

A
Journey
Of
MAN
Into
TIMELESSNESS

Prepared by:

PAUL E. CANTRELL
2004

A Journey of

MAN

Into

TIMELESSNESS

12 Lessons

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Preface

Science fiction has challenged the minds of men to think about things beyond this life. It has invented the idea of “time travel.” But the Word of God has not only challenged our minds to think on the things beyond this life, but has given us the assurance that we need in order to make our decision to travel the way that leads to a very desirable existence beyond death—a travel into timelessness!

Man needs to seriously deal with such question as “Where am I going?” and “What will be at the end of my life?” A serious study on “Last Things” should help to find answers to such questions as these and others as well.

This study will deal with such issues as “Death,” “Life,” “Mortal and Immortality,” “The Spirit realm,” “Resurrection,” “Judgment,” “Punishment,” and “Reward.” Our journey in this life leads to the time of our death, and then what? What will we face after death? What will be the ultimate end of man?

Let’s begin our study searching for answers to our many questions about our future destiny/1

Paul E. Cantrell
2004

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Chapter One

“LOOKING AT THE END OF LIFE”

INTRODUCTION

1. Acts 8:5-13
2. People like Simon the Sorcerer, through the centuries, have appealed to man's curiosity about the things beyond this world.....and especially about the future.
 - a) They often create great excitement in the minds of lots of people.
 - b) And often make a lot of money in the process.....from gullible people.
 - c) This curiosity about the unusual and the future is in the realm of religion as well.
 - d) There is not a one of us that is not concerned about what will happen to us after death.
 - e) We all know one thing for certain.....we will die! (Heb. 9:27)
 - f) But then what?
 - g) What lies beyond death's door for us?
 - h) Is there any way to know for certain?
 - i) We are fully persuaded that the Bible is the only dependable source to which we can turn for answers to our questions.
3. Life must have a beginning in order to have an end.
4. In these lessons we are looking at what happens at the end of man's life on earth.

DISCUSSION

I. MAN'S BEGINNING AND NATURE!

A. Man has been created by God!

- 1) Gen. 1:27—***"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."***
- 2) When God created man:
 - a) He first formed the body of man from the dust of the ground.
 - b) Then, he breathed into his nostrils the "breath" or "spirit" of life.
 - c) The outcome.....Man became a "living being." or "soul."
 - d) Gen. 2:7—***"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."***
- 3) Without the spirit, the body was lifeless.
- 4) With the spirit, the body became "alive," "active," "living."
- 5) But, take away that spirit of life.....and the body becomes "dead."
- 6) James 2:26—***"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."***
- 7) Go to a funeral home and view a body!
 - a) When you look at that dead body....everything is there but what?
 - b) The spirit....it is gone!
- 8) The body must have the "spirit of life" within to be alive.

The fall of man was brought on by his disobedience!

- 1) He was warned that his disobedience would bring on death.
- 2) But Mother Eve was deceived into believing a lie....that they would not die!
- 3) They didn't die physically that day, but they did die spiritually.
- 4) Sin brings on spiritual death....separation from God.

B. Why is man Mortal?

- 1) The word "Mortal" means that something or someone is capable of dying! (Gk., Thnetos)
- 2) Rom. 6:12—"***Let not sin reign in your mortal body....***"
- 3) I Cor. 15:53-54—"***This mortal must put on immortality.***"
- 4) 2 Cor. 5:4—"***.....that mortality might be swallowed up of life.***"
- 5) Gen. 3:19—"***....for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.***"
- 6) What returns to the ground? (**THE BODY**)
- 7) All these passages refer to the body of man!
- 8) Such is not said of the spirit within man!
- 9) God designed the body for physical death....but not the spirit.
- 10) The reason why the body dies is found in Gen. 3:22-24.

C. Man is also a triune Being.

- 1) 1 Thess. 5:23—"***And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.***"
- 2) **Body:**
 - a) The means of activity upon this earth.
 - b) A part of our identity is with our bodies.
 - c) We care for our bodies as a part of who we are.
 - d) The physical house for the spirit and soul.
- 3) **Spirit:**
 - a) The likeness of God. (John 4:24)
 - b) We have God-like characteristics because of this "spirit of life" within our bodies.
 - c) Suggest two possibilities about this "spirit of life" within us:
 - A) This special entity is unique in the entire universe.
 - B) And/or, it becomes unique as it develops within us.
 - d) This is the real inner person.
 - e) Identifies with the Body & Soul.
- 4) **Soul:**
 - a) Seems to identify with both our body and our spirit as well.
 - b) But the Soul is also distinct from both.
 - c) That inner person that will give an accounting to God in Judgment.
 - d) That which can be punished by God. (Matt. 10:28)

II. MAN'S REASONINGS ABOUT EXISTENCE AFTER DEATH

- A. ***Job's question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" was not the first time this question was asked. (Job 14:14)***

- 1) It has been a universal question of man...possibly from the death of Abel.
- 2) It has been an insistent question ... because teeming throngs have lived and died upon the earth.
- 3) But it has also been a perplexing question for many.... For there was no positive assurance given.
- 4) Men may go for years without seriously pondering this question.
 - a) But sooner or later we all will.
 - b) Because death is all around us.
 - c) And when we face death, it will surely be our question then.

B. *Questioning of man leads him to anticipate existence after death.*

- 1) Man observes things dying down....then coming to life again.
 - a) The cold and deathlike winter is gradually turned into new life in the spring.
 - b) Man asks: "*Will man be like this?*"
- 2) He also observes that in the death of all things---others are blessed.
 - a) Animals live off of other animals or things.
 - b) We live off of dead animals or things.
 - c) But who profits in the death of a man?
- 3) He notices that Matter is not destroyed, but merely exists in another form when affected.
 - a) Matter continues on generation after generation.
 - b) But man dies!
 - c) Is that the end of man....the highest form of being to exist?
 - d) Is matter superior to man?
- 4) Man also notices that all races of men have held to some form of existence after death.
 - a) Why? Where did it come from?
 - b) Written records indicate that it dates back into antiquity.
 - c) The Ancient Pyramids of Egypt are living testimony to man's belief in an existence after death.
 - d) The records of the Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Chinese, Japanese, Norsemen, Eskimos, etc., all indicate a belief in some kind of existence after death.
 - e) Why is this belief among so many?
 - f) How did they arrive at this conclusion?
 - g) No Revelation from God that we know of.
- 5) The very belief in God should lead men to believe in existence after death.
- 6) Even the Jewish people came to the same conclusion from statements of Scripture & reasoning upon them.
 - a) Job's question, "*If a man die, will he live again?*", did not go unanswered by Job, himself!
 - b) Job 14:14; 19:25-27
 - c) David's statement about his son shows a belief in an existence after death. (2 Sam. 12:22-23)
 - d) The translating of Enoch and Elijah emphasizes an existence after death of some kind.

III. BUT MAN NEEDS ASSURANCE OF IMMORTALITY!

A. The assurance of Immortality was still lacking until Jesus came!

- 1) With all of man's reasoning, he was still groping!
- 2) Even the Old Testament Revelation did not make it as clear as the New Testament Revelation.
- 3) 2 Tim. 1:10—"***But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel...***"
- 4) All the evidences pointed towards an existence after death, but there was a need for absolute assurance!
- 5) The Resurrection of Jesus gave man that assurance!
- 6) His resurrection removed all question of doubt of Immortality for man.

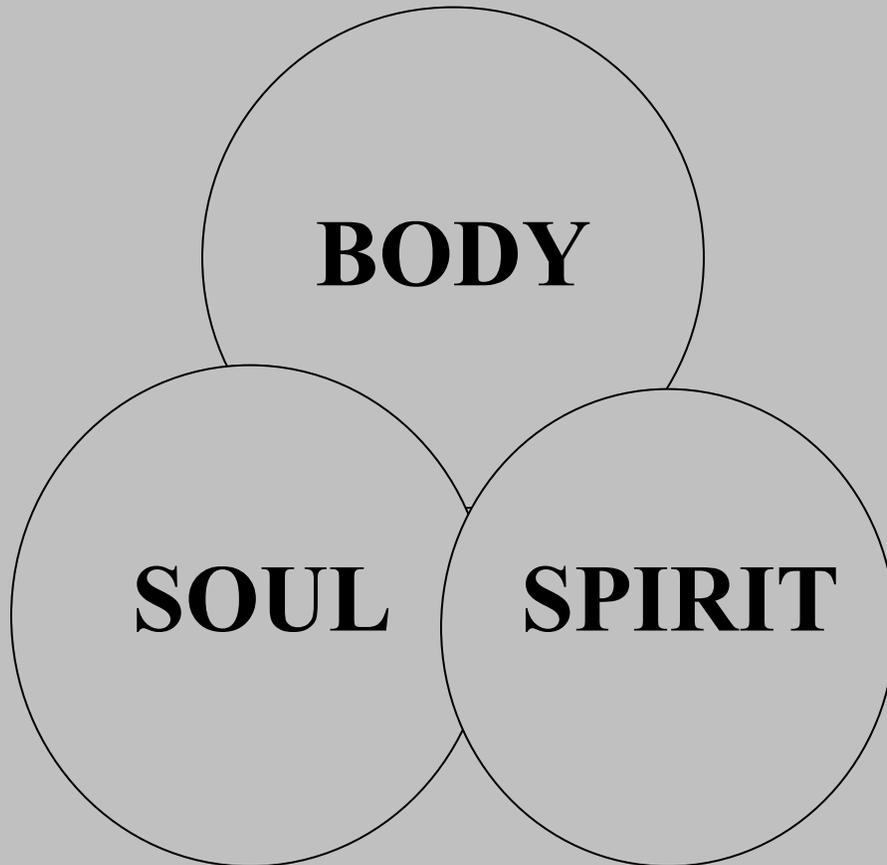
B. What is Immortality?

- 1) It is to raise up this mortal body from the grave and transform it into an immortal body....one that can never die!
- 2) 1 Cor. 15:42-44
- 3) Phil. 3:20-21
- 4) 1 John 3:2
- 5) It is to turn this mortal body into a spiritual body that is glorious and unending.
- 6) A re-uniting of the New Body, Soul, and Spirit of man.
- 7) And fitting it for eternity.....everlasting life with God.
- 8) Here we bear the image of the earthly.....then we will bear the image of the heavenly!
- 9) Only God is capable of giving man that immortal body. (1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15-16).

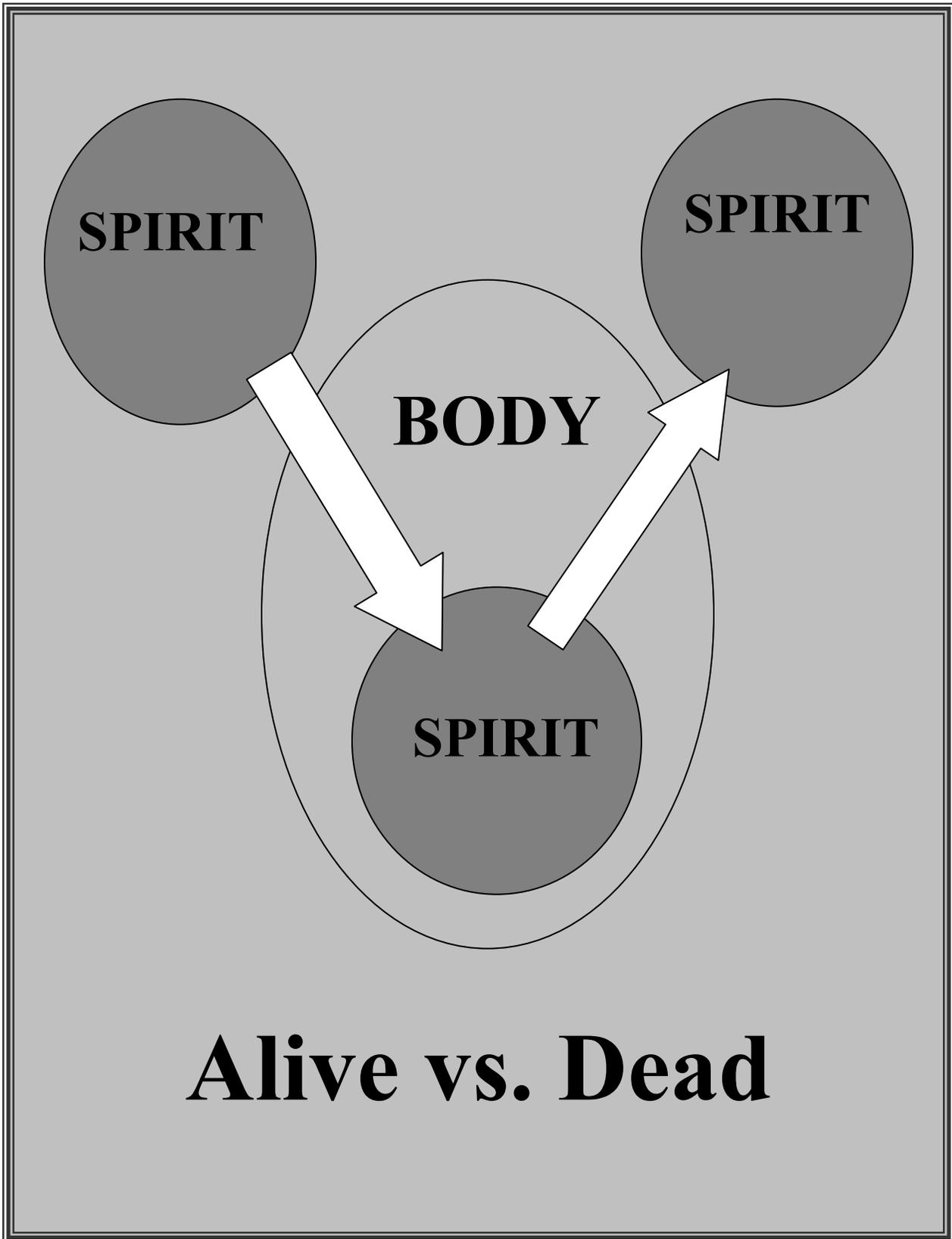
CONCLUSION

1. How grateful we should be for God's assurance of Immortality through Christ.
2. A preacher told about a woman that was crippled badly with arthritis.
 - a) She could not walk without someone helping her.
 - b) It was a pitiable sight to behold (I know personally---both my father and my mother-in-law became bedfast with the disease).
 - c) But in spite of the obvious cripple condition, she had come to the church building to be baptized into Christ.
 - d) It wasn't easy....took a lot of help.....but she made it!
 - e) Her crippled and vile body now had the hope of a glorious, immortal body someday!
3. 1 Pet. 1:3—"***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...***"
4. Do you have this hope?

**MAKE-UP OF
MORTAL MAN**



A Triune Being



Chapter Two

“IS DEATH THE END OF MAN?”

INTRODUCTION

1. Jas.4:14—***“Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”***
 - a) Is man’s existence for just a little while and then gone forever?
 - b) Is this life all there is to man’s existence?
 - c) 1 Cor. 15:32—***“If the dead do not rise, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!’***
 - d) 1 Cor. 15:19—***“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.”***
2. But, we do believe:
 - a) That Christ rose from the dead!
 - b) That some day we too shall be raised!
 - c) That we will exist somewhere throughout eternity!
3. This lesson—4 States of Man’s Existence will help to show this!
 - a) It is not just a short existence and it’s all over.....
 - b) But we will pass through three separate states into the 4th state.
 - c) God has made these states known to us in His Word.

DISCUSSION

I. STATE OF INNOCENCE

A. It is called such because such are not accountable to God.

- 1) We enter this state upon physical birth.
- 2) We do not inherit sins—so such are not under condemnation.
- 3) Recognized by Jesus:
 - a) Matt. 18:3—***“Verily I say unto you, Except you are converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”***
 - b) Matt. 19:14—***“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”***
- 4) Everyone recognizes the innocence of little children.

B. If little children are not lost, then they don’t need to be saved!

- 1) What causes a person to be lost is sin! (Rom. 6:23)
- 2) If they are not sinners, then they are not lost!
- 3) The better word for them is—They are SAFE!

C. There are two ways to leave this State:

- 1) Die in a State of Innocence!
- 2) Or, Become responsible before God for our disobedient acts.
- 3) Isa. 59:2—***“...your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear.”***

II. STATE OF RESPONSIBILITY

A. When we become old enough to be held accountable for our actions!

- 1) Rom. 14:12—“***So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.***”
- 2) When we sin, we automatically go into the world of sin and condemnation.
- 3) Rom. 6:16—“***Do you not know that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?***”

B. This State is divided into two compartments:

- 1) Servants of sin or servants of righteousness!
- 2) Lost sinners or saved!
- 3) In the Church or in the Lost World!

C. Those lost in the world can be of two kinds:

- 1) Religious, but lost! (Matt. 7:21-23)
- 2) Non-religious, and lost! (2 Thess. 1:7-9)

D. There are two kinds of people connected with the church:

- 1) Those who are faithful unto death. (Rev. 2:10)
- 2) Those who are unfaithful. (2 Pet. 2:20-22)

E. How does one get into the church or the saved state?

- 1) Jn. 3:5
- 2) Acts 2:38, 41
- 3) One must continue faithful in order to stay saved.

F. We will leave this State in one of three conditions:

- 1) Die in faithfulness to God.
- 2) Die in unfaithfulness to God.
- 3) Die in a lost condition in the world.

III. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE OF THE DEAD

A. All go to this State upon Physical Death!

- 1) This is a place of waiting called (Sheol or Hades)
- 2) Jesus went into Hades (Acts 2:27).
- 3) The Rich man went into Hades, but was in torment. (Lk. 16:22-23)
- 4) Lazarus went into Hades, but was comforted.

B. Thus, there are two separate conditions in Hades:

- 1) Comfort or torment.
- 2) Rest or Restlessness.
- 3) Happiness or unhappiness.
- 4) Paradise or Tartarus.
- 5) Hopeful or Hopeless.
- 6) And....no changing of one's condition while there.

C. Mankind leaves the Intermediate State by:

- 1) God calling all men forth from there to Judgment.
 - a) Rev. 20:13—“***Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.***”

- 2) Resurrection from grave.
 - b) Heb. 9:27—“*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment...*”
- 3) In a State of Grace or a State of Condemnation!

IV. THE ETERNAL STATE

A. Man’s ultimate destiny is Eternity!

- 1) Either with God or Away from God!
- 2) Eternally Saved or Eternally Lost!
- 3) Heaven or Hell!

B. Mankind is ushered into this State by a Resurrection to Judgment.

- 1) Jn. 5:28-29
 - c) Resurrection to Life.
 - d) Resurrection to Condemnation.
- 2) Jesus will return for Judgment with his angels. (Matt. 25:31-32)

C. Mankind can entered into heaven by:

- 1) Dying in a state of innocence—infant, young child, or retarded.
- 2) Dying as a faithful Child of God.

D. Mankind can entered into hell by:

- 1) Dying in a lost condition in the world.
- 2) Or, dying as an unfaithful child of God.

CONCLUSION

1. Death is not the end of man’s existence!
2. Eternity is man’s ultimate destiny.
3. We have a choice as to what our ultimate destiny will be.
4. But that choice must be made here, now, while we have time & opportunity.
5. Have you made your choice?

4 States of Man's Existence

SAFE	Faithful CHURCH	COMFORT	HEAVEN
	Unfaithful		
Innocent	Responsible	Intermediate	Eternal
SINNER	Religious WORLD	TORMENT	HELL
	Non- Religious		

Chapter Three

“DOES THE SPIRIT OF MAN SURVIVE THE DEATH OF THE BODY?”

INTRODUCTION

1. Man is in a journey in life.
 - a) There are many ways this life can be lived.
 - b) God has given instructions for the best way to live.
 - c) This journey through life can be a blessed one, a profitable one, and a spiritual one that ends extremely happy.
 - d) Or, it can be a carnal, worldly-centered, selfish journey that ends in great disappointment.
2. Man begins his journey when the "breath" or "spirit" of life is placed in him by God (Gen. 2:7).
 - a) In this journey, we are developing the person or character that identifies us.
 - b) At physical death, our journey in life is ended.
 - c) The body goes back to dust, but what happens to the "breath" or "spirit" of life?
 - d) What happens to the person (the soul) that has developed in life?
 - e) Does the spirit of man survive the death of the body?
3. We have seen that man is a triune being--body, soul, and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23).
 - a) The spirit in man is what gives him life, activity in this world.
 - b) But the absence of the spirit brings death, inactivity (Jas. 2:26).
 - c) The death of the body brings to a close our activity in life on this earth.
 - d) But is that the end of man's journey?

DISCUSSION

I. DOES MAN'S SPIRIT SURVIVE THE DEATH OF THE BODY?

A. It is the body that dies, not the spirit!

- 1) Jas. 2:26 states--"***For as the body without the spirit is dead....***"
- 2) It nowhere states that the spirit is dead without the body.

B. The Old Testament gives us an indication of what happens to the spirit.

- 1) Isaiah 6:1-3
 - a) Angels are spirit-beings that exist.
 - b) The very existence of God shows the same clearly (John 4:24).
- 2) Gen. 5:24--"***And Enoch walked with God: and he was not, for God took him.***" (*Where?*)
- 3) 2 Kings 2:11--"***And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.***"
 - a) Was he taken into nothingness?

- 4) 1 Sam. 28:19--***"Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines: and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me: and the lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."***

a) Was Samuel's spirit alive without his body?

C. The New Testament also gives us an indication of what happens to the spirit upon death.

- 1) Matt. 17:4--***"Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, 'Lord it is good for us to be here; if you wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'"***

a) Their bodies were dead, but their spirits were alive.

- 2) Jesus quotes a statement of God to Moses....1500 years before.

a) Matt. 22:32--***"I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.... God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."***

b) Makes a point on the tense of the verb....Present tense!

c) "I am"....Not "I was."

d) What is living? (the spirit of man!)

- 3) There are many other passages.

II. BUT WHERE DOES MAN'S SOUL OR SPIRIT GO UPON DEATH?

A. It is obvious that the spirit survives the death of the body.

- 1) But is it asleep like the body?

a) This expression is never used with reference to the spirit.

b) Only the body.

c) Dan. 12:2--***"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."***

d) This and other passages refer to the body, not the spirit.

- 2) Eccl. 12:7--***"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."***

a) This says the spirit goes back to God, but in what sense?

b) Does it go to heaven....if so, both good & bad go to heaven?

- 3) Jesus commended His spirit to the Father in His death.

a) Lk. 23:46--***"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the spirit."***

b) Where did Jesus' spirit go upon His death?

1. He promised the thief they would be together in Paradise that day (Lk. 23:43).

2. Peter stated that Jesus' soul was not left in Hades (Acts 2:31).

B. Just where do the spirits or souls of dead men go?

- 1) Some advocate that the righteous go to heaven upon death.

a) When Jesus was resurrected, he ascended back to heavens (Eph. 4:8).

b) It is advocated that Jesus liberated the righteous dead from Sheol or Hades and took them to heaven with Him.

- c) After this, all righteous go to be with the Lord at death s(Phil. 1:21-24; 2 Cor. 5:6-8; Rev. 6:9-11).
- 2) If the Righteous go directly to Heaven:
 - a) What about the resurrection and judgment?
 - b) Are these dis-embodied spirits (Rev. 6:9-11)?
 - c) Does Heaven come after the resurrection and judgment?
 - d) Is it possible that these expressions are anticipating what will eventually become a reality?
 - 1. In going from Pennsylvania to Texas....one may pass through several states in order to get there.
 - 2. So, with our spirit--we may have to experience a resurrection and judgment before eventually being with the Lord eternally.
 - 3. Example: **Acts 2:34-35**

III. UPON DEATH, MAN'S SPIRIT GOES TO HADES.

A. Caution! Humans think in terms of places, events, time, etc.

- 1) God accommodates our humanness:
 - a) By using human terms about Himself: arms, hands, head, feet, etc.
 - b) By describing Heaven and Hell as though they were material places.
 - c) Seems to do the same about where our spirits go.
- 2) Man's spirit must go some place!
 - a) So, God accommodates us in describing a place.
 - b) He called it Sheol in the Old Testament.
 - c) He called it Hades in the New Testament.

B. SHEOL occurs 65 times in O.T.

- 2) 31 Times translated Hell in KJV (mistake).
- 3) Refers to the state of the dead.
 - a) Spirit goes into Sheol.
 - b) The wicked will suffer, but the righteous will not (Ps. 9:17).

C. HADES occurs 10 or 11 times (one may be a variant).

- 1) Greek Translation of O.T. used Hades to refer to Sheol.
- 2) When the N.T. quotes the O. T., it uses Hades for Sheol.
- 3) Translated Hell....definitely not proper!
- 4) Other versions just use Hades.

D. The Grecian concepts of the place of spirits:

- 1) Had two compartments:
 - a) Elysian fields--abode of good--pleasurable.
 - b) Tartarus--abode of bad--punishment.
- 2) The Jewish people had somewhat of the same concept.

E. The New Testament concept:

- 1) Both Sheol and Hades seem to be neutral or generic terms.
- 2) Where both the righteous and wicked spirits go.
- 3) And all earthly contact and activity ceases.

F. Hades is divided into two compartments: Righteous and unrighteous.

- 1) The Righteous are in Paradise!
 - a) Jesus went to Paradise upon His death (Lk. 23:43).
 - b) But He was in Hades (Acts 2:31).
 - c) We conclude that Paradise is where the righteous go in Hades.
 - d) Paul went into Paradise, but was not permitted to tell what he saw (2 Cor. 12:1-4)
 - e) It is a place of rest (Rev. 14:13).
 - f) Paradise is not the final state of man, but a temporary place.
 - g) It is an unclothed state (without the body).
 - h) In the final state, we will be clothed upon with a new body.
- 2) The Unrighteous are in Tartarus!
 - a) Used one time (2 Peter 2:4).
 - b) Refers to fallen angels, but not final state.
 - c) They are reserved there unto Judgment.
 - d) If unrighteous are there, they are reserved for judgment also.
 - e) Both will receive a similar eternal fate (Matt. 25:41).

G. Conditions in Hades?

- 1) Story of the Rich man and Lazarus illustrate (Luke 16:19-31).
 - a) Lazarus was carried to Abraham's Bosom where he was comforted.
 1. Abraham's Bosom....a place of honor at a Banquet.
 2. Comfort, peace, rest. (Luke 16:22, 25)
 - b) The Rich Man was in Hades in Torment (Luke 16:23, 24, 28).
 1. He was in Torment in Hades (Tartarus).
 2. No rest, peace, comfort, or honor.
 - c) A great gulf is fixed between two places in Hades:
 1. So, that no one can pass back and forth;
 2. So, no one will have a second chance after death.

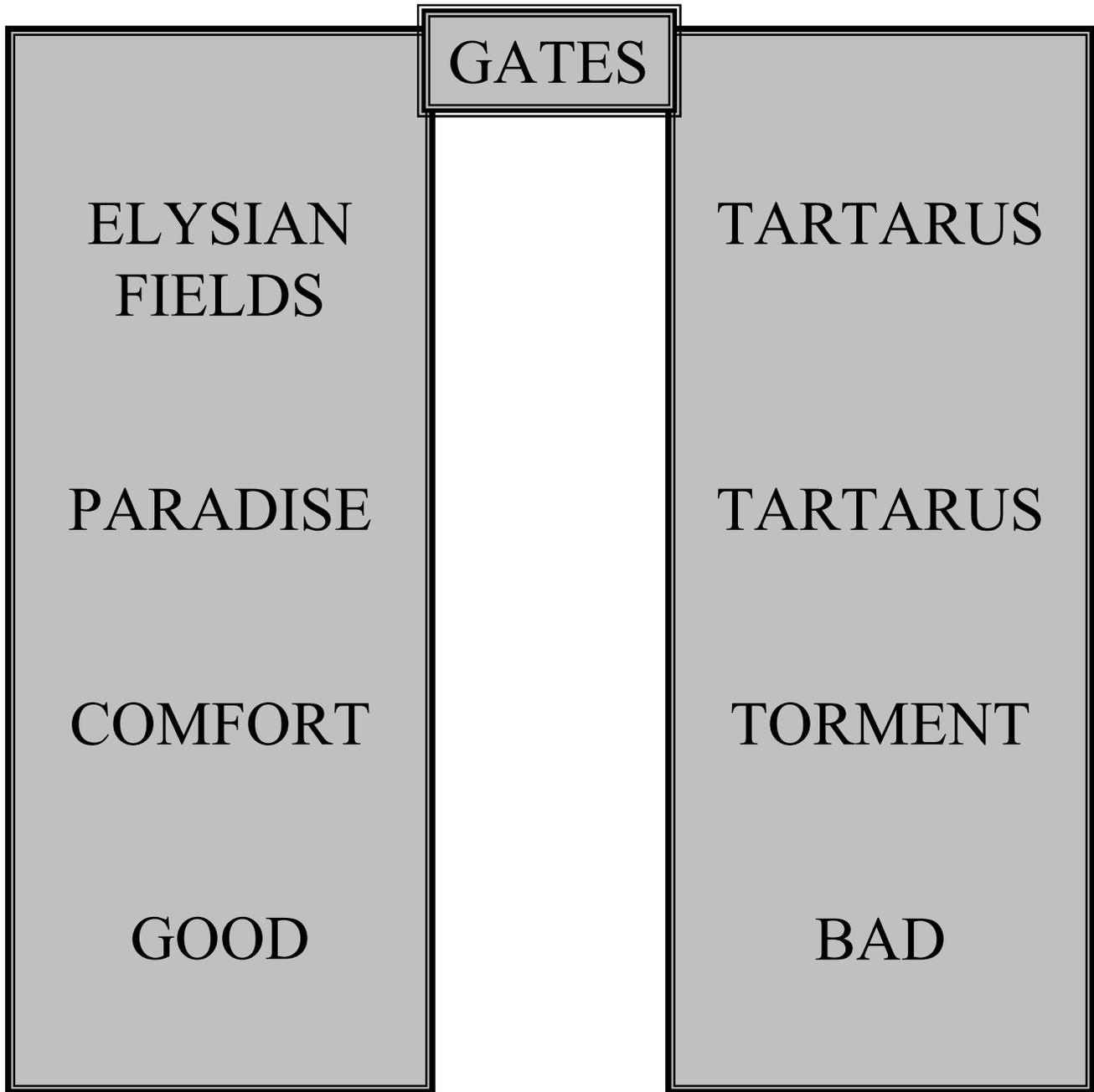
H. Conclusions about Hades:

- 1) All go to Hades....but into proper place in Hades.
- 2) There is a "conscious" existence there.
- 3) The Righteous are comforted.
- 4) The Wicked are tormented.
- 5) They retain their identities.
- 6) They are able to communicate and recognize one another.
- 7) People are still on earth alive.
- 8) But no return or communication with those living on earth.
- 9) They retain their memory.
- 10) They are awaiting judgment.

CONCLUSION

- 1) What can we learn from our study?
 - a) Those who are in Torment in Hades don't want their loved ones to go there!
 - b) Those in Comfort have a very joyous place to await for our resurrection!
- 2) The significance--we make the choice as to which place we will be! What is your choice?

SHEOL / HADES



UNSEEN WORLD OF THE DEAD

Chapter Four

"DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD"

INTRODUCTION

1. At Jesus' return, several events will occur:
 - a) There will be a general resurrection of all mankind.
 - b) The end of the present order of things.
 - c) Jesus will deliver the Kingdom up to the Father.
 - d) He will put an end to all rule, power, & authority.
 - e) Death as the last enemy will be destroyed.
 - f) Christ will become subject to the Father.
 - g) Judgment of all mankind---Reward or Punishment.
 - h) Present heavens & earth to be destroyed.
2. This lesson—Deals with the Destiny of the Present Heavens & Earth!
3. Questions:
 - a) Will they continue to exist in a physical state?
 - b) Will the earth be renovated & returned to its original state before man sinned?
 - c) Will it be transformed into a spiritual habitat suitable for spiritual bodies?
 - d) Or, will it be destroyed and pass away?
 - a) Proper understanding of certain words is important to this study

DISCUSSION

I. HOW IS THE WORD "WORLD" TO BE UNDERSTOOD?

A. It is used in a variety of ways:

- 1) It is used with reference to periods of time. (Greek—"Aion")
 - a) "The Patriarchal Age," "Mosaic Age," "The Christian Age."
 - b) Matt. 12:32—"*Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.*"(or, *the one to come*).
 - c) KJV uses, "World" instead of age!
 - d) This world, age, period of time, will come to an end.
 - e) Another one (world, age, period of time) will follow it.
- 2) It is used with reference to the evilness of the times. (Aion)
 - a) 2 Cor. 4:4—"*Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*"
 - b) Gal. 1:4—"*Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age...*"
 - c) Dealing with the conditions of the present period of time.

- 3) The inhabitants of the world. (Greek—"Oikoumene")
- Luke 2:1—*"And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered."*(Inhabitants)
 - Heb. 2:5—*"For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels."*
 - The world to come---the abode of the righteous---Heaven.
 - Peter refers to it this way: *"Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."*(2 Pet. 3:13)
 - Again a contrast of the "present (age)world" and "the (age)world to come."
 - This present inhabited world will come to an end.
- 3) Mankind in orderly nations or kingdoms. (Greek—"Kosmos")
- John 3:16—*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*
 - Matt. 4:8—*"Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory."*
 - Can have reference to Material goods accumulated.
 - Matt. 16:26—*"For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"*
 - Peter used this Greek Word in contrast to something:
 - 2 Pet. 3:6-7—*"By which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."*
 - The heavens & earth did not perish...humanity perished
 - But he switches from humanity to the heavens & earth and their future destiny.

B. These 3 Greek Words do not have reference to what we refer to as the "Universe"..... or the heavens & earth!

- They refer more to mankind who inhabits the earth.
- To mankind in orderly nations or kingdoms.
- Or to the sinfulness of mankind that inhabits the earth.
- All of mankind and his sinfulness will be punished, and perish!
- Not talking about the heavens & earth.
- Both Old & New Testaments use the expression, "Heavens & earth" to refer to our universe.
 - Gen. 1:1—*"In the beginning, God created the heaven & the earth."*
 - Matt. 24:35—*"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."*

II. THREE WORDS THAT DO DEAL WITH OUR SUBJECT:

A. Heaven "Ouranos" is used in 3 possible concepts:

- 1) With reference to the atmosphere surrounding the earth.
 - a) Luke 18:13—"*And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'*"
 - b) The area where birds & man can survive.
 - c) Beyond this atmosphere, man has problems existing.
- 2) With reference to the created universe that contains all the heavenly bodies.
 - a) Gen. 1:1—"*In the beginning, God created the heaven & the earth.*"
 - b) Ps. 19:1—"*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.*"
 - c) Mankind has always been fascinated by God's handiwork!
- 3) Reference to the abode of God & the heavenly hosts.
 - a) Matt. 5:12—"*Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*"
 - b) Matt. 5:48—"*Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*"
 - c) Heaven where God is..... and where our reward will be.

B. Earth (Ge).

- 1) Has reference to this planet (earth).
- 2) Reference to the material of which it is made: soil, ground, dust, land.
- 3) Matt. 13:5—"*Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.*"
- 4) It is used in contrast to the heavens.
- 5) Matt. 5:18—"*For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.*"
- 6) The word (Ge) is never used with reference to the NEXT WORLD, but with one exception.
 - a) 2 Pet. 3:13—"*.... Look for new heavens and a new earth...*" (Also Rev. 21:1)
 - b) It is new in relation to the old earth.(Accommodative)

C. Destroy (Appollumi)

- 1) Jesus draws a sharp contrast in using this Greek word:
 - a) Matt. 10:28—"*And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*"
 - b) Man can kill the body---cause it to cease activity.
 - c) But God can destroy or punish both the body & soul of man in Gehenna (Hell) (Everlasting fire).
- 2) 2 Thess. 1:9—"*These shall be punished with everlasting (age lasting) destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power*"
- 3) Destruction not only of physical things, but spiritual things as well.

- 4) Observations:
 - a) Word means to abolish, put an end to, ruin, to kill, give over to everlasting misery, lose everlasting salvation, to perish, to be lost.
 - b) Used in **Sense of punishment**.
- 5) Other passages (Mk. 1:24; Rev. 8:9; 11:18)

III. THEN WHAT SHOULD WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE "DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD?"

A. What we should not be meaning:

- 1) Not talking about destruction of this evil world (mankind) (Oikoumene)—But they will be destroyed if they do not repent!
- 2) Not talking about destruction of mankind in orderly nations (Kosmos)—But they will be destroyed if they do not repent!
- 3) Not talking about this present period of time (Age) (Aion)—But this period of time will end!

B. We are dealing with the destruction of the present Heavens & Earth.

- 1) The earth, land, planet, the place where man is now living.
- 2) The heavens in the sense of the atmosphere around the earth, as well as the universe (heavenly bodies—Sun, Moon, Stars).

C. Peter gives a vivid description of this destruction in 2 Peter 3:5-12:

- 1) Seven different Greek words are used to describe destruction:
 - a) **Luo**—To loose, unbind, release, dissolve, break up, demolish, to destroy, to perish. (v. 11—dissolved)
 - b) **Kausoo**—To burn up, set fire to, with fervent heat. (v. 10—Burn with heat).
 - c) **Kata-Kaio**—To burn up, consume by fire. (v. 10—Burned up).
 - d) **Puroo**—To burn with fire, set on fire, full of fire, fiery, melted by fire & purged of dross, refined by fire. (v. 12—Being on fire).
 - e) **Teko**—To make liquid, to become liquid, to melt, to perish or be destroyed by melting. (v. 12—Shall melt).
 - f) **Rhoizedon**—Whistling of an arrow, rushing sound, roaring flames, Noise. (v. 10—Great noise).
 - g) **Parago**—To pass by, to pass away. (v. 10—will pass away).
- 2) Observations:
 - a) The present heavens & earth will:
 1. Pass away with a great noise
 2. With the crash of a falling universe, the roar of destroying flames as they consume the universe.
 3. Be dissolved, burned up.
 - b) It would be very hard to miss the point of these terms.
 - c) These heavens & earth will pass away.
 - d) Rev. 20:11—*"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."*

- e) All of man's works will perish!
 - 1. The end of all human glory will be apparent.
 - 2. Houses, skyscrapers, cities, monuments—all will be dissolved.
- 3) Then, God will bring into existence that New Heavens & New Earth.
- 4) Two Greek words are translated "New."
 - a) **Kainos---Fresh, Upgraded, Renovated.**
 - 1. Not new in respect to time.
 - 2. Eph. 4:24—"*And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*"
 - 3. Like an Old Dilapidated car renovated and made new
 - b) **Neos---Recent, Young, never before existed.**
 - 1. New in respect to time.
 - 2. Mark 2:22—"*And no one puts wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins...*"
 - 3. *Not a renovated car, but a new car!*
 - c) God used Neos!

CONCLUSION

- 1. God has warned man of the coming calamity, as He did in Noah's Day.
- 2. 2 Peter 3:11—"*Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness.*"
- 3. Indifference to such warnings does not speak well of intelligent beings!
- 4. Illustration:
 - a) If a ship was close to shore, but was broken up by a storm—diligent efforts would be made to rescue the survivors.
 - b) Ropes with life-buoys would be thrown out to as many as could be found and be brought into the life-boats.
 - c) But what if a man refused the help offered and drowned?
 - d) Such would be hard to understand!
- 5. But mankind so treats God's offer of rescue from the penalty of sin every day.
- 6. Are you prepared in mind, heart, and life for this Great Destruction that is to come?

Chapter Five

"ARE THERE SIGNS OF JESUS' RETURN?"

INTRODUCTION

1. The one great theme of the Bible is: THE REDEEMPTION OF FALLEN MAN!
2. This theme is summed up in 3 expressions:
 - a) A Redeemer is coming---O. T. Scriptures.
 - b) The Redeemer has come---Gospels.
 - c) The Redeemer is coming again---Letters to Christians.
3. Our study will be dealing with the 3rd expression...The coming Redeemer!
4. Two extremes have been taken on this subject:
 - a) Sensationalism—Date setting, sign-watching, various unusual happenings at Jesus' return.
 - b) Indifference—BE unconcerned, indifferent to Jesus' return, engage in unrighteousness.
5. This lesson:
 - a) To emphasize the teaching about Jesus' return.
 - b) Deal with the question—"Will there be signs of His coming?"
 - c) Purpose:
 - 1—To guard against being deceived by false teaching.
 - 2—To discourage apostasy.

DISCUSSION

I. TERMS THAT DENOTE HIS COMING!

A. Note:

- 1) A "second coming" certainly infers there was a "first coming."
- 2) His "first coming" gives an assurance of His "second coming."
- 3) The expression, "Second coming," is not found in KJV.
- 4) John 14:3—"*...I will come again...*"
- 5) But the concept is obviously there.

B. Greek terms that describe Jesus' 2nd coming:

- 1) Apokalupsis—Revealing, Revelation.
 - a) 2 Thess. 1:7—"*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels....*"
- 2) Epiphaneia—Manifestation, Appearance.
 - a) 1 Tim. 6:14—"*That you keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ...*"
- 3) Ophthesetai—Shall appear

- a) Heb. 9:28—*"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."*
- 4) Parousia—Presence, Coming
 - a) 1 Thess. 3:13—*"To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints (Holy ones)."*
- 5) Hemera—Day, Day of the Lord
 - a) 2 Peter 3:10—*"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..."*
- 6) Erchomai—Coming
 - a) John 14:3—*"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again...."*

C. Why so many terms---Stress Importance!

II. NATURE OF HIS RETURN.

A. Scriptures:

- 1) Come in person.
 - a) 1 Thess. 4:16—*"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven..."*
- 2) Come with great noise.
 - a) 1 Thess. 4:16—*"...with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God..."*
- 3) Come in the clouds.
 - a) Rev. 1:7—*"Behold, he cometh with clouds..."*
- 4) Coming will be visible to all.
 - a) Rev. 1:7—*"And every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."*
- 5) Come with his holy angels.
 - a) Mark 8:38—*"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."*
- 6) Come in glory.
 - a) Matt. 25:31—*"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."*

B. Observations from Scripture concerning Jesus' coming:

- 1) We should earnestly believe in His coming.
- 2) Eagerly await it.
 - a) 1 Cor. 1:7-8—*"So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

- 3) We should look for His coming.
 - a) 2 Pet. 3:12—"*Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God...*"
- 4) Always be in readiness for His return.
 - a) Matt. 24:44—"*Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*"
- 5) Love & desire His return.
 - a) 2 Tim. 4:8—"*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.*"
- 6) Look forward to the great joy at His coming.
 - a) 1 Pet. 4:13—"*But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*"

III. EVENTS TO OCCUR BEFORE HIS COMING:

- A. Time will obviously have had to elapse.**
 - 1) As we have already seen---almost 2000 years!
 - 2) Matt. 25:19—"*After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.*"
- B. Jews & the Gentiles are to become one in the church.**
 - 1) John 10:16—"*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*"
- C. A great apostasy from the Faith to occur & the man of sin be revealed.**
 - 1) 2 Thess. 2:1-3
 - 2) 1 Tim. 4:1—"*Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith...*"
- D. The long delay will cause doubters to arise.**
 - 1) 2 Pet. 3:3-4—"*Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*"
- E. Events in Revelation will occur before Jesus comes to reward and punish.**
 - 1) Rev. 1:1—"*The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass...*"
- F. The destruction of Jerusalem.**
 - 1) Matt. 24:1-3
- G. Note: As far as we know....all of these have occurred!**

IV. ARE THERE SIGNS OF JESUS' RETURN?

- A. What about the "signs" in Matt. 24?**

- 1) Vs. 4-5—Deceivers to come.
- 2) Vs. 6—Hear of wars, and rumors of wars.
 - a) **"end is not yet."**
 - b) End of what?
- 3) Vs. 7—Nation against nation, Famine, pestilence, earthquakes.
 - a) Vs. 8---**"All these are the beginning of sorrows"**
 - b) For whom?
- 4) Vs. 9—Apostles delivered up & killed & hated of all nations.
- 5) Vs. 10—Many to fall away.
- 6) Vs. 11—Many false prophets to arise.
- 7) Vs. 12—Lawlessness abound, love of many grow cold
 - a) Vs. 13—**"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."**
 - b) End of what?
- 8) Vs. 14—Gospel to be preached to all nations.
 - a) **"then shall the end come."**
 - b) What end?
 - c) Col. 1:23—**"...the gospel....which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."**
 - d) AD 63!
- 9) Vs. 15—When you see the "Abomination of Desolation" stand in the holy place—spoken of by Daniel!! (Dan. 9:20-27) (70 weeks)
 - a) This became the **SIGN** for believers!!
 - b) Those who make desolate....destruction of city & temple.
 - c) Luke 21:20—**"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."**
 - 1—Withdrew for short time.
 - 2—Jews were relieved....They are gone.
 - 3—Christians fled the city...believed Jesus.
 - 4—The Roman army returned and destroyed Jerusalem.
- 10) Vs. 16-22
 - a) Why only those in Judea to flee?
 - b) If end of world, what difference would all this make?
 - c) These are the days of vengeance upon Jewish unbelievers.
 - d) Luke 21:22-24
- 11) Vs. 23-31
 - a) Highly figurative language.
 - b) Describing the coming of the Lord in destruction upon Jerusalem. (O.T. example—Isa. 13:9-10---Fall of Babylon)
 - c) Matt. 23:31-39 triggered what was said in Matthew 24.
 - d) The Horrible destruction by the Romans occurred in AD 70.
 - e) Christians were spared because they believed & fled!

12) Vs. 32-33.

- a) What is near?
- b) The destruction of Jerusalem!

13) Vs. 34

- a) Nails it down....destruction of Jerusalem.
- b) Significant to Christians!
- c) God's punishment upon unbelieving Jews showed God's rejection of them.
- d) Destruction of Temple....no longer acceptable!
- e) New Covenant had already gone into force for all peoples.

B. Can we know when Jesus will return?

1) Jesus' own statement.

- a) vs. 36—*"But of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."*

2) Other statements:

- a) 1 Thess. 5:2—*"For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night."*
- b) 2 Peter 3:10—*"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..."*

3) In spite of these plain statements:

- a) Religious leaders have predicted the date of the Lord's return.
- b) Making them smarter than the Lord Jesus!

CONCLUSION

1. Let's be thankful for the great promise of the Lord's Return for His people.

- a) Let it console us in tribulation & persecutions.
- b) Let it stimulate us to our duty as children of the day, and not the night.
- c) May we always be expectant, watching and ready in attitude & life for His coming.

2. But let it be a terrible warning to the unbeliever:

- a) Of the impending doom to those unprepared for His return.
- b) To repent and become obedient to the gospel.

3. Belief in the second coming is more than just a matter of a belief:

- a) It is a hope, a glorious hope, in a great promise.
- b) It is a firm expectation of things to come.
- c) It will be the completion of our Salvation.

4. Illustration:

- a) The War was over....their Son would be coming home!
- b) They received a letter stating that he would be coming soon.
- c) So, they cleaned the house, fixed up his room, got everything in readiness.
- d) And waited anxiously each day....looking outside hour after hour.

5. Are you anxiously looking for the promised coming of Jesus Christ?

Chapter Six

“WILL JESUS REIGN ON EARTH A 1000 YEARS?”

INTRODUCTION

1. The Over-all theme of the Bible is the Redemption of Fallen Man!
 - a) The Old Testament books foretold of the coming Redeemer.
 - b) The Gospels record that the Redeemer has come.
 - c) And the Letters to Christians tell us that He is coming again!
2. Our last lesson dealt with:
 - a) Terms that denote His coming.
 - b) The Nature of His return.
 - c) Are there signs of His return?
3. Now we would like to look at what will take place at His return.
4. What is the reason for Jesus' coming back again?
 - a) Is it to set up an earthly kingdom and reign on earth for a 1000 years?
 - b) Does the Bible clearly teach that such will happen?
 - c) Or, is this something that the mind of man has dreamed up?

DISCUSSION

I. 1ST, WHAT IS CLEARLY STATED AS THE PURPOSES OF CHRIST'S RETURN?

A. The Resurrection of all mankind!

- 1) John 5:28-29—*"Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear his voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation."*
- 2) Both the righteous & unrighteous are raised!

B. To Bring all things to an end.

- 1) I Cor. 15:24—*"Then comes the end..."*
- 2) End of what? The present order of things on earth.

C. To deliver up the Kingdom to the Father.

- 1) I Cor. 15:24—*"Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father..."*
- 2) He has been reigning as King up to this time.

D. He puts an end to all rule, power, and authority of men (and angels).

- 1) I Cor. 15:24—*"when He puts an end to all rule, all authority and power."*
- 3) For the Ultimate and only authority will be God, the Father!

E. Death to be destroyed!

- 1) I Cor. 15:25-26
- 2) Jesus must reign until all enemies have been put down.
- 3) The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

F. Jesus will then become subject to the Father.

- 1) I Cor. 15:27-28
- 2) Christ becomes subject to the Father, so that God may be all in all.

G. Judgment of all mankind!

- 1) **Matthew 25:31-32**
- 2) All nations, peoples, will be gathered before Him for Judgment.
- 3) Reward or Punishment given. (Matt. 25:41, 46)

H. Destruction of present heavens & earth.

- 1) **2 Peter 3:10-12**

II. WILL THERE BE A RAPTURE BEFORE JESUS' RETURNS?

A. What is the "Rapture?"

- 1) It is a part of the Pre-Millennial doctrine.
- 2) They teach that Jesus will secretly & suddenly appear in the sky.
- 3) The righteous dead will be raised.
- 4) The righteous living will be caught up together with them.
- 5) Will go into heaven for a period of 7 years with Christ.
- 6) All the unrighteous living will be left on earth.
- 7) And the unrighteous dead will remain in grave.

B. Based on 1 Thess. 4:15-17.

- 1) V. 15—Assurance to Living Christians!
 - a) That those Christians alive at Jesus' coming will not precede those who are dead Christians.
 - b) They will be caught up together to be with the Lord.
- 2) V. 16—Description of Jesus' coming.
 - a) "With a shout"
 - b) "With the voice of an archangel"
 - c) "With the trumpet of God" (SECRET???)
- 3) V. 16—"The dead in Christ will be raised first."
 - a) Dead Christians will be raised first.**(Before Whom?)**
 - a) Then, the Living in Christ will be caught up together with them to be with the Lord.
 - b) Giving assurance to Christians of what will happen to them at Jesus' return.**(Does not deal with Unrighteous)**
 - c) Not two separate resurrections....but one...at same hour!
- 4) This "Rapture" theory is a false doctrine, not what the Bible plainly teaches.

III. WHEN JESUS RETURNS WILL THERE BE A 1000 YEAR REIGN ON EARTH?

A. This concept is a vital part of the doctrine of "Pre-Millennialism."

- 1) It is believed and advocated by a lot of Protestant denominations.
- 2) This Theory advocates that Jesus:
 - a) Will come to earth to reign on the literal throne of David.
 - b) He will reign in the city of Jerusalem.
 - c) His reign will be for 1000 years.

- 3) The doctrine hinges on one primary passage: **Revelation 20:1-6!**
 - a) Only place where any mention is made of a 1000 year reign.
 - b) The doctrine stands or falls on a proper understanding of what this passage states or teaches.

B. Read Revelation 20:1-6

- 1) Observations:
 - a) The passage says nothing about a 1000-year reign on earth!
 - b) Nor about Christ reigning a 1000 years on earth.
 - c) The emphasis is not on Christ reigning, but the reigning of beheaded souls living & reigning with Christ.
 - d) It does not say "We Christians" will reign, but "beheaded souls"----- That leaves us out....and most Christians also.
 - e) It does not mention Jerusalem as the place of reigning.
 - f) It does not state that the reigning is on David's Throne.
 - g) It takes all of these to make up the "Millennial" doctrine.**
- 2) Also, it should be obvious that:
 - a) This, as well as the whole book of Revelation, is filled with symbolic & figurative language.
 - b) Can you have a literal key to a literal bottomless pit?
 - c) Can you literally bind Satan with a literal chain?
 - d) Did John see literal thrones with beheaded souls on them?
 - e) Then, why should we understand the expression "a thousand years" to be literal?

C. What is the possible meaning of Rev. 20:1-6?

- 1) Realize that Revelation was written to Christians of the 1st Century to help them & those who followed to remain faithful.
- 2) The great threat to the church was & would be Persecution!
 - a) The Jews at first....Fall of Jerusalem changed that!
 - b) Then, Gentiles in isolated places at first---often spurred on by unbelieving Jews (Paul's journeys).
 - c) Then Nero, Emperor of Rome, brought on the first of many severe persecutions by Rome and the Roman Empire.
 - d) These lasted off and on for another 200 years.
 - e) Obviously, the Devil, that old dragon was behind all of this.
- 3) The 1st mention of slain or beheaded souls is found in Rev. 6:9-11
 - a) They are under the altar.
 - b) They are asking how long until their blood is avenged.
 - c) They are given a white robe & told to rest for a while longer.
 - d) Why? Until others after them would also suffer same fate.
- 4) The 2nd mention of beheaded souls is in Rev. 20:1-6.
 - a) Here, they are living & reigning with Christ.
 - b) They have been elevated....raised up (**Not bodily Resurrection**)
 - c) What has happened?

1. Their death has been avenged. Rev. 19:1-2
2. The great persecutor of God's people has been judged.
3. That great persecuting city has been brought low.
- d) In AD 312---Constantine became Emperor of Rome, and was able to stop the persecutions.
- e) He proclaimed Christianity the acceptable religion of the Empire.
- f) Those who had died for the Cause of Christ did not die in vain....They won the victory!
- g) God's Cause was exalted through the blood of the Martyrs.
- h) 1000 years....complete concept. Their victory was complete.

D. Reasons for rejecting the "Pre-Millennial" doctrine:

- 1) It is not taught in clear, plain language.
- 2) It contradicts plain teachings connected with Jesus' 2nd coming.
- 3) This teaching makes the same mistake the Jews made:
 - a) LOOKING for a Carnal Kingdom....not a spiritual kingdom.
 - b) It takes a Spiritual Birth to enter a Spiritual Kingdom.
- 4) It denies that Christ has been & is still reigning on David's throne in the heavenly realm. (Acts 2:30-31)
- 5) It makes God's Word, John's preaching & Jesus' preaching a lie....Since they taught, "**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**"(Matt. 3:2; 4:17)
- 6) It advocates that God and Christ failed to set up His kingdom at his 1st coming.
- 7) Can you imagine such unbelief as the above?
- 8) The doctrine is against reason, common sense, and plain teaching of Scripture.
- 9) It is belittling and degrading to God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
- 10) It is contrary to the Word of God!

CONCLUSION

1. The Scripture clearly teaches:
 - a) Jesus is now reigning on David's Throne at the right hand of God. (Acts 2:30-31)
 - b) That He will reign until He returns for Judgment. At which time He will turn the kingdom over to the Father. (I Cor. 15:24-28)
 - c) Any teaching that contradicts this is an incorrect understanding of Scripture.
2. Important lessons:
 - a) The dangers of getting caught up in false teachings...led astray.
 - b) The importance of knowing what the Scriptures do teach.
 - c) The assurance that God has & does carry out His promises.
 - d) He will return someday for the righteous!
3. Will you and I be among that number?

Chapter Seven

"THE GREAT POWER OF THE RESURRECTION"

INTRODUCTION

1. The Study of the HISTORY OF MANKIND holds many fascinating tales.
 - a) Man's goodness, as well as his wickedness, is fully seen.
 - b) This HISTORY also reveals the great struggles of man:
 - Struggles with himself;
 - Struggles with his environment;
 - Struggles with his fellow-human beings;
 - c) This HISTORY could be looked upon as a HISTORY OF CONQUESTS!
2. Among the most remarkable conquest ever made:
 - a) Was not:
 - In the days of Napoleon;
 - Nor in the days of Alexander the Great;
 - Nor even in the days of Cyrus the Great, etc.
 - b) But it was in the days of the Roman kings.
 - c) It was a conquest Daniel foretold would happen.
 - Dan. 2:44—*"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kings, and it shall stand for ever."*
 - Dan. 7:13-14—*"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."*
 - d) This conquest was the conquest of the Roman Empire by Christianity.
 - e) And this conquest was not without great casualties as well!
 - There was great shedding of blood of the martyrs.
 - Overwhelming amount of agony, suffering, sacrifice, sorrow, and tears.
 - Rev. 6:9-10—*"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'"*
 - f) But this conquest has been of immense value to mankind.
 - g) But this conquest was only made possible by a great event in history—**The Resurrection of Jesus from the dead.**

- 1) Rom. 1:4—***“and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”***
 - 2) If Jesus was raised—then all will be raised! (1 Cor. 15:20-22)
 - 3) Jesus foretold that such would happen! (Jn. 5:28-29)
3. Let's take a closer look at this great conquest by Christianity.

DISCUSSION

I. HE WHOM THEY PUT TO DEATH FINALLY CONQUERED THEM.

A. The Roman Governor & Roman soldiers put Jesus to death.

- 1) The Jews were not allowed by Roman Law to put someone to death. (Jn. 18:31)
- 2) They condemned Jesus in their courts—but had to bring Him to the Roman Governor for review & final punishment.
- 3) Peter stated to the Jews: ***“Him....ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”*** (Acts 2:23)

B. At Jesus' death, the Roman Empire was virtually pagan.

- 1) Idolatry & paganism reigned supreme from one end to the other.
- 2) The exceptions:
 - a) The land of Palestine where the Jews lived who believed in God.
 - b) The scattered Jews & converted Greeks throughout the Empire.
- 3) Paul's words in Athens shows the hold of Idolatry: ***“His spirit was moved within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.”*** (Acts 17:16)

C. Within some 50 years after Jesus' death:

- 1) The church was worshipping in every principal city of the Empire.
- 2) Paul could say within 30-35 years after Jesus' death: ***“...the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven.”*** (Col. 1:23)

D. Within 300 years after Jesus' death:

- 1) Half the Roman Empire had reputedly accepted the gospel.
- 2) It had become the official, acceptable religion of the Empire.
- 3) Idolatry was being replaced by Christianity.

E. Christianity had spread like a raging fire:

- 1) It swept away pagan strongholds.
- 2) It dethroned idols everywhere it went.
- 3) It overcame the power, pride, lust, passions, and dishonesties of men.
- 4) It brought an evangelistic fervor & zeal to the Empire that had not been seen before.

II. THIS CONQUEST WAS NOT WITHOUT GREAT OBSTACLES.

A. The men who first preached the gospel were Jews.

- 1) Many were of the lower classes of people.
- 2) Rome's hatred of the Jews was exemplified in A.D. 70 when they destroyed their sacred City & Temple.
- 3) But Christianity triumphed in spite of this handicap.

B. Another obstacle was the Message itself.

- 1) It was proclaiming salvation thru Jesus:

- a) Who was a low-born Jew;
 - b) Who was born of a virgin;
 - c) But most of all—he died the death reserved for the worse of criminals.
 - 2) But the hope that the message offered was not thru just a Jew.....
 - a) But thru the Anointed One of God that was to bless all nations.
 - b) The One that is called the Christ, the Son of the Living God.
 - 3) Christianity triumphed in spite of Jesus being a Jew.
- C. *Another obstacle was the demands of the Gospel message.***
- 1) That Salvation was ONLY possible thru Jesus. (Jn. 14:6)
 - 2) There was no other name by which men could be saved. (Acts 4:12)
 - 3) That men must die to self in order to follow Jesus. (Matt. 16:24)
 - 4) That pride of man must be dealt with. (James 4:8-10).
 - 5) That men could no longer walk in the way of sin & wickedness. (Rom. 6:1-2).
 - 6) That men must turn from vain Idols and serve the Living God. (1 Thess. 1:9).
- D. *In spite of these and other great obstacles:***
- 1) Christianity conquered the Roman Empire.
 - 2) In spite of the great fury Rome unleashed upon harmless Christians for over 200 years—the Victory came!
 - 3) The Gospel brought a great transformation in human history.
 - 4) The world was shaken to its depths and made a better place.

III. 3 BASIC REASONS FOR CHRISTIANITY'S GREAT SUCCESS:

- A. *Their preaching was attested to by miracles, wonders, and signs.***
- 1) Mark 16:20—"*And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.*"
 - 2) This made it easier for people to believe --the message was from God.
- B. *The Zeal of followers of Christ could not be dampened to stop them.***
- 1) When commanded by the Jewish rulers to stop preaching Jesus.
 - a) Their reply was: "*We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.*"
 - b) They filled Jerusalem with their teaching. (Acts 5:28)
 - 2) When persecution broke out under Saul's leadership:
 - a) The Christians were scattered abroad.....
 - b) But they went every where preaching the word. (Acts 8:4)
 - 3) Their mouths could not be stopped:
 - a) Not in Jerusalem;
 - b) Nor in Judea, Samaria, Nor anywhere in the Roman world.
 - 4) No laws could be passed stringent enough to shut their mouths.
 - 5) No torture could be devised sufficiently horrible to hush their testimony.
 - a) Death lost its sting & they sang praises to God in the face of such.
 - b) They were willing to be put to death, rather than to stop believing and speaking about Jesus Christ.
 - c) When one was put to death—others took his place.
 - d) Their spilled blood bore testimony to their sincere belief in Jesus as the Savior of the world.

- 6) Sooner or later the Empire had to buckle & fall under such an onslaught of Courage, Conviction, and Zeal!

C. *The third reason was the message it offered to the yearning of men's hearts.*

- 1) For centuries, men had pondered Job's question: ***"If a man die, shall he live again?"***
- 2) Up until Christ, there had been no sure, stated answer.
- 3) Socrates, the great Greek Philosopher, expressed it so well:
 - a) He lay dying from his suicidal attempt.
 - b) His followers asked him – *"Shall we live again?"*
 - c) All he could say was, *"I hope so, but no man can know."*
- 4) But suddenly a message was heard around the world.....
 - a) There is hope, sureness, and certainty of life after death.
 - b) The very heart & core of their message was: ***"Christ is risen from the dead and is the first of many to rise."*** (1 Cor. 15:20)
 - c) And they were so certain of their message of hope that:
 - They zealously proclaimed it around the world;
 - They were even willing to become martyrs for this message—dying under the most horrible & painful deaths men could devise.
 - Their preaching was filled with quotations from the Old Testament to show this was God's plan all along.
 - There were many eye-witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus.
 - Miracles, wonders, and signs helped to add force to the preaching of the resurrection from the dead.
- 5) Their assurance shook the complacency & agnosticism of the Roman world.
 - a) Great multitudes embraced the gospel message of hope.
 - b) Until finally—the persecution was stopped by Constantine (Roman Emperor) in the early 300's.
 - c) He then opened the door wide for Christianity to be the acceptable religion of the Empire.
 - d) He went forth to conquer—and conquered!

CONCLUSION

1. Mankind still needs this message today as well.
2. Christians also need to be just as zealous & determined to take this message to our age.
3. Have you accepted this message into your life as yet?

Chapter Eight

“WHY A FINAL JUDGMENT?”

INTRODUCTION

1. Jn. 12:47—“*...for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.*”
 - a) Jesus’ first advent had a primary purpose.
 - 1) It was not to judge the world—to finalize man’s destiny!
 - 2) But rather to save the world—give man hope of salvation.
 - b) Jesus came calling man to repentance.
 - c) He came to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin. (Jn. 1:29)
2. But Jesus will come again—this time in Judgment upon mankind!
 - a) In the past God has brought temporal judgments.
 - 1) Adam & Eve—driven from Garden of Eden.
 - 2) Cain
 - 3) The Flood that destroy mankind from the earth—except 8 souls.
 - 4) Sodom & Gomorrha.
 - 5) etc.
 - b) These judgments were not complete—they were partial.
 - 1) And we are able to learn important lessons from such judgments.
 - 2) But God has planned for a final judgment that is complete.
 - 3) Acts 17:31—“*Because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained, He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.*”
 - c) We can be assured of this coming Judgment Day:
 - 1) Not only because Jesus promised it—“*For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.*” (Matt. 16:27)
 - 2) But because God raised Jesus up as absolute proof that such will occur.

DISCUSSION

I. THE NATURE OF THIS JUDGMENT!

A. God will judge through Christ!

- 1) Heb. 12:23—“*...to God the Judge of all...*”
- 2) Jn. 5:22—“*For the Father Judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.*”
- 3) Who better to judge mankind than the God-Man!
- 4) He shares both Divinity and Humanity!

B. This Judgment will be an awesome sight & experience!

- 1) Rev. 20:11—“*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.*”

- 2) 2 Cor. 5:10-11—*“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...”*
- 3) Preparation for this great occasion is an absolute necessity!
- 4) Heb. 10:30-31—*“For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people.’ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

C. This Judgment will be in Righteousness!

- 1) The perfect standard of righteousness will be used.
 - a) Rev. 20:12—*“...the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.”*
 - b) Jn. 12:48—*“...the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”*
- 2) This judgment will not be perverted, unreasonable, nor unfair.
- 3) It will be according to Truth!
 - a) Rom. 2:2—*“But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth...”*

II. WHY HAVE A FINAL JUDGMENT?

A. Mankind will have already been judged in a sense!

- 1) This has been seen in the terrible judgments that have come upon individuals and nations...physically!
- 2) It is seen by the suffering that mankind has had to endure!
- 3) The lesson on the 4 States of man shows this!
 - a) We are either innocent or a sinner.
 - b) We are either in the church—saved, or in the world—lost!
 - c) We are either in Hades—in Comfort or Torment!
- 3) So, why have a final judgment?

B. To see that Justice is completed!

- 1) Not all wrongs are punished, even here.
- 2) Not all right actions are recognized here.
- 3) God’s justice will make all known and clear.
- 4) Rom. 2:16—*“...in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.”*

B. To help man see himself in the true light!

- 1) Man has the power of memory!
 - a) Lk. 16:25—Abraham said to the Rich Man, *“Son, remember...in your lifetime...”*
 - b) We retain a record of all our actions.
 - c) In Judgment—God just has to revive it to our consciousness.
- 2) Man has a Conscience!
 - a) Rom. 2:15—*“...who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them.”*

- b) Our conscience voluntarily anticipates punishment for wrong deeds.
 - c) It will be Self-Revelation and Self-Condensation when our lives are compared to God's Truth.
- 3) Man develops a Character!
- a) Man's thoughts and deeds develop into the character of the person.
 - b) Sin leaves its mark upon the soul!
 - c) Matt. 15: 19-20—***“For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies....these are the things which defile a man....”***
 - d) Thus, our character reveals our past thoughts & actions.
- 4) Thus, man's true condition will be fully made manifest in judgment!
- a) God's Justice will be made obvious to all!
 - b) The righteous will be upheld!
 - c) The wicked will be shown for what they really are.

C. To pronounce the Final verdict upon mankind!

- 1) Rom. 2:5-6—***“But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each one according to his deeds.”***

CONCLUSION

1. We are being judged every day by our thoughts and actions.
2. We are judging ourselves every day, as well.
3. Every honest person knows that he will be judged someday by God.
4. Those not honest are just deceiving themselves.
5. When the apostle Paul preached to Felix....”***...as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid...”***
6. And with good reason—He was not prepared—and he knew it!
7. What about your life—are you prepared for judgment?
8. You can be by turning to the Grace and mercy of God—now, while there is time and opportunity!

Chapter Nine

"IS PUNISHMENT IN HELL JUST?"

INTRODUCTION

1. Man is too prone to have an "easy religion" for his own good.
 - a) He wants to hear the softer truths of Christ.
 - b) He wants to hear about the gentleness & love of God.
 - c) He wants to hear about the great hope of the gospel.
 - d) But deliver him from the terrible concept of punishment.
2. Mankind seems to have an instinctive dread of suffering & pain.
 - a) Most of us avoid such at all cost!
 - b) We take pills that kill the pain.
 - c) If we cannot medicate away the pain....try to operate & cut it out.
3. And when it comes to the concept of everlasting punishment:
 - a) Man does his best to:
 - 1—Lessen it in some way
 - 2—Or deny it altogether
 - b) Surveys have shown this:
 - 1—High % say they believe in heaven.
 - 2—Low % say they believe in hell.
 - 3—But both concepts come from same Bible....And Same God!
4. To say one believes the Bible:
 - a) He has to believe in Heaven and Hell (Reward & Punishment).
 - b) Heaven is made far more desirable because of the punishment we are escaping from.
5. Let's examine what the Bible says about Hell.

DISCUSSION

I. IMPORTANT TERMS TO DISTINGUISHED.

A. There are 5 terms that need to be distinguished to clearly understand this lesson:

- 1) The problem has been created by the KJV translators not making a distinction between 4 of the 5 terms.
- 2) They used the word "Hell" to supposedly translate 4 different concepts.
 - a) Sheol is translated Hell in the O.T. 31 times (incorrectly).
 - b) Hades is translated Hell in the N.T. 10 times (incorrectly).
 - c) Tartarus is translated Hell in the N.T. 1 time (incorrectly).
 - d) Gehenna is translated Hell in the N.T. 12 times correctly!

B. Let's look at each of these concepts:

- 1) Sheol & Hades are terms that identify the place of departed spirits.
 - a) The unclothed state of the dead.
 - b) Where both the good & the bad go after death.
 - c) But this real of existence is pictured as having two compartments.

- 2) Paradise is where the righteous souls go upon death to await the resurrection & judgment.
- 3) Tartarus is where the unrighteous angels have been placed by God to await the judgment.
 - a) By inference, it is also the place probably where the unrighteous souls go upon death to await the resurrection & judgment.
 - b) There is a great gulf fixed between these two compartments so that no one can pass back & forth to either place.
- 4) Gehenna is the place of everlasting punishment.
 - a) It is where the unrighteous people go after the resurrection & judgment.
 - b) It is also where the Devil & His angels will go after the judgment.
 - c) This term was used by Jesus, Himself, 11 out of 12 times in the N.T.

C. Origination of the term, "Gehenna."

- 1) The word is carried over from the Hebrew O.T.
 - a) It was the Land of, or the Valley of Hinnom.
 - b) This valley was located on the South edge of Jerusalem.
- 2) In older times:
 - a) The valley was used by idolatrous kings of Judah to worship the idol god Molech.
 - b) They would sacrifice their children as an offering.
 - c) God loathed the place and had it desecrated by King Josiah.
 - d) It was given the name "Tophet", means, "Abomination" or "Detestation" or "to vomit with loathing."
 - e) Jer. 31:32; 19:6; 2 Kings 23:10; Ezek. 23:37, 39.
 - f) The filth of the city was thrown into the valley & burned.
 - g) It had continued as such unto the time of Christ.
- 3) In the time of Christ:
 - a) It was a place of garbage, putrification, breeding place of worms, undesirable things.
 - b) It had continual fires & smoke day and night.
 - c) It had come to be a very fitting expression to denote a place to be cast into to be punished.

II. DESCRIPTION OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

A. The use of the word "Gehenna."

- 1) Matt. 5:22—"*In danger of Gehenna fire.*"
- 2) Matt. 5:29—"*Cast into Gehenna.*"
- 3) Matt. 5:30—"*Cast into Gehenna.*"
- 4) Matt. 10:28—"*Destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.*"
- 5) Matt. 18:9—"*Cast into Gehenna fire.*"
- 6) Matt. 23:15—"*More a child of Gehenna than yourselves.*"
- 7) Matt. 23:33—"*Damnation of Gehenna.*"
- 8) Mark 9:43—"*Into Gehenna, into the fire that never shall be quenched.*"
- 9) Mark 9:45—(Same)

10) Mark. 9:47—"*Cast into Gehenna fire.*"

11) Luke 12:5—"*Cast into Gehenna.*"

12) Jas. 3:6—"*Set on fire of Gehenna.*"

B. Other terms that describe future punishment:

1) Destruction:

a) 2 Thess. 2:8; 1:8-9; 1 Cor. 3:17; Matt. 7:13

b) To lose all hope of living with God!

2) Perish:

a) To lose one's life here,

b) But hereafter, it is to lose one's opportunity for eternal life.

c) Lk. 13:3; 2 Pet. 3:9; Jn. 3:16

3) Punishment:

a) 2 Thess. 1:9; Matt. 25:46; Heb. 10:29

b) Terms carry the idea of: Justice, Full Justice, Vengeance, Restraint.

4) Torment:

a) 2 different Greek words found in same text (Lk. 16:23-24).

b) The rich man was Conscious, Not annihilated upon death, having to endure torments, pain, agony, woe, bitterness, grief, misery, distress.

c) The rich man was in Hades, not Gehenna, in torment.

d) Other passages emphasize the same in Gehenna. (Rev. 20:10).

5) The wrath of God to be poured out:

a) At least 17 different passages that stress God's Wrath in N.T.

b) Rom. 1:18; Rev. 6:16-17 illustrate.

6) Fire:

a) Fire is used effectively to portray the concept of great punishment.

b) Furnace of fire. (Matt. 13:42)

c) Everlasting fire. (Matt. 25:41)

d) Fire that is not quenched. (Mk. 9:44-45)

e) Lake of fire. (Rev. 20:15)

f) Smoke of fire goes up forever and ever. (Rev. 14:11)

7) Darkness:

a) Darkness has always held a peculiar fear in men's hearts to some degree or another.

b) Note the intensification of this darkness!

c) Chains of darkness. (2 Pet. 2:4)

d) Blackness of darkness forever. (Jude 13)

e) Outer darkness. (Matt. 25:30)

8) Additional terms:

a) Suffer the Vengeance of God. (Rom. 12:19)

b) Suffer the Damnation of God. (Rom. 13:2)

c) Suffer the Judgment (Condemnation) of God. (Rom. 2:3)

d) Suffer indignation, tribulation, and anguish. (Rom. 2:8-9)

e) A state of perdition. (Heb. 10:39)

f) Second death. (Rev. 20:15)

g) Everlasting separation from the presence of God. (2 Thess. 1:9)

C. The Duration of Punishment:

- 1) The word forever keeps coming up constantly.
- 2) Matt. 25:46—"***And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.***"
- 3) The concept of the Greek word (Aionios) is on & on without any stated end.
- 4) Such is a terrible thing to contemplate!
 - a) Who would want to go there?
 - b) A person would have to be crazy to want to go to such a place.
- 5) But what is even more terrible...That intelligent men will not listen to God's warning & turn to God to escape such!

III. IS THIS TERRIBLE PUNISHMENT JUST?**A. Can a loving, merciful, kind God give out such terrible punishment?**

- 1) Questions often asked:
 - a) "*Could God's love allow His creatures to suffer forever?*"
 - b) "*Doesn't God have compassion upon suffering humanity?*"
 - c) "*Would not God put suffering humanity out of their misery rather than let them suffer forever?*"
- 2) We need to see what this loving, kind God has done in the past!
 - a) He has allowed misery & suffering in our world from Adam until now!
 - 1—And how ghastly it has been to Him at times.
 - 2—It has been so terrible at times that He intervened.
 - 3—2 Peter 2:4-6
 - b) Why hasn't this loving God ended all suffering?
 - c) Why did He even create man in the first place?
 - 1—He knew what would happen.
 - 2—He knew that man would sin and bring on all his misery.
 - d) If suffering is so inconsistent with God's love, why even create man to start with?
- 3) But take a look at Jesus!
 - a) He loved us enough to die for us. (Jn. 3:16)
 - b) And yet, He is the one that used the expression "Gehenna" 11 of the 12 times used in the N.T.
 - c) He used the expression: "***Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched***" 3 times in Mark 9.
 - d) He told the story of the Rich Man & Lazarus.
 - 1—Rich Man was in Hades, not Gehenna, but was in torment.
 - 2—And He stated...there is no hope of relief.

B. Is Sin that terrible that it deserves this kind of punishment?

- 1) Man's reasoned approach:
 - a) The God of the universe must do right...be just.
 - b) To punish sin with such severity is unjust.
 - c) The reason...
 - 1—Sin is only for a short time...no matter how bad it is.
 - 2—Punishment is said to be forever.
 - 3—That doesn't sound just or fair.

- 2) But is man capable of making a fair judgment about this matter?
 - a) We are all guilty of sin... can we be unbiased?
 - b) Don't we take sin lightly?
 - 1—We are born into a sinful environment.
 - 2—We live in it every day of our lives.
 - 3—It is a part of our lives.
 - 4—It is acted out before our eyes constantly.
 - c) Would not such intimate familiarity deaden our minds to its terribleness?
 - 1—Man justifies sin, plays with sin, enjoys sin, indulges in sin, winks at sin in himself & others.
 - 2—Are we really capable of seeing sin in its true light?
- 3) Three concepts that show the terribleness of sin:
 - a) The result of one "little" sin in the Garden! (Gen. 3)
 - 1—Eve disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit.
 - 2—As a result, sin entered into man's world.
 - 3—From one sin has come untold, endless suffering & death to mankind.
 - 4—Our world is filled with sin and its fruits.
 - 5—All this from one "little" sin!
 - b) God's Atonement for sin shows sin's terribleness.(1 Pet. 3:18)
 - 1—God, Himself, had to come down in human form to make an atonement for sin.
 - 2—Terribleness seen in it's cost!
 - c) God's threatened punishment for sin shows its terribleness.
 - 1—Is it God or man who does not understand the terribleness of sin & its deserved punishment?
 - 2—To deny punishment for sin is to reject the need of such an enormous atonement.
 - 3—For both converge to show the terribleness of sin.

CONCLUSION

1. God has stretched forth His hands in tenderness & love for man to turn to Him for the salvation He offers through Jesus.
2. The Atonement is God's grand specimen of His love for His creatures.
3. But at the same time:
 - a) He has shown His righteous severity & anger for sin in the terrible death of Jesus to atone for sin.
 - b) He has warned man of the terrible consequences of rejection of His offer.
4. Man needs to reach forth his hand with all speed to accept His great love and to escape the just penalty of his sins.

Chapter Ten

“WHY BELIEVE IN HELL?”

INTRODUCTION

1. Matt. 10:28—***“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”***
2. Hell is not a very pleasant word to think about!
 - a) Men avoid talking about it seriously.
 - b) They use it as a curse word to take away its seriousness.
 - c) And most people do not think they are going there.
3. Why should anyone want to believe in Hell?
 - a) Surveys show that the vast majority do not!
 - b) 90% in heaven-----20% in hell.
 - c) It is much more desirable to only believe in reward and not punishment.
4. But common sense and our conscience lets us know that there is both reward and punishment.
5. And most of all—God says there is a Hell!
 - a) Do you believe in God—then you will also believe in Hell!
 - b) God is not a liar—there is going to be such a place!
 - c) Jesus said it is a place “prepared.” (Matt. 25:41)
6. So, why believe in Hell?
 - a) For the most obvious of reasons—God said So!
7. Since, we have answered our question—let’s turn to another thought!
8. Why I should not want to go there!

DISCUSSION

I. BECAUSE OF HOW HELL IS DESCRIBED!

A. A place of “outer darkness.”

- 1) Matt. 25:30—***“Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.”***
- 2) It is to be driven from the presence of God—who is Light!
- 3) Mankind has a normal dread of total darkness.

B. A place of a “Lake of fire.”

- 1) Rev. 20:15—***“And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”***
- 2) How do you reconcile fire & darkness?
 - a) God is trying to communicate what Hell will be like in terms we can grasp.
 - b) Hell may neither be literal fire or literal darkness as we know it here.
 - c) But whatever it will be—it will be terrible!

C. A place of pain!

- 1) Matt. 25:30—***“Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”***

- 2) Rev. 14:11—“*And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night...*”
- 3) Matt. 25:46—“*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.*”
- 4) Punishment, torment, weeping & gnashing of teeth—doesn’t sound too desirable, does it?

D. A place of divided families!

- 1) Matt. 10:34-37
- 2) Jesus is the Prince of Peace, but His message will divide families:
 - a) Some would obey Him, others would not.
 - b) Some would be faithful, others would not.
- 3) None of us like to think of our loved ones being lost!
 - a) But the truth is...many families will be divided.
 - b) We need to do all we can to avoid such!

E. Because it is forever!

- 1) Matt. 25:46—“*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.*”
- 2) There is no end...never to cease!
- 3) Hell will be just as long as Heaven—Same Word used to describe both.

II. BECAUSE OF WHO WILL GO THERE!

A. The Devil & his angels will be there.

- 1) Matt. 25:41—“*Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*”
- 2) Not a very desirable group to be with!

B. The wicked.

- 1) Ps. 9:17—“*The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God.*”
- 2) Rom. 1:18—“*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*”
- 3) This is the next most obvious group of people—“richly deserved!”

C. The disobedient.

- 1) 2 Thess. 1:7-9
- 2) We either obey or make up the population of Hell.
- 3) It doesn’t matter how morally good we are—we must also obey the gospel!
- 4) Acts 2:38

D. Deceived religious people.

- 1) Matt. 7:21-23
- 2) Jesus’ warning to religious people—“*You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?*”
- 3) Being religious, morally good, or even being zealous is not enough.
- 4) We must do the “will of the Father.”

E. Unfaithful Christians.

- 1) Rev. 2:10
- 2) What about those who are unfaithful?
- 3) Heb. 10:26-31

CONCLUSION

1. Hell is just as real as Heaven!
2. Hell is just as terrible as Heaven is wonderful.
3. Hell is just as long as Heaven.
4. And God has warned us about it!
5. So, believe it—or be prepared to suffer in it forever!
6. Cast yourself on the mercy of God now!
7. Obey His gospel—live faithful to death!

Chapter Eleven

“WHY BELIEVE IN HEAVEN”

INTRODUCTION

1. Illustration:

- a) Two well-known men in the 1800’s had a well-publicized debate.
 - b) It was on Atheism.
 - c) The two men were Campbell and Owen.
 - 1) Campbell was a member of the Lord’s Church.
 - 2) Owen was an Atheist.
 - d) Mr. Owen visited Mr. Campbell at Bethany, WV, to arrange for the debate.
 - e) That evening as they strolled over the farm they came to the family burial grounds.
 - f) Mr. Owen stated, *“There is one advantage I have over the Christian— I am not afraid to die—And if some few items of my business were settled, I would be perfectly willing to die at any moment.”*
 - g) Mr. Campbell’s reply: *“You say you have no fear in death; have you any hope in death?”*
 - h) After a solemn pause, Mr. Owen answered, *“No.”*
 - i) Mr. Campbell then reminded him, *“Then,”* pointing to an ox standing in the shade, whisking off flies, *“you are on the level with that brute. He has fed until he is satisfied, and there he stands in the shade, and has neither fear nor hope in death.”*
 - j) Mr. Owen made no attempt to answer.
2. Is it the lot of our existence to be like that brute beast—no fear nor hope in death
- a) Is it just to live a short time and die?
 - b) And with no hope of anything beyond this existence?
 - c) Job 14:14—***“If a man dies, shall he live again?”***
3. And we all want to say—Yes, there is hope after death!
- a) All past civilizations have entertained such a hope.
 - b) Not only from the standpoint of wanting to continue to exist;
 - c) But also as a Reward concept for striving to live right.
4. But to have this hope is a matter of faith!
- a) I believe that there is an existence after death!
 - b) I am convinced that there is Reward as well as Punishment awaiting man after death!
5. Why do I believe in Heaven?
- a) Several Reasons could be given.
 - b) Would like to look at 4 reasons in this lesson.

DISCUSSION

I. BECAUSE OF WHAT JESUS HAS SAID!

A. He came down from Heaven to live among men.

- 1) Jn. 1:1, 14—*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word, was with God, and the Word was God....And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”*
- 2) John 14:11-2—*“Let not your heart be troubled; you 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.”*
- 3) If He has been there—He ought to know about it!

B. He has given us insights to this place by using descriptive terms:

- 1) Life without end in the presence of God. (Matt. 25:46)
- 2) A place of glory. (2 Cor. 4:17)
- 3) A place of Rest. (Heb. 4:9; Rev. 14:12)
- 4) A new world different from this one to exist in. (2 Pet. 3:13)
- 5) A place of great reward. (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:8)

II. BECAUSE OF CONDITIONS THAT HAVE TO BE FACED IN THIS LIFE.

A. The shortness of this life!

- 1) Jas. 4:14—*“For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”*
- 2) Without hope of heaven—it is all over in a very short time.
- 3) Is that the purpose for our existence?

B. The Wickedness we have to deal with here.

- 1) The world was so wicked at one time—God destroyed all but 8 souls.
- 2) Wickedness often reigns among mankind.
- 3) Morals continually are lowered to the level of beast.
- 4) Honesty & truth compromised and laughed at.
- 5) Man needs to have hope of something better than this.
- 6) Matt. 5:10-12

C. The Trials and Tribulations of this life.

- 1) Life is often filled with: *“Blood, Sweat, and Tears!”*
- 2) The Struggle for survival. (Matt. 6:33)
- 3) The temptations we have to deal with. (Jas. 1:2-4)
- 4) The calamities that often befall us sooner or later.
- 5) Illustration
 - a) Lady had been stricken with arthritis.
 - 1—Legs gnarled & twisted—had to have help to walk.
 - 2—Pitiful sight to see.
 - b) She sat through the worship service with a smile and a hopeful outlook.
 - c) She had just the day before been baptized into Christ.
 - d) She now had hope in spite of her physical ailments.
- 6) Calls to mind what Jesus said: *“Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”*
7. What a blessing to have hope in such bad circumstances.

III. BECAUSE IT IS THE GREATER OF THE TWO CHOICES.

A. The Choice is between Heaven or Hell. (Matt. 25:46)

- 1) Hell is designed for punishment for sinners.
 - a) The Devil and his angels are the primary ones it is designed for. (Matt. 25:41)
 - b) But sinful man will also suffer the consequences unless redeemed by the blood of Jesus. (Rom. 6:23)
- 2) Heaven is designed for Reward for the Faithful to God.
 - a) This hope is held out to all men to accept.
 - b) The message has been sent out: ***“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.”*** (2 Cor. 5:20)

B. The contrast between the two certainly makes Heaven more desirable.

- 1) Illustration:
 - a) Young teen—angry—rebellious—getting into trouble.
 - b) Only hope for him—a radical change or he would wind up dead or in prison.
 - c) A friend of the family was a policeman.
 - d) He offered to take the teen into the local prison to see and talk with prisoners.
 - e) Helped him to see which was the better choice.
- 2) I believe in Heaven—because it is by far the better choice.

IV. BECAUSE OF THE BLESSINGS HEAVEN OFFERS.

A. Conditions in heaven:

- 1) Rev. 21:5—***“Behold, I make all things new.”***
- 2) 2 Pet. 3:13—***“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”***
- 3) 1 Pet. 1:4—***“to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.”***
- 4) 1 Cor. 15:42-44
- 5) 1 Thess. 4:17—***“Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.”***
- 6) New, Unchanging, Complete holiness, complete satisfaction.
- 7) No pain, tears, death, persecution, crippling diseases.

B. Encouraging Words:

- 1) Phil. 1:23—***“For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”***
- 2) 1 Cor. 2:9—***“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”***
- 3) Lk. 6:23—***“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven.”***

CONCLUSION

1. The obvious choice—to believe in and want to go to Heaven!
2. Why shouldn't everyone want to go to heaven!
3. But going to Heaven is not without a cost!
4. And this is where the problem comes in—the Willingness to pay the cost!
5. The cost is spelled out clearly:
 - a) Matt. 16:24—***“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”***
 - b) Jesus must become Lord of my life....what He says, I must do!
 - c) Matt. 18:3—***“Unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”***
6. Do these questions come to your mind?
 - a) Does the Lord expect too much?
 - b) Is the price too high?
 - c) Is it worth what I have to give up?
 - d) Can I get in on a cut-rate price?
7. Illustration:
 - a) A man went shopping in a store.
 - b) Saw price on an item he wanted...98 cents.
 - c) He erased the price & wrote 49 cents.
 - d) He did this on several items.
 - e) When he checked out....it was obvious what he had done.
 - f) The checker said: *“I’m sorry we priced these items too high for you, I hope the price you have marked suits you better.”*
 - g) Did you say—*“That would never happen!”*
 - i) But don't people attempt to do the same thing spiritually?
 - 1) Instead of obeying God's Will to be saved—they want it easier.
 - 2) Instead of being steadfast & faithful—they want to have more slack
 - 3) Instead of abounding in the work of the Lord—they want to do as little as possible and still be accepted.
 - j) And then in judgment day, we want to hear God say:
“I’m sorry that I made the requirements of heaven too high for you. What you have done suits me perfectly, pass right on through the gates, heaven is yours.”
8. Do we really think that God will let us set our own price?
9. The price stands—are we willing to pay the cost?

Chapter Twelve

“HOW WILL YOU DIE?”

INTRODUCTION

1. Illustration:

- a) “This day was no ordinary school day. How I wish I had taken the bus!
- b) “But I was too cool for the bus. I remember how I talked the car out of mother.
- c) “‘Special favor,’ I pleaded, ‘all the kids drive.’
- d) “When the 2:50 bell rang, I threw all my books in the locker. I was free until 8:40 tomorrow morning!
- e) “I ran to the parking lot, excited at the thought of driving a car and being my own boss. Free!
- f) “It doesn’t matter how the accident happened. I was goofing off—going too fast. Taking crazy changes.
- g) “But I was enjoying my freedom and having fun.
- h) “The last thing I remember was passing an old lady who seemed to be going awfully slow.
- i) “I heard the deafening crash and felt a terrific jolt. Glass and steel flew everywhere.
- j) “My whole body seemed to be turning inside out. I heard myself scream.
- k) “Suddenly, everything was very quiet. A police officer was standing over me. Then, a doctor.
- l) “My body was mangled, I was saturated with blood. Pieces of jagged glass were sticking out all over.
- l) “Strange....I couldn’t feel anything.
- m) “Hey, don’t pull that sheet over my head. I can’t be dead. I’m only 17, I’ve got a date tonight.
- n) “I am supposed to grow up and have a wonderful life. I haven’t lived yet. I can’t be dead!”

2. All of us:

- a) Whether young or old have an appointment with death.
- b) Heb. 9:27—***“It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment.”***

3. It is not a question of whether we will die....for we all shall!

- a) We don’t even have the right to determine **When** we will die!
- b) Only in what **Condition** we will die.

4. All of us will make that decision!

- a) We will do it directly or indirectly.
- b) Since we do not know the **When** of our death....
- c) Every day we live we decide the **How** of our death!

5. If we died tonight—**“In what condition would we die?”**

DISCUSSION**I. WOULD WE DIE PREPARED OR UNPREPARED TO MEET GOD?*****A. Lk. 12:16-21***

- 1) The Rich Man had prepared for living, but not for dying!
- 2) He could have been prepared for death—if he had taken the time.
- 3) But because he did not—called a fool!
- 4) ***“Thou fool, this night wilt thy soul be required of thee...”***

B. How typical of men today.

- 1) Actively preparing for living—and some succeeding quite well!
- 2) This is all that interest them.
- 3) They fail to put the most important thing first in their lives.
- 4) Matt. 16:26—***“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”***

II. WOULD WE DIE IN TERROR OR IN PEACE?***A. The hearing of the gospel places a heavy responsibility upon our soul.***

- 1) Jas. 4:17—***“Therefore to him that knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin.”***
- 2) To hear the gospel and not respond places us under a greater responsibility!
- 3) Jas. 1:22—***“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”***
- 4) If you were to die today, would you die in great fear or terror?

B. Illustration:

- 1) A widower who had been a faithful Christian for a long time had a neighbor who was an unbeliever.
- 2) At times, in conversation, he would say that Christians are stupid to spend their time and money on religion.
- 3) But one day, he discovered from his doctor that he was terminally ill.
- 4) He called for the Christian to come to see him.
- 5) ***“I have a request of you....See that I am buried DEEP in the ground, so that neither God nor the devil can get to me.”***
- 6) ***“Foolish!”*** you say?
- 7) Rev. 6:12-17
- 8) Figurative language—but the terror was real!

C. The faithful Christian can die in peace.

- 1) 1 John 4:16-18
- 2) And what a great blessing this is for us!

III. WOULD WE DIE IN CHRIST, OR OUT OF CHRIST?***A. Rev. 14:13—“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”***

- 1) There is a sharp contrast in dying in sin or dying in Christ.
- 2) Jn. 8:21—***“I go my way, and you shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, you cannot come.”***

B. If we are to die in Christ—we must be in Him!

- 1) To be “in Christ” offers great blessings spiritually.
 - a) Eph. 1:3—***“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”***
- 2) And the greatest blessing is---eternal life!
- 3) How do we get into Him?
 - a) Gal. 3:26-27
 - b) Rom. 6:3-4
- 4) But it is important that we not only get into Him, but remain.
 - a) Col. 2:6-7

C. To die in Christ is to die with hope & assurance!

- 1) Phil. 1:21—***“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”***
- 2) 2 Tim. 4:6-8
- 3) Death holds no terror for the faithful Christian.
- 4) To die would truly be a gain.

CONCLUSION

1. If you died today....in what condition would you die?
 - a) Prepared or unprepared?
 - b) In Terror or in Peace?
 - c) In Christ or out of Christ?
2. It is certain that we will all die.....some sooner than others!
 - a) We never know the time of our death, nor of the Lord’s return.
 - b) Now is the only time we have for certain.
 - c) Heb. 3:15—***“Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.”***
3. Illustration:
 - a) A man told about driving down a highway when he saw a large bird in the road bending over a dead rabbit.
 - b) As he approached the bird:
 - 1) It did not flee
 - 2) But, rather, spread its wings as though to challenge the oncoming car.
 - 3) There was a hard thumping sound—the bird was dead.
 - c) A little later, he noticed a turtle going across the road in front of him.
 - 1) He did not run, dodge the car, nor challenge it.
 - 2) He just pulled his legs and head into his shell...as the car passed over him.
 - d) The hawk and the turtle illustrate two ways mankind faces death as it comes speeding down the road of life.
 - 1) Some are proud and reject the offer of salvation in Christ.
 - 2) Some just pull within themselves and hope they will be okay.
4. If you died tonight—how would you die?

