

San Juan church of Christ

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What Does God's Word Say About... Eternal Life

At the moment of our death our spirit leaves the body and returns to Him who made us (Eccl. 12:7) and everything about our life, at the moment of death, is sealed permanently. There is no second chance to live one's life a different way. The Psalmist wrote, "Man is like a mere breath; his ways are like a passing shadow" (Psa. 144:4). The brevity of life is "just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away" (James 4:14). The reality of death is the sobering truth of the finality of it all.

Everyone of us, upon our death in the flesh, will face judgment from God as to how we lived our life upon this earth (Hebrews 9:27). In the gospel of John, Jesus said, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28-29). He also said, "I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him [God] who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (John 5:24).

Jesus taught that eternal life in heaven would be granted to those who believed in Him (John 3:16) and are obedient to Him (Hebrews 5:9). Everyone will experience eternal life when they die in the flesh, however, those who are disobedient will have "everlasting punishment". God has given man a short time upon this earth, compared to eternity, and death will seal the fate of everyone according to the way they led their lives. Solomon wrote, "fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil" (Eccl. 12:13-14).

The Psalmist said, "My life is continually in my hand, yet I do not forget Your law" (Psm. 119:109). The inspired writer points out a truism of life. An individual, unless intellectually impaired by a mental defect, has total control of the course of life that he chooses to take. Joshua understood the choice we have to accept or reject God when he said, "choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

The apostle Peter wrote, "For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God [Christians]; and if it begins with us first, what would be the outcome of those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if it is with difficulty that the righteous are saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner?" (1 Peter 4:17-18).

The apostle Paul wrote of Jesus' return from heaven and said, He will "deal out retribution [judgment] to those (1) who do not know God and to those (2) who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus". These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power (2 Thess. 1:7-9). Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it". Many religious people will claim that they know God but will not "do the will of My Father." Jesus, when speaking to both groups said, "then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me you who practice lawlessness" (Matt. 7:13-14, 23).

We will all face God on the day of judgment (2 Cor. 5:10). It is at that time our eternal destiny will be determined by whether or not we remember and applied God's law to our life while in the flesh. Yes, it is our life and our decision as to how we choose to live it. The question we must face is this, "Did I choose to live my life according to the will of God?" Our choice regarding this question will determine our eternal destiny. It is our choice, and we will have to live with it for eternity.

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:
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