

"The First Five Minutes After Death" or "Where Does a Believer Go When They Die?"

2 Cor. 5:8-9

2-7-16 SS

1. There is a false teaching that when the believer dies, his soul, spirit, and body remain in the grave till the resurrection of the church. The believer "sleeps" until final judgment (soul sleep). It is not the believer who is asleep but his body!

2. Some believe that when people die they are judged instantly and go to their eternal destinations.

TT- What does the Bible rightly interpreted teach?

I. The Unbeliever.

Q- Where does the unbeliever's body and soul/spirit go when they die?

His spirit and soul goes to Hades waiting to be cast into Gehenna or (lake of fire) at the Great White Throne Judgment to suffer for eternity. The physical body remains in the grave.

Luke 16:22-23, And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; (23) And in **hell** "Hades" he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Rev 20:11-15, And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. (12) And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. (13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and **hell** "Hades" delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. (14) And death and **hell** "Hades" were cast into the lake of fire "Gehenna." This is the second death. (15) And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. So the unbeliever's body goes to the grave and the spirit and soul to Hades waiting to be united together and to stand at the Great White Judgment and to be cast into the eternal lake of fire.

II. The Believer.

Q- Where does the believer's body and soul/spirit go when they die? The first five minutes after death.

The believer's spirit/soul is taken to heaven in the presence of Jesus immediately after death. The physical body remains in the grave "sleeping."

At the resurrection of the church, the physical body is resurrected and living believers are translated. Both receive a glorified body and are reunited with the soul/spirit to live in the New Jerusalem forever (Rev. 21-22).

The two eternal destinies are based entirely on whether or not they trusted Jesus alone for salvation (Matt. 25:46; John 3:36).

Let me share some Scriptures that validate this:

2 Corinthians 5:8-10, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, **and** to be present with the Lord. (9) Wherefore we labour, that, whether **present or absent**, we may be accepted of him. (10) For we must all appear before the **judgment seat 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.

Phil. 1:21-24, For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (22) But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. (23) For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: (24) Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

Luke 23:42-43, And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. (43) And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Eccl. 12:7, Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

1 Thess. 5:9-10, For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, (10) Who died for us, that, **whether we wake or sleep**, we should live together with him.

1 Thess. 4: 13-17, But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are **asleep**, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which **sleep in Jesus** will God bring with him. (15) For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. (16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (17) Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1 Cor. 15:51-52, Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall **not all sleep**, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Note that no unbelievers are resurrected at the rapture of the church. Now let's turn to the book of Revelation.

Rev. 6:9, And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar **the souls** of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

Rev 7:13-14 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? (14) And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which **came out of great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

There is two general resurrections- the just and the unjust, the believer and unbeliever, life and damnation, and before the tribulation and after the millennium.

John 5:28-29, Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, (29) And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Rev. 20: 4-6, And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus [Tribulation martyrs], and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (5) But the rest of the dead [unbelievers of all ages] lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the **first resurrection**. (6) Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Tribulation believers, along with the redeemed from both the OT and NT eras, will reign with Christ during the 1,000-year kingdom.

John MacArthur explains it best as he echoes the teaching of the historical church. "Scripture teaches two kinds of resurrections: the "resurrection of life" and "the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:29; cf. Dan. 12:2; Acts 24:15). The first kind of resurrection is described as "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14), and includes Christ, selected saints as his resurrection, the resurrection of "those who are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor. 15:23), and the "better resurrection" (Heb. 11:35). It includes only the redeemed of the church age (1 Thess. 4:13-18), the OT (Dan. 12:2), the two witnesses, and the Tribulation (Rev. 20:4). They will enter the kingdom in resurrection bodies, along with believers who survived the Tribulation. The second kind of resurrection, then, will be the resurrection of the unconverted who will receive their final bodies suited for torment in hell."