

Death and the Afterlife

DHOP Study Guide



1. Explore the common phrases for 'death' in the Bible (See John 11:11, Deut 31:16, 2 Cor 5:1, Luke 12:20, Job 16:22, Gen 49:33, Psalm 115:17, Acts 5:10, Gen 3:19, Job 14:2, Phil 1:23).
2. How did death enter the world and what is 'the last enemy'? (Rom 5:12, 1 Cor 15:26)
3. Is death still an issue for a Christian? Do those in Christ now have 'immortality'? (2 Tim 1:10)
4. There are two terms, 'immortality' and 'incorruption' which are both used with reference to the **resurrection of the body** (1 Cor 15:53-54). Look both words up in a dictionary, then compare with the term mortal. Are Christians mortal in your opinion? Try to delineate which terms apply to the soul or body.
5. Are all people resurrected or just Christians? (John 5:29)
6. Is **Immortality** a future event, present or past? (Rom 2:7; 1 Cor 15:53). Eternal life in contrast to Immortality concerns man's spirit and soul and is a **present** possession for the believer, unaffected by the death of the body. All people are eternal beings, but only those who receive Christ will have 'eternal life.' Immortality always refers to the glorification of our mortal bodies at the resurrection, as Jesus demonstrated in his earthly sightings after the cross.
7. Are the dead floating around the earth in some other dimension or under the control of God who has the keys to both destinations (Heaven and Hell)? (Rom 14:9, Rev 1:18)
8. Are the dead vagrants? Floating around in some 'middle ground' or **immediately** in the presence of Heaven with the Lord or Hell? (2 Cor 5:8, Luke 16:22)
9. Investigate the concept of **purgatory** or 'middle ground' between Heaven and Hell in your Bible and find scriptural references to justify this doctrine. (**Hint:** you won't find any.)
10. Is it okay to talk to your dead relatives? Is this practice mentioned in Scripture? What does God have to say about this practice, also known as '**Necromancy**' or '**Spiritism**'? (Study Lev 19:31, 20:6-7; Isa 8:19, Deut 18:7-12). (Hint: Abomination is not a good word).
11. Are the supposedly 'dead people' that mediums and Necromancers talk to really departed loved ones, or more sinister and seducing evil spirits, trying to deceive humanity? (1 Kings 22:22, 1 Tim 4:1).
12. Is there such a thing as **soul sleep** (As some Christian denominations believe)? This is described as the soul existing in an 'unconscious state' after physical death until the resurrection. Scour the word of God and find evidence for this concept if you can. Does the bible teach that souls are **conscious** or unconscious after physical death? You might start with these scriptures: Isa 14:9-11, Psalm 16:10, Luke 16:23,;23:43, 2 Cor 5:8, Phil 1:23, Rev 6:9.

¹ Some Excerpts taken from, "Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible" by Myer Pearlman (Pentecostal Classics, Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Mo. 1937, 25th Printing 2010).

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13. Is it beneficial for a Christian to die, providing he has done all that the Lord has asked of Him on earth? (Phil 1:21). Does man have a 'second chance' after physical death or not? (Heb 9:27)
14. **Meditate** upon the many names for Heaven: 1) **Paradise** (Garden) reminding us of our ancestors walking with God (Rev 2:7, 2 Cor 12:4). 2) **Fathers House** and mansions (John 14:2). 3) A Heavenly **Country** (Heb 11:13-16). 4) A **city** (Heb 11:10, Rev 21:2).
15. Consider the many **Blessings** of Heaven:
 - a) Light and Beauty (Rev 21:23, 22:5).
 - b) Fullness of Knowledge (1 Cor 13:12) – The mysteries of the universe will be made plain, knowledge will be perfected, theological issues resolved.
 - c) Rest (Rev 14:13, 21:4) – No more weariness, worries, sorrow, grief, pain or suffering.
 - d) Service – (Rev 7:15, 22:3).
 - e) Joy Everlasting (Rev 21:4).
 - f) Social Joys (Heb 12:22; 23; 1, Thess 4:13-18) – In Heaven friends and relatives will be faultless, including you. No more bickering or strife!
 - g) Fellowship with Christ (John 14:3, 2 Cor 5:8, Phil 1:23) – In that day we shall be like Him!

Synopsis

Though physical death continues for all on earth, it becomes a door to life in the case of those who accept Christ. It was never God's intent for man to experience death. Death entered through sin. When Adam and Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they died both spiritually and physically (Gen 3:6) simultaneously. Spiritually, because they were immediately disconnected from God (Gen 3:7), and physically, because at that moment, physical death began in their bodies. Had they eaten from the tree of life in that condition, they would have lived forever in a fallen corruptible state. That's why God mercifully banned them from the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:24), as He planned to redeem them later on, through His Son. Since man is spirit, soul and body, the redemption must include all three facets of man's tripartite being and whilst man may become right with God spiritually (Eph 2:1), he is still subject to physical death due to his blood inheritance from Adam. In the beginning God created man both spirit and body, and when spirit and body came together, they became a 'living soul.' Physical death is separation of the body from the spirit (which we will all encounter), spiritual death or the **second death** (Rev 20:14,20:6, 2:11, 21:8) is separation from God (eternally), which no-one needs to encounter as Christ gave his blood for everyone's redemption (John 14:6, John 3:16) should they choose him in this lifetime.¹

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