

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Part 2

Greetings precious people, this week we are going to continue examining 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 and we examined some of them in last week's article.

This week I would like for us to look further into the area of what happens when we die. As we established last week from the Bible, at death (physical) the physical body may cease to exist but the soul of man continues on for eternity. Now the question is, 'Where does the soul go when the body dies? Where do we spend eternity?'

In Luke 16:19-31, "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

Many mistaken this to be a parable (a true to life 'story' with a spiritual meaning) I do not believe it is a parable for none of the parables that Jesus used gave names of specific people. This should be better understood as an actual account of an event that Jesus being God was able to convey as He saw it.

From the events in this account we understand the following: when a person died prior to the resurrection of Jesus (which was a believer like Lazarus) they went to a place known as "Abraham's bosom" also known as Paradise. Then when Jesus died and rose again He took those who trusted God to Heaven with Him. For those who believed not (past and present) that die in their sin they go to a place known in the Bible as Hades until the time when God brings all unbelievers before His throne and judgment is passed upon them for their sin and the sentence of Hell is pronounced. Revelation 20:11-15 "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each

one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”

There is life after death; there are no ‘second chances’ once you die; if your sins have not been forgiven through faith in Christ, you will stand before a just and holy God and be judged for your sins; if you are not ‘born again’ you will not go to Heaven but spend eternity in Hell. You **will** live forever, the question is: where will you spend it?

Drew Macintyre is associate pastor of Calvary Chapel of Alpine and can be reached at 619-445-2589, or ccalpine@juno.com