

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Part one

Greetings precious people, this week we are going to begin to examine the questions: "What happens when we die? Do we cease to exist? Is there an after life?" These questions and others like them are very important for they deal with eternity. There are many opinions concerning death and what occurs afterward. Some believe that death is the end of existence; others believe in some form of re-incarnation that you get more chances to get to Heaven if you didn't make it this time; while some believe in a variety of after life experiences.

We will examine what the Word of God the Bible has to say concerning life after death. Let's begin by considering the belief that a religious sect during the time of Jesus known as the Sadducees held to, the belief that there was no after life, Jesus had a number of confrontations with this group, one such encounter is recorded in Matthew 22:23-32, "The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her." Jesus answered and said to them, "**You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God.** For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Jesus clearly refutes the notion that when you die that it is all over. He also corrects their thinking on life after death by pointing to the Word of God. There is a great deal of ignorance concerning death and what follows and much of that ignorance is attributed to not knowing the Bible and the power of God. The notion of when I die it is all over is an appealing thought because then I can live however I please with no eternal consequences and no One to answer to but it is a false notion.

The Bible makes it clear that man is a three fold being, body; soul; spirit. The physical body of which we all have is merely the temporary dwelling place for our soul (the real you which will last forever). When God created man He created him an eternal being.

When Adam and Eve rebelled against God in the Garden of Eden they experienced one of God's promises for He had told them, "Of all the trees in the Garden you may eat except the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. In the day that you eat of that tree you will surely die!" They ate and immediately they died 'spiritually' and they also began to die physically.

The 'spirit' aspect of man is that part that is able to have an intimate relationship with God, to communicate, fellowship, worship, and know God. Because of sin, we are all dead spiritually and need the "new birth" that Jesus speaks of in John 3:1-3, "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God;

for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." When we repent of our sin and place our faith in Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit comes into our life and makes us alive spiritually. Now we become a complete being the way God intended us to be.

Just as there are two parts to life (physical and spiritual) there are two parts to death (physical and spiritual). Unless the Rapture occurs when we are still alive, all of us will experience the physical death. But only those that are 'born again' will never taste of the spiritual death the Bible speaks of which is Hell. If you are only born once (physical) you will die twice but if you are born twice (physically and spiritually) you will only die once. Are you certain of where you will spend eternity?

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