

San Juan Church of Christ

1414 Hawk Parkway, Unit C
Montrose, CO 81401 | (970) 249-8116

What Does God's Word Say About...

What Happens at Death

When we die physically, or "fall asleep" (1 Thess. 4:13-15), we are immediately judged (Heb. 9:27) by God's word (John 12:48-50). The simple meaning of death is separation, "The body without the spirit is dead" and "then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it," (James 2:26; Ecc. 12:7). Those who are obedient to God's word and "fall asleep" (die physically) will immediately be with Christ in heaven (John 12:26; Phil. 12:23). Those who are disobedient to God's word and "fall asleep" (die physically) before Christ returns, will be judged by the "great white throne and Him [Christ] who sat upon it," (Rev. 20:11).

The Old Testament patriarchs who died before Christ was crucified have already been judged by "the great white throne" and Christ's sacrifice on the cross covers their sins, as well as ours. "But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for ALL TIME... For by one offering He has perfected for ALL TIME those who are sanctified," (Heb. 10:12,14.) Those who were disobedient to God in the Old Testament, and died, were sent to a place called Hades [place of the dead] where they were "in torment." Jesus gave the story of a rich man who was "joyously living in splendor every day" without regard to God. When the rich man died, and was in Hades, he was "in torment" and asked for a "dip of water" to cool off his tongue "for I am in agony in this flame," (Luke 16:19-24).

After the cross John wrote "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne [where Christ sits], and the books were open; and another book was open, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds...death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them...Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire," (Rev. 20:12-14). The "second death" is spiritual death, which is complete separation from God in the lake of fire, or hell.

When Christ returns, "He will sit on His glorious throne" and will judge all of those who are alive at His return. "He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right and the goats on His left. Then the King will say to the ones on His right 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom [heaven] prepared for you from the foundation of the world'," (Matt. 25:31-34). "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels'...These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life," (Matt. 25:41, 46).

No one will be lost because God wants him to be lost. Anyone who suffers eternal punishment in hell-fire will do so IN SPITE of God's character [God is love], (1 John 4:16, 19), not because of it! God wants us all to be saved (1 Tim.2:3-4; 2 Pet.3:9). But when anyone chooses to reject God and His word, God allows him to make that choice. But each must give an account to God for the choice he has made (Rom. 14:12).

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

info@sanjuanchurchofchrist.org

XNLV234477