

What Happens When We Die?

Is the end of the world near? Where does a person go when they die? How can I know what's going to happen? Let's look at some end time terms!

Death – n. 1: the event of dying or departure from life; 2: the permanent end of all life functions in an organism or part of an organism; 3: the end of life; 4: the time when something ends; 5: a final state;

- Death by definition from the Bible: *(Bible Translation: NASB)*

1. Spiritual Death is the _____ separation of the sinner from God

- Psalm 51:5 - *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.*
- Romans 3:23 - *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
- Romans 5:12 - *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.*
- Romans 6:23 - *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

2. Physical Death is the _____ separation of the body from the soul and spirit

- John 19:30 - *When Jesus therefore had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit.*

3. Second Death is the _____ separation of the sinner from God

- Revelation 20:11-15 - *And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is {the book} of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one {of them} according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Here are some observations about death:

1. Death is our _____ not the ultimate healing!

- I Corinthians 15:24-26 - *then {comes} the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.*

2. Death will be _____!

- I Corinthians 15:50-57 - *Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall*

not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. Oh death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Hebrews 2:14, 15 - *Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.*
- Revelation 21:4 - *and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be {any} death; there shall no longer be {any} mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away. "*

3. Death is a _____.

- Psalm 116:15 - *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones.*
- John 5:24 - *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.*
- John 8:51- *I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.*
- Philippians 1:21- *For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.*
- II Corinthians 5:8 - *We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.*
- Ecclesiastes 7:2, 4 - *Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties. For you are going to die, and you should think about it while there is still time. A wise person thinks about death, while a fool thinks only about having a good time.*

"Death is the great key that opens the palace of eternity."

--John Milton

Here are some questions and answers about death, dying and what's ahead:

- 1) Are the dead present with us now? Can they see what we are doing?
- 2) What happens when we die?

- Hebrews 9:27 - *And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.*

Death terminates any opportunity to get right with God! Scripture does **NOT** teach:

- The dead _____ us
- The dead _____ us with their presence
- The dead can _____ with us in séances, occult activities or spiritism. These practices are condemned in Scripture!
 - Deuteronomy 18:9-13; 20-22 - *"When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. "There shall not be found*

among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. "For whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord; and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you. "You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. But the prophet who shall speak a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he shall speak in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die. "And you may say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?' "When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

- The virgin _____ or other dead saints pray for us
- The dead need our _____
- The dead can be _____

3) What about those who have died and come back?

➤ Hebrews 9:27 - *inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.*

4) Where do we go when we die?

A. Unbelievers:

- Luke 16:24 - *"And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame.'"*
- Revelation 20:11-15 - *And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.*

B. Believers:

- Luke 23:42, 43 - *Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom." And Jesus replies, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."*
- Acts 7:54-60 - *The Jewish leaders were infuriated by Stephen's accusation, and they shook their fists at him in rage. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed steadily into heaven and saw the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honor at God's right hand. And he told them, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at God's right hand!" Then they put their hands over their ears and began shouting. They rushed at him and dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. His accusers took off their coats and laid them at the feet of a young man named Saul. As they stoned him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He fell to his knees, shouting, "Lord, don't charge them with this sin!" And with that, he died.*

- II Corinthians 5:6-10 - *So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. For we live by believing and not by seeing. Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.*
- Philippians 1:21-24 - *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.*
- Revelation 21:1, 2 - *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

Suppose we knew exactly when we would take our last breath... What would we start or stop doing? What would change about the way we live, think, attitudes, habits, or relationships?

- Ecclesiastes 7:1b-4 (NLT) - *The day you die is better than the day you are born. Better to spend your time at funerals than at parties. After all, everyone dies—so the living should take this to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for sadness has a refining influence on us. A wise person thinks a lot about death, while a fool thinks only about having a good time.*

- **Sheol** – The Old Testament Hebrew term for the place of the _____. Prior to Christ's resurrection, it was the destiny of the both believers and unbelievers. Sheol was always spoken of as "_____." The word "sheol" is found some 65 times in the Old Testament. Unfortunately, its translation into English muddies its meaning:

King James Version	New International Version
"grave" – 31 times "hell" – 31 times "pit" – 3 times	"grave" – 55 times "death" – 6 times "depth of the grave" – 4 times

- **Hades** - The New Testament equivalent of _____. It is the _____ place of unbelievers until their resurrection
- Luke 16:24 - *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.'*
- Revelation 20:13 -15 - *The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*
- **Paradise** - The _____ of God. It is the present abode of believers until the return of Christ. Jesus apparently descended to Sheol

- Ephesians 4:7-10 - But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)
- I Peter 3:18-20 - *Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit. So he went and preached to the spirits in prison—those who disobeyed God long ago when God waited patiently while Noah was building his boat. Only eight people were saved from drowning in that terrible flood.*

Before joining the thief in paradise...

- Luke 23:43 - *And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."*

Paradise was in Sheol! Paul was taken to paradise, the third heaven:

- II Corinthians 12:1-6 - *This boasting will do no good, but I must go on. I will reluctantly tell about visions and revelations from the Lord. I was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell. That experience is worth boasting about, but I'm not going to do it. I will boast only about my weaknesses. If I wanted to boast, I would be no fool in doing so, because I would be telling the truth. But I won't do it, because I don't want anyone to give me credit beyond what they can see in my life or hear in my message.*

- **Prophecy** - *n.* : An inspired utterance of a prophet, viewed as a revelation of divine will. 2: A prediction of the future, made under divine inspiration. 3: Such an inspired message or prediction transmitted orally or in writing.

Pastor's Prophecy Principles:

- 1) Interpret the passage literally unless it doesn't make sense
- 2) Discover the historical background in which the prophecy was originally given
- 3) Compare parallel passages
- 4) Beware of imposing a man-made system; let the Scriptures speak!
- 5) Search to find if the prophecy is near, distant or remote e.g. Isaiah predicted near (in his own time), distant (the second coming) and remote (the millennium).
- 6) Interpret all prophecy in light of Christ
- 7) Christianity, unlike most world religions, has a specific blueprint of the future. Theologian John Walvoord says the Bible is 1/3 predictive and 1/2 of those predictions have been fulfilled!

- **The Great Tribulation** (Revelation 7:14) - A time of incredible _____, wars and plagues preceding the reign of Jesus on the earth.

- **Millennium** - Although the word "millennium" is not found in the Bible, the concept of Jesus Christ reigning on the earth for a _____ years is clearly spelled out.

- Revelation 20:2-7 - *He seized the dragon—that old serpent, who is the devil, Satan—and bound him in chains for a thousand years. The angel threw him into the bottomless pit, which*

he then shut and locked so Satan could not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were finished. Afterward he must be released for a little while. Then I saw thrones, and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their forehead or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years. This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.) Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years. When the thousand years come to an end, Satan will be let out of his prison.

This future thousand-year "golden age" of peace and justice on the earth will occur after the Great Tribulation. Come Lord Jesus!

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

- *Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters, we don't really need to write you. For you know quite well that the day of the Lord's return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. When people are saying, "Everything is peaceful and secure," then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman's labor pains begin. And there will be no escape. But you aren't in the dark about these things, dear brothers and sisters, and you won't be surprised when the day of the Lord comes like a thief. For you are all children of the light and of the day; we don't belong to darkness and night. So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Stay alert and be clearheaded. Night is the time when people sleep and drinkers get drunk. But let us who live in the light be clearheaded, protected by the armor of faith and love, and wearing as our helmet the confidence of our salvation. For God chose to save us through our Lord Jesus Christ, not to pour out his anger on us. Christ died for us so that, whether we are dead or alive when he returns, we can live with him forever. So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing...*