

Church of God Sunday School

WHERE WILL I GO WHEN I DIE?



DAILY READINGS:

- ❑ **Monday:** We all have an appointment with death (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Hebrews 9:27).
- ❑ **Tuesday:** Sin causes spiritual death, but Christ makes us alive (Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:13).
- ❑ **Wednesday:** Life is too short to put off spiritual preparations (Job 14:1; James 4:14; 2 Corinthians 6:2).
- ❑ **Thursday:** A certain rich man failed to make spiritual preparations (Luke 12:16-21).
- ❑ **Friday:** Jesus told a true story about a rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
- ❑ **Saturday:** The names of overcomers are recorded (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; Revelation 20:11-13).

MEMORY VERSE: *"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."*
—Matthew 25:46

Is There Life After Death?

Have you ever wondered what happens after you die? Is there life after death? If so, where will you go? The answers to these important questions will help determine how you live your life before death. That is why it is important to know what happens after you die. There are many beliefs and opinions concerning what happens after death. Some people say the grave is the end, that there is nothing after death. Other people believe everyone is going to Heaven. Still others say that there is no place called hell; it is just a scare tactic to make people do what is right. Most important, what does the Bible say? That is what we must consider, for the Bible is the Ultimate Authority.

Job asked a very important question in Job 14:14, when he said, "If a man die, shall he live again?" The Book of Job asks many questions whose answers can only be found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Who better to answer this question about life after death than Jesus? At the grave of Lazarus, Jesus told Martha, "I am the resurrection, and the life . . . whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25-26). Yet, Lazarus was dead. What did Jesus mean when He spoke of never dying?



It is important to realize there are different kinds of death described in the Bible. One is physical death. This occurs when there is a separation of the soul and spirit from the body (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Every one of us has an appointment with physical death (Hebrews 9:27). Solomon wrote, "To everything there is a season [or an appointed time] . . . A time to be born, and a time to die" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2). We do not know when death will take place, but we must prepare for it. What happens to us after this is determined by whether or not we are alive spiritually. When one sins against God, that sin causes a separation. This is described as being "dead in sins" (Ephesians 2:5). Only by accepting Christ as your Savior can you be "quickened" (Ephesians 2:1), or made alive spiritually.

Making Preparations for Death

For most people, the thought of dying is frightening. Psalm 23:4 tells us that we do not need to be afraid of the "valley of the shadow of death" if God is with us. What does that mean? Before we face death, we must prepare. We must have God within us, not beside us or close by, but we must have His Spirit living in our heart. Sometime in our life we will be given a choice: to serve God or not serve God. If we accept Jesus as our Savior, we will have His Spirit

in us all through life; and He will also be with us when we die. Would you go to an important financial appointment without gathering all the needed papers first? Would you leave for a lengthy trip without packing and getting directions? Many people realize the importance of preparing for these events, yet they do nothing to prepare for the most important appointment of all. Today's spiritual preparation determines tomorrow's eternal destination.

Some people put off preparing for death, hoping that at the end of their life they will have enough time to get right with God. This is similar to preparing for retirement by waiting until the last few months of your career to put money aside and hoping it will be enough. Many people would consider that foolish, yet they continually put off making preparations for life after death. When should you start making your spiritual preparations? Second Corinthians 6:2 says that "now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Yesterday is gone, tomorrow may never come, today is all you have for sure. Today is the best time to begin making preparations.



James wrote that life is "a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14). Job described life as being "of few days" (Job 14:1). Yet, too often people live their life as if they will live forever, giving little or no thought to their eternal home. In Luke, Chapter 12, the "certain rich man" made plans for building bigger barns to hold his wealth. He was planning on enjoying his "goods" for many years, but he did not plan for life after death. God called him a "fool." His treasures were all on earth, not in Heaven (Luke 12:21; Matthew 6:20). We must make preparations for what Solomon called our "long home" (Ecclesiastes 12:5).

Your Eternal Home

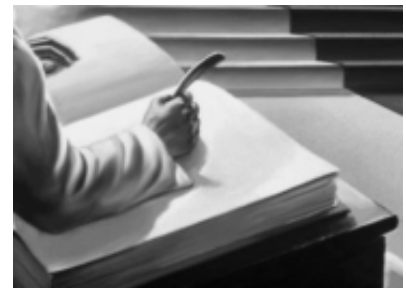
If you are traveling to a place you have never been before, a map can be very helpful. Your life can be described as a journey. Where are you headed? What is your final destination? It is not God's will for anyone to "perish," but He desires all to "have everlasting life" (John 3:16). God has "no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ezekiel 33:11), but Psalm 116:15 tells us, "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." Because it is so important to God that you make the right choice concerning your final destination and He knows that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23), God has provided a roadmap—the Bible. Everything you need can be found in this wonderful Book! Sadly, many people reject God's plan of salvation. They decide to travel their own way (Proverbs 16:25). This has been called the broad way. Many people are traveling this way, and Matthew 7:13 says it "leadeth to destruction," a place of "everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46). There is another way to travel. It is often called the narrow way, a way that few people have chosen, but it leads "unto life" (Matthew 7:14).

What are these two destinations that Jesus called "destruction" and "life"? Perhaps the best way to understand is to read a true story Jesus told in Luke, Chapter 16, about the rich man and a beggar named Lazarus. When they died, those two men went to two different places. Lazarus went to a place of comfort, described as "Abraham's bosom" (a Jewish expression meaning Heaven), and the rich man went to a place of torment, called hell. Neither Lazarus nor the rich man could leave one place for the other. These were their eternal (or forever) homes. Their final destinations were determined by the spiritual preparations they made before death.

The Book of Life

In ancient cities when a baby was born, his or her name was written in a city registry. When someone in that city died, their name was then marked out of the book of the living. The Bible tells us that God has a book where names are recorded as well. This book is called "the book of life" (Philippians 4:3). At the final Judgment, anyone whose name is not written in this book will be "cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

When you accept Jesus as your personal Savior, you are born again. You become spiritually alive, and your name is written down in the Book of Life. As long as you continue to live the life of an overcomer, your name will not be marked out of this book (Exodus 32:33; Revelation 3:5). Is your name written in this book? Have you made plans for your final destination? If not, it is not something to put off until another day.





1. What is the best source to find the answer to questions about life after death? _____
2. What important question did Job ask in Job 14:14? _____
3. What separation happens in a physical death? _____
4. What separation happens in a spiritual death? _____
5. How can you be "quicken" (Ephesians 2:1), or made alive spiritually? _____
6. What does Hebrews 9:27 and Ecclesiastes 3:2 tell us about death? _____
7. When should you start making spiritual preparations for your eternal home? _____
8. How did James and Job describe the shortness of one's life? _____
9. In Luke, Chapter 12, why did God call the rich man a "fool"? _____
10. What is the way called that leads to destruction? _____
11. What is the way called that leads to life? _____
12. What is the Jewish figurative term for Heaven? _____
13. What is the book called where God writes down the names of overcomers? _____
14. How do you get your name into this book? _____

What Does the Bible Say

FILL IN THE BLANKS

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the _____"
(Hebrews 9:27).

"For we must all appear before the _____ of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

"And whosoever was not found written in the _____ of _____ was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into _____ . . ." (Matthew 25:41).

"And these shall go away into everlasting _____: but the righteous into _____ eternal" (Matthew 25:46).

". . . but now he is _____, and thou art _____"
(Luke 16:25).

About Life After Death?