

Words of

Truth & Reason

Acts 26:25

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Let's Talk About Death (1)

Death, like taxes, is an unpleasant reality we must prepare for.

I'm 38 years old, so I don't talk about death often. Do you?

Society has talked about death due to the "death with dignity" movement, most recently publicized after Brittney Maynard, a young woman with brain cancer who chose to end her life. We need to see what the Giver of Life has said about the end of physical life.

The book of Genesis teaches us that in the beginning, God planned for man to live on earth and avoid death by eating from the tree of life (Gen. 2:9). As religion in America has grown more liberal, many preachers and churches do not believe or teach that the book of Genesis is a record of

literal history (does yours?), denying that a literal tree of life existed (Gen. 2:9). Jesus' and Paul's teachings prove they believe it is literal history (Matt. 19:4-9; 1 Tim. 2:12-14).

Genesis also tells us that God planned for man to die once sin was present (Gen. 2:17). Like the memorial at "Ground Zero" in New York City, death is a painful memorial of past events that must be remembered, but our society is forgetting the connection between sin and death. Have you forgotten?

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Let's Talk About Death (2)

Our experience with death is often very "sanitized." Our loved ones die in a hospital or at home, and we last see them in nice clothes in a decorated box. A farmer's or soldier's experiences with death are not so clean. Why does this matter? Death is a visible illustration of sin (Gen. 2:17), so grasping the concept of death aids our understanding of sin.

Death is the absence of life, like darkness is the absence of light, and sin is the absence of God (Is. 59:1-2). When death separates us from our parents, children, or closest friend, this is God's effort to teach us of our condition in sin without Him. That is the horror of hell---separation from your Father.

Death also reminds us of our weakness and limitations. *What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave?* (Ps. 89:48) Likewise, you cannot save yourself from sin. You are weak (Rom. 5:6).

Death and sin are painful processes (James 1:14-15), have repulsive results (Jn. 19:30), and end all opportunities for joy and reconciliation (Lk. 16:19-31). Are you learning?

Meditate on this, and your heart will be made better (Eccl. 7:3-4). Contact us for a free CD on this subject.

Let's Talk About Resurrection

Many people plan for retirement. How much thought do you give to the time your body "retires" from death?

Talking about death naturally leads to the subject of resurrection. This is controversial as many people believe death is the end or that our spirit returns to a new body (reincarnation). Can all ideas be right? No, but God's are.

What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave? (Psa. 89:48). Jesus claimed that He would deliver Himself from the power of the grave and proved it on the first day of the week (Jn. 10:17; 20:1). The first day of the week is the Lord's Day--- the only day the Spirit gave significance to for the church (Rev. 1:10; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2). This day is God's weekly memorial of Jesus' resurrection. In the 4th century a human council declared Easter a holy day of the church worldwide. (Read Colossians 2:20-23 and see the front page of our website for more on the topic of Easter)

Jesus also said *all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth... to the resurrection of life, or to the resurrection of condemnation* (Jn. 5:28-29). Many people avoid the subject of death and resurrection because they both point to judgment for each deed, public and private (Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 5:10). Learn from God how to prepare for that day. Can we help you? Send us your comments, questions.

And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.
(Hebrews 9:27-28)

You are invited to:
Sunday AM Bible classes:
10:00AM
Sunday AM Worship:
10:45AM
Sunday PM Worship:
5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes
& Worship: 7:00 PM

After Death, Before Resurrection

After learning of death and resurrection many people wonder what happens in between. Luke 16:19-31 offers the most help on this subject. Read those verses and then notice a few things we can learn.

A separation (v22-23) These two men are separated from each other by a *great gulf* (chasm). One is in a place of torment and the other is comforted—both in a temporary residence for souls until Judgment. This is not "Purgatory," where Catholic tradition claims sins are purged by temporary punishment—neither Jesus, nor the apostles taught this.

A memory of loved ones on earth (v28) The man in the place of torment feared that at death his five brothers would join him. We all have loved ones in this place—they also are hoping we do not join them. So, at death, we are conscious. We are not like a computer that has been unplugged. Our bodies appear to be sleeping, but our spirits return to God with the knowledge we had at death (Eccl. 12:7).

This is where Jesus went after death and before He was raised (Acts 2:27). At the moment of death, atheists and agnostics are convinced, hypocrites are exposed, all who are deceived see reality, and faithful Christians have comfort. Someday, we will all agree—don't wait until death to learn!

Questions from this issue's articles:

1. What does the book of Genesis teach us was God's original solution to the problem of death?
2. What is God trying to teach us at the death of our parents, or other loved ones?
3. When was "the Lord's Day" first recognized? When was Easter first recognized?
4. After death, all people will either experience _____ or _____ until the day of resurrection.

* Mail your answers to the church of Christ in Quail Valley 4104 E. Harrison St, Batesville, AR 72501

OR, e-mail your answers to **TruthAndReason@suddenlink.net**

* If you have a comment or question, call (793-6700; 569-4491) or visit our website **WWW.QVCOC.COM**

* All past and current issues of *Truth and Reason* are available at our website—tell a friend!