

This we believe.... there is life after death!

July 5, 2009

God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.

Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verse 11 (506)

- 81% of Americans believe in the existence of heaven (where people live forever with God after they die).

When asked, *"Immediately after death, which of the following do you think will happen to you?"*

- 61% - I will go to heaven
- 15% - I will go to purgatory
- 5% - I will be reincarnated
- 4% - I will cease to exist
- 1% - I will go to hell.

1. Eternity is a reality for everyone.

But tell me this-since we preach that Christ rose from the dead, why are some of you saying there will be no resurrection of the dead?

1 Corinthians chapter 15, verses 12-16 (879)

- a) *"For if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised either." (vs. 13)*
- b) *"And if Christ was not raised, then all our preaching is useless, and your faith is useless. (vs. 14)*
- c) *"And we apostles would all be lying about God, for we have said that God raised Christ from the grave, but that can't be true if there is no resurrection of the dead." (vs. 15)*
- d) *"And if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised." (vs.16)*
- e) *"And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is useless and you are still guilty of your sins." (vs.17)*
- f) *"In that case all who have died believing in Christ are lost." (vs. 18)*

And if our hope in Christ is only for this life, we are more to be pitied than anyone in the world.

1 Corinthians chapter 15, verses 12-16 (879)

2. Every person will face God in eternity.

And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment...

Hebrews chapter 9, verse 27 (925)

I have the same hope in God that these men have, that he will raise both the righteous and the unrighteous.

Acts chapter 24, verse 15 (853)

- Every person will be resurrected after death.
- Every person will stand before God after death.
- God will separate those who trusted His Son Jesus and followed Him from those who didn't.

3. Separation from God = Hell

- There are dozens of references to "Hell" in the bible.
- There are several different words used for "Hell".
- It is described as the place where Satan and his demons exist as well as the final destination of the unrepentant.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans chapter 6, verse 23 (861)

Jesus described Hell as...

- ❖ “darkness” or “outer darkness” – Matthew 8:12; 22:13; 25:30
- ❖ “fire”, “torment” and “unquenchable fire” - Matthew 3:12; 13:42 & 50 Mark 9:43 & 48
- ❖ “gnashing of teeth”- Matthew 8:12; 13:42 & 50; Matthew 25:30

The Lord isn't really being slow about His promise (to return), 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 chapter 3, verse 9 (939)

4. Complete freedom and fulfillment with God = Heaven

The Bible describes heaven as...

- a) Freedom from pain, sorrow, guilt, injustice and death.

They will never again be hungry or thirsty, and they will never be scorched by the heat of the sun. For the Lamb on the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to the springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” Revelation chapter 7, verses 16 & 17 (953)

- b) Your search for belonging will be completely fulfilled.

I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! God himself will be with them. Revelation chapter 21, verse 3 (961)

- c) It is incomparable!

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will reveal to us later.

Romans chapter 8, verse 18 (862)

- d) There will be rewards in heaven.

But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value. If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builders will be saved, but like someone escaping through a wall of flames. 1 Corinthians chapter 3, verses 13-15 (871)

5. How Should the Reality of Eternity Change AI?

- a. There is urgency to sharing Jesus with others.
- b. My perspective of the world and lost people is different.
- c. I am grateful for God's grace and should be willing to extend it to others.
- d. My hope is not in this world (people, governments, politicians, money, etc.); but in Christ alone.
- e. How I invest my time, talent and treasure is transformed.

Next Week: This We Believe...The Bible is God's Only Book.