

## #122 UNDERSTANDING DEATH AND RESURRECTION

**Q:** Why does the Bible say we should look forward to the blessed hope of being raised to life in the resurrection to be with Jesus, if we already pass straight to heaven when we died? I am confused: If being absent from the body is being present with the Lord, then why is there a resurrection?

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 "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. <sup>16</sup>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: <sup>17</sup>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."

**A:** All true doctrines will stand the test of being proved by the whole counsel of God, confirmed by comparing all the Scriptures in context from both Old and New Testaments. You will find scriptures that are often used to twist the truth into a false doctrine, are no longer confusing when compared to God's whole word contained in His Old and New Testament, neatly fitting together so that only one true answer is revealed to be the true doctrine of God, because it fits! Following is a scripture often used to prove that our 'disembodied soul' goes straight to heaven to be with Jesus when we die:

2 Corinthians 5:8 "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

**A:** The expression, "absent from the body but present in spirit" was also used by Paul when he was not physically present with the church but wanted them to know he was praying for them. It is a Jewish idiom that meant, "My heart is with you as though I were present".

1 Corinthians 5:3-4 "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, <sup>4</sup>in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ."

**A:** Present in spirit, and present with the Lord, are Jewish idioms, or expressions, understood by the Jewish reader to mean that our spirit or heart is with the one we long to be with. To find the true doctrine of 2 Corinthians 5:8, it is necessary to read this passage in the context it was written to find its intent and full meaning.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. <sup>2</sup>For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: <sup>3</sup>If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. <sup>4</sup>For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. <sup>5</sup>Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup>Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: <sup>7</sup>(For we walk by faith, not by sight:) <sup>8</sup>We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

Now Paul's intent is clear, expressly clarifying in advance of his statement, that he did not mean we will be found naked without a body when we die, but our spirit breath from God that made us alive at creation, goes back to God who gave it while we sleep in death, then when Jesus comes, we shall be clothed upon with the immortal body from God heaven, when we are changed in a moment at the last day!

1 Corinthians 15:52-53 "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. <sup>53</sup>For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

**Q:** Why can't it be true like some say, that the real spirit person inside goes up to heaven or down to hell, and only his body is dead?

Ecclesiastes 12:7 "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it."

**A:** You and I as mortals, shall put on immortality when Jesus comes but until then, we were created from dust and we shall return to dust. When did Paul say that he would be clothed in immortality? At the last trump when Jesus comes to raise us up! Paul said that **THEN** he longed to be clothed with our house which is from heaven - at the last trump when death is "swallowed up" in victory!

1 Corinthians 15:54 "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

**A:** That the body is dead, when the spirit breath of God goes back to God who gave it, was common knowledge in the early church, and agrees with the Old Testament view of life.

James 2:26 "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Job 27:3 "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils."

**A:** Paul instructed New Testament saints to interpret all teaching and doctrine by searching the only scriptures they had to search.

Acts 17:11-12 *“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”*<sup>12</sup> *Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.”*

**A:** Paul declared Himself to be a follower of all things written in the law and in the prophets, looking forward to the resurrection of believers to heaven, and of the wicked to suffer 2<sup>nd</sup> death.

Acts 24:14-15 *“But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:”*<sup>15</sup> *and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.”*

**A:** From Old through New Testaments of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we find that His word does not change: Man is a created being of dust who returns to dust, because life comes from God who alone has immortality, and our hope is in His appearing to redeem us to live in His glorious presence for all eternity!

1 Timothy 6:14-17 *“That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:”*<sup>15</sup> *which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;”*<sup>16</sup> *who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”*

**Q:** That makes sense, but if we don't go straight to heaven when we die but only our spirit breath that gave us life goes back to God, then why did Jesus say in John 11:26 that whoever believes in Him shall never die?

John 11:26 *“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”*

**A:** Many preaching the immortality of the human soul, take John 11:26 out of context, teaching falsely that at death, you will leave your body as a disembodied spirit and transport directly to heaven, but according to scriptures above and by reading this text in context, we find that is simply not true. The answer is found in verse 24-25. This scripture is clearly not talking about what happens at the point of death, but Jesus is talking to Martha about the resurrection! When read in context, being present with the Lord happens at the last day! Jesus teaches that whoever is dead at his coming who believed in Him shall live, and that whoever is alive at His coming who believes on Him will never have to die, because they shall put on immortality and rise up to meet Him!

John 11:24-26 *“Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die..Believest thou this?”*

Jesus spoke of that glorious day when He shall come to redeem His people, when all sin and sorrow will be cleansed in the Lake of Fire, and death shall be no more! What a glorious day that shall be when we shall forever be with the Lord!

**PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, Your name is called Everlasting Father because you are God from before creation until everlasting! We praise you, our creator, Lord and Savior, and we look for your appearing when we shall see your face and live with you forever in the heavenly city that you have prepared for us! May we be found ready and waiting when you come, **in Jesus name, Amen.**

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Bringing God's Word  
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This tract series has grown from the weekly Bible study targeting personal life issues faced by God's people through the pages of the Bible, and in our lives today, while looking to the power of God's word that comes alive through His indwelling Holy Spirit, to bring truth, lasting change and wholeness to our lives. We pray these tracts will help you to become more effective in your individual life and in opening doors to express and share your faith, so that many will come to know our God of grace, mercy, love and redemption through your personal ministry to them.