

You Will Live Forever

“The world and its desires are passing away, but the one who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:17).

It's getting ugly out there.

Indeed, the world is dying. Not in a false-alarmist, “OMG-global-warming-is-going-to-kill-us-all!” sort of way. Rather, this world is passing away in a Romans 1, “The-wrath-of-God-is-being-revealed-from-heaven” sort of way. How very unsettling and confusing this must all be for those absent “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding” (see Phil. 4:7).

A spirit of death and devastation has blanketed our globe. The enemy knows that his time is short. While nobody can say exactly when it will occur, it holds true that, as 2 Peter 3:10 reveals, “The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.”

Here's the bright side: You will live forever.

Well, it can be a bright side.

For all who acknowledge the reality of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and both believe upon and surrender to Him, the fact that we are created as eternal beings is brighter than the brightest star.

For those who deny Him, this reality is an unfathomable curse.

I had an epiphany the other day. It's such an elemental truth that I'm a bit embarrassed by it. Every human being who has ever been conceived and then suffered physical death is, at this very moment in time, and beyond time, fully conscious, alert and self-aware.

Right now, Alexander the Great is sentient.

As you read this line, Adolf Hitler is alert and, as Scripture declares, experiencing each interminable instant of the unimaginable torment that shall befall all who reject Christ Jesus.

And even as I write, the Apostle Paul is bathed in, and fully cognizant of, the indescribable glory that is the presence of the Holy Savior.

The late C.S. Lewis who, likewise, is presently experiencing what world renowned Christian apologist Hank Hanegraaff calls "heightened awareness," is credited with once saying, "You don't have a soul. You are a Soul. You have a body."

Your body is mortal. It's an earth suit for your immortal soul. It is, quite literally, and as modern science affirms, molded from clay. You are a bag of dust and water. "The dust returns to the earth where it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7).

The very instant we die, we will each stand in spirit before God and face judgment (Heb. 9:27). For those of you with the Holy Spirit, those who are faithful Christ followers, to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (see 2 Cor. 5:6-8). For those of you who remain unbelievers, even unto to the end of your earthly life—for those who reject Christ—physical death means eternal separation from God, which, again, is quite literally a living hell (Luke 16:22-23).

Still, until Jesus' triumphant and quite conspicuous final return, and until our ensuing final resurrection, those believers who have already passed away in the earthly sense will come together with Christ in an "intermediate" heaven, or, as He called it from "that rugged cross," "Paradise" (see Luke 23:43 and 2 Cor. 12:4). Alternatively, and tragically, those who have rejected Him will be held apart from Christ in

a very ugly place—in a “temporary hell”—called Hades (see Rev. 1:18 and 20:13-14).

Upon Christ’s final return, those believers who, in spirit, were together with Him in Paradise, will, once again, along with those believers who remain here on earth, join Him in both spirit and with glorified physical bodies, in the new heaven and upon the new earth (see Rev. 21:1). Those who were deceived by the Antichrist spirit, those whose names are not found written in the book of life, will be cast, along with Satan and his many demon helpers, into a lake of fire. There, they (you?) will suffer a very real, very conscious and never-ending living hell (Rev. 20:11-15).

These are weighty matters of eternal significance. These are your only two choices. Whether you are an atheist, Muslim, Hindu, Jew, Wiccan, agnostic, Buddhist or Mormon, you must either accept Christ or deny Christ.

Heaven or hell.

While you may deny Him until the day you die, after that, you will deny Him no more. Hate Him you may still, but deny Him you will not. Philippians 2:10-11 assures us, “that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

You will bow, and you will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Whether you do so now, in joy, or later, in horror, is up to you.

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26).

I believe it.

Do you?

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