

Death

Message 01 in the series, "What Happens When We Die?"

"And now, dear brothers and sisters, we want you to know what will happen to the believers who have died so you will not grieve like people who have no hope." 1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NLT)

"...No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him." 1 Corinthians 2:9 (NLT)

1. When we physically die our soul/spirit departs from the body, *whether a believer or not*.

"We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be *absent from the body* and to be present with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8 (NKJV)

Soul (Nephesh in Hebrew, Psyche in Greek)- The essence of a person. It encompasses the mind, will, and emotions. It is the seat of human consciousness and identity. In biblical terms, the soul is often associated with life itself and the individual's relationship with God.

Spirit (Ruach in Hebrew, Pneuma in Greek)- The breath of life given by God. It represents the divine aspect within a person, connecting them to God and the spiritual realm. The spirit is often seen as the source of spiritual insight, discernment, and communication with God.

Note: While there are distinct nuances to each term, in practical terms, the Bible sometimes uses "soul" and "spirit" interchangeably to refer to the innermost part of a person.

"...Remember him before you near the grave, your everlasting home, when the mourners will weep at your funeral. Yes, remember your Creator now while you are young, before the silver cord of life snaps and the golden bowl is broken. Don't wait until the water jar is smashed at the spring and the pulley is broken at the well. *For then the dust will return to the earth, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.*" Ecclesiastes 12:5-7 (NLT)

A. We never know when we will die, so we need to always be ready!

"Look here, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we are going to a certain town and will stay there a year. We will do business there and make a profit.' How do you know what your life will be like tomorrow? Your life is like the morning fog—it's here a little while, *then it's gone.*"

James 4:13-14 (NLT)

Then he told them a story: "A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. He said to himself, 'What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops.' Then he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. And I'll sit back and say to myself, "My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!" But God said to him, 'You fool! *You will die this very night.* Then who will get everything you worked for?' Luke 12:16-20 (NLT)

B. We must make the most of the time we are given here on earth.

"So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. *Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days.* Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:15-20 (NLT)

Note: The choices we make while we are alive impact what happens after we die.

2. For those who *have* placed their faith in Jesus, upon death, their soul will be united with Him in Heaven (*Paradise*) for an interim of time.

“...I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don’t know which is better. I’m torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me. But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live.” Philippians 1:20-24 (NLT)

“But the other criminal protested, ‘Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.’ Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.’ And Jesus replied, ‘I assure you, *today you will be with me in paradise.*’” Luke 23:40-43 (NLT)

3. For those who *have not* placed their faith in Jesus, upon death, their soul will be in Hades (*Place of the Dead*) for an interim of time.

“Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. ‘Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.’”

Matthew 11:20-24 (NLT)

“And anyone who believes in God’s Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn’t obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God’s angry judgment.” John 3:36 (NLT)

Jesus said, “There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed in purple and fine linen and who lived each day in luxury. At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man’s table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores. *Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to sit beside Abraham at the heavenly banquet. The rich man also died and was buried, and he went to the place of the dead.* There, in torment, he saw Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus at his side. The rich man shouted, ‘Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames.’ But Abraham said to him, ‘Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish. And besides, there is a great *chasm separating us*. No one can cross over to you from here, and no one can cross over to us from there.’ Then the rich man said, ‘Please, Father Abraham, at least send him to my father’s home. For I have five brothers, and I want him to warn them so they don’t end up in this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘Moses and the prophets have warned them. Your brothers can read what they wrote.’ The rich man replied, ‘No, Father Abraham! But if someone is sent to them from the dead, then they will repent of their sins and turn to God.’ But Abraham said, ‘If they won’t listen to Moses and the prophets, they won’t be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’” Luke 16:19-31 (NLT)

Note: A loving God doesn’t send people to Hades/Hell, He saves people from it!

“The Lord isn’t really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.”

2 Peter 3:9 (NLT)

“When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God’s sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God’s condemnation. For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the

life of his Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God. When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned... But there is a great difference between Adam's sin and God's gracious gift. For the sin of this one man, Adam, brought death to many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ. And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin led to condemnation, but God's free gift leads to our being made right with God, even though we are guilty of many sins. For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ."

Romans 5:6-12, 15-17 (NLT)

Note: If this is true, and it is, we should make every effort to share Jesus with those who do not know Him.

"So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, 'Come back to God!'" 2 Corinthians 5:20 (NLT)

"And you must show mercy to those whose faith is wavering. Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment..." Jude 1:22-23 (NLT)

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