13** The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. **14** Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. **This is the second death.** **15** And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

- This describes the Great White Throne Judgment that will take place at the end of Christ's Thousand Year Reign
- The souls of the unrighteous dead will be brought out of hell to stand before God, and Jesus Christ will judge them with a final judgment
- After this final judgment they will be cast into the lake of fire
- This is the second death (also called eternal death, because it cannot be reversed)
- The lake of fire is a place of perpetual torment (Revelation 20:10)

4. There will be two separate Resurrections from the dead

John 5:28–29 (NKJV) *Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

- Jesus speaks of all people who have died
- All will hear His voice & come forth
 - *those who have done good, to the resurrection of life*
 - *those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation*

a. The First Resurrection

Revelation 20:4,6 (NKJV) *...they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years ... 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the **first resurrection**. Over such the second death has no power ...*

- This first resurrection occurs at the Second Coming of Christ (before the Thousand Year Reign of Christ) and includes all believers (only)

b. The Second resurrection

- The second resurrection occurs after the Thousand Year Reign of Christ & includes all unbelievers (at the Great White Throne Judgment)
- Revelation 20:11–15

5. What Death is not!

- Death is not soul-sleep (The concept of soul-sleep is not biblical)
- Death is not annihilation or extinction
- Every person that has been created by God has a soul, and that soul is immortal, and will exist forever (a person's soul cannot be un-created)