



**An undenominational publication  
devoted to the teachings of Jesus and  
His apostles and dedicated to those  
who seek the truth.**

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## **AFTER DEATH --WHAT?**

Some people assume they are on their way to 'the great reward.' But what does God say about it?

Scripture tells us: "Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). In other words, there will be no second chance to have another

go at it. Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it" (Matthew 7:13-14). Ultimately there are just two possible destinations and two different roads that lead to those destinations.

When Jesus told the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke chapter 16, He opened a window of understanding into the destiny of those who pass from this life. For the poor man, Lazarus, there was immediate comfort and reward, while the rich man looked up in torment and found himself doomed to agony. It was explained to him, "a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us." There was no changing of the eternal destiny. The rich man chose the broad road and destruction was upon him. The poor man chose the narrow road that leads to life and was at peace with God.

Scriptures such as Matthew 25 and Revelation 20 tell us there will be a great Judgment Day on which "the great and small" will stand before the Judgment seat of Christ and eternal life or eternal torment will be God's judgment. Preparation for the coming Judgment is in our hands today. Will you hear, "Well done good and faithful servant, come and share your Master's happiness!" or, "Depart from Me, you who are cursed!" This life gives us the opportunity now to be on the right side of eternity when it comes.



— Randy Gardner  
Church of Christ, Quechee, VT

# YES, YOU HAVE A SOUL!



In the religious world various theories have evolved about the state of man after death. Some teach that man is just a mortal being and vanishes away. But does the Bible teach man possess an immortal soul that survives the death of the body?

The word “soul” enjoys a “wide range of meanings” in both Hebrew and Greek. In order to understand those meanings, it is necessary to examine how the word is employed within various contexts in Scrip-

ture where it appears. The common words for “soul” in the Bible (Hebrew *nephesh* [from *naphash*, to breathe]; Greek *psuche*) is used in at least four different ways.

In Revelation 6:9-10, John says “When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, ‘How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?’” John tells us he saw “the souls” not “the bodies.” It is very clear that this can’t be mortal bodies, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. “I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable” (1 Corinthians 15:50).

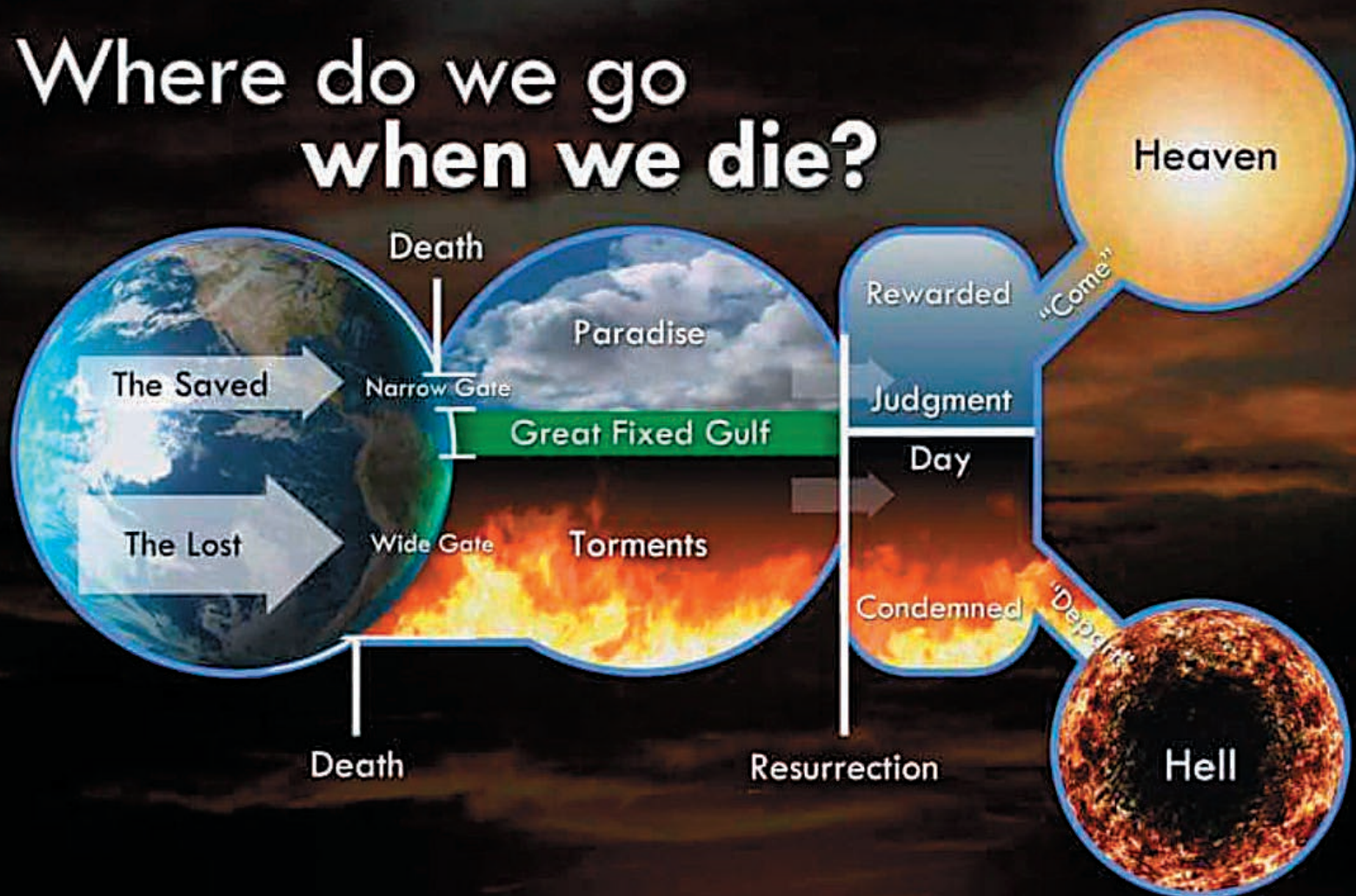
Our Lord Jesus also made a clear distinction between the body and soul of man. “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28).

The account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31) explains the distinction between the body and the soul perfectly. “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side...” (Luke 16:22). Did angels come to carry the physical body of Lazarus to Abraham’s side? Certainly not.

The ‘soul’ in Scripture is sometimes applied to the whole being or life of man (Acts 2:41, Ezekiel 18:20, Prov 12:10). These passages, however, do not in any way annul the fact that man possesses an immortal soul. The context determines what words mean. Scripture clearly teaches in verses such as those discussed above that you have a soul. “May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

**Richmond O. Gyamfi**  
Church of Christ, East Hartford, Connecticut

# Where do we go when we die?





# THE RESURRECTION

**The concept of a bodily resurrection has been questioned and contested by many for thousands of years. The Sadducees challenged Jesus on this issue during His earthly ministry (Matthew 22:23-32). The Apostle Paul, as he reasoned with the philosophers, was openly ridiculed when he taught about Jesus and the resurrection from the dead (Acts 17:16-32).**

The teaching of a bodily resurrection is fully supported and boldly proclaimed in Scripture. The resurrection of Jesus was foretold by the prophets (Acts 13:32-35). Jesus himself spoke of His own resurrection as an undeniable certainty (Matthew 20:17-19; John 2:19-22). And the Apostles, along with many others, witnessed and confirmed the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:23-24; 32; 1 Corinthians 15:4-8). This critical evidence establishes the resurrection as an integral element of the gospel message and an essential doctrine of the Christian faith.

“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

The resurrection proves Christ’s deity—He was God in the flesh (John 1:1-4). Through His resurrection, Jesus conquered death and gained the victory over Satan (Hebrews 2:14-15). We share in this victory through baptism where we figuratively participate in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Belief in Christ’s resurrection secures our redemption and insures our own resurrection.

“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we will certainly also be united with Him in a resurrection like His” (Romans 6:3-5).

Ultimately, the resurrection of Jesus provides the basis for the Christian’s faith and salvation. If Jesus had not been raised from the dead, the Christian would have no hope. “For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins” (1 Cor 15:16-17). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is our hope!

— Terry Schmidt  
Southern Maine Church of Christ, West Kennebunk, Maine



# JUDGMENT IS COMING

There are those who believe there will be a day of divine judgment and there are those who don't have any idea of what is meant by the term "the day of judgment." Others have chosen to ignore it, but if we choose to believe it or to ignore it, does not change the fact that it is *already established to happen*. The Lord has declared in Psalms 9:7: "The Lord reigns forever; He has established his throne for judgment." II Corinthians 5:10 states: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done within the body, whether is good or bad."

In a Court, the judge passes down a sentence on the evidences presented. What will the judge of our souls render to us on the Day of Judgment? The civil court judge renders a verdict according to the law of the state. The Almighty God will render His verdict according to His word, the Bible. Jesus said: "There is a judge for the one who rejects Me and does not accept My words; that very word I spoke will condemn him at the last day" (John 12:48). The New Testament is God's final Will and Testament for us and we will be judged according to it.

**God will  
bring  
every deed  
into  
judgment**

The word of God reminds us: "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12: 13-14).

The wonderful thing about God as our judge is that He is patient and long suffering not wanting anyone to perish. He extends His grace to us until the final day. The Lord has extended His grace to us in Jesus Christ who can save us from our sins. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven" (Acts 2:38).

There's a great Day coming! Are you ready for the Judgment Day?

– John Kurpiel  
Church of Christ, Lawrence, Massachusetts

# HEAVEN AND HELL ARE REAL

On a clear, spring day, one may take a big breath while admiring the beauty of some place and think “it can’t get any better than this!” There are places we find absolutely breathtaking. But when I think about a beautiful place, my thoughts immediately turn to the inspired word of God. It is in the inspired Scriptures that we learn about Heaven. One may, however, ask the question, is Heaven for real?

Heaven is described as God’s dwelling place (1 Kings 8:43), the Father’s house (John 14:2 8:4), a place where the children of God can find rest (Revelation 14:13), and a permanent dwelling place for God’s children (John 14:2-3). We will never hunger, never thirst, and never have to cry again, for God will wipe every tear from our eyes (Revelation 14:16). There will be no more pain and death (Revelation 21:4). Heaven is a place where God’s people will reign forever and ever (Revelation 22:4).

Some believe that only 144,000 will get to enjoy the beauty of heaven. These individuals have taken passages such as Revelation 7:4-8 and Revelation 14:3, to be a literal number. However, in the symbolic language of the book of Revelation, the number 144,000 is not to be understood as a literal number. It is a *symbol* representing either the complete totality of all the redeemed for all time, or God’s redeemed people from the Old Testament, with the “great multitude” standing before God’s throne in heaven the redeemed people from the New Testament.

If taken literally, no married men with children would have the opportunity of enjoying heaven for Revelation 14:4 says the 144,000 are “ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves pure.” Taken literally only male virgins would have the right to the inheritance heaven! This same number would also exclude all gentiles going to heaven, for the 144,000 are all of Jewish ancestry from the ancient tribes of Israel (Revelation 7:4-8).

Today both men and women, married and single, with or without children, who have been “born again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Christ Jesus” (1 Peter 1:3) have “a kingdom prepared for you” (Matthew 25:34).

Just as Heaven is real we find another place in the inspired Scriptures called the “eternal fire that is prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41), a place of eternal punishment (Matthew 25:46), and “hell” (Greek: *gehenna*).

According to the scriptures, both Heaven and Hell are for real. Let us live according to God’s divine plan and purpose so we can obtain that “eternal house in heaven,” not built by human hands (2 Corinthians 5:1).

**Greg Johnson**  
**Church of Christ, Middletown, New York**

# A CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

"God has set eternity in the hearts of men"  
Ecclesiastes 3:11

"We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, . . . groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For

**in this hope we were saved."**

Romans 8:22-24

"God has given us new birth ... into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you."

1 Peter 1:3-4

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