

Where does a Christian go when they die?

(A timeline for eternity)

7.12.26

I Thess 4:13 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, concerning those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. **18** Therefore encourage^[a] one another with these words.

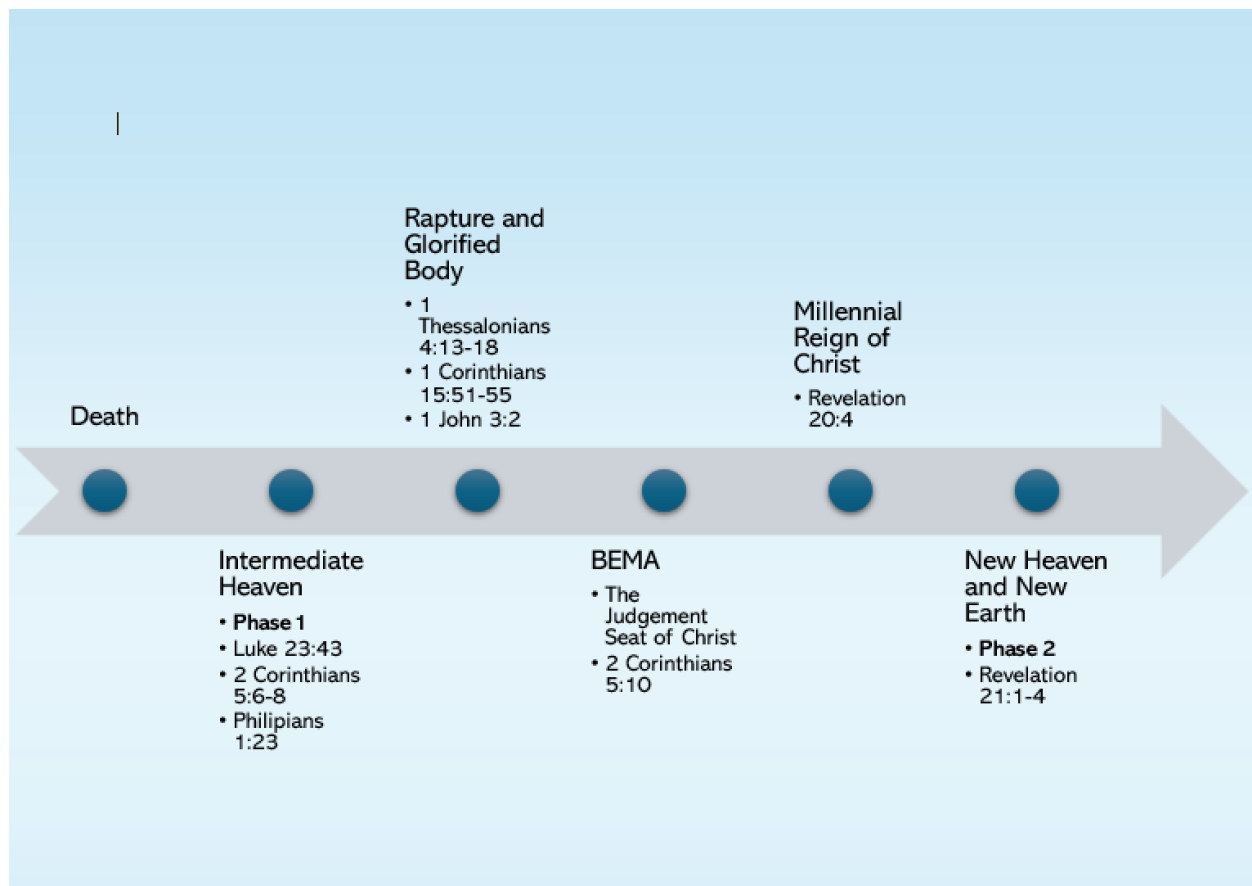
Ever wondered...

Where are they?

What are they doing?

Will I see them again?

I. A quick overview of what happens to a believer when they die.



II. Death

Luke 16:22 "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side.

Billy Graham once said, "Death for the Christian cuts the cord that holds us captive in this present evil world so that angels may transport believers to their heavenly inheritance."

III. Heaven...Phase 1/ intermediate

A. Heaven is....

1 Heaven is.....Immediate

Luke 16:22-31²² "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.

II Cor 5:8 In fact, we are confident, and we would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Luke 23:43 And he said to him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Phil 1:23 I am torn between the two. I long to depart and be with Christ—which is far better—

Not angels

Not in soul sleep

Not reincarnated

Not in purgatory

2 Heaven is.....in Phases

Phase 1 / Intermediate Heaven

Luke 16:22-31 ²² "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

Phase 2 / Permanent Heaven

Rev 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

Rev 21:3-4 ³ Then I heard a loud voice from the throne:^[a] Look, God's dwelling^[b] is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples,^[c] and God himself will be with them and will be their God.^[d] ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things^[e] have passed away.

3 Heaven is....Up.

Jesus----Acts 1:9 After he had said this, he was taken up as they were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

Acts 7:55-56 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

4 Heaven is....Amazing!

II Cor 12:1 must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. ² I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. ³ And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows— ⁴ was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell.

B. A few thoughts on intermediate /phase 1 heaven

1. We are fully conscious

Luke 16:22-31 ²² “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

Rev 10:9-10 ⁹ So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, “Take and eat it; it will be bitter in your stomach, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.”

¹⁰ Then I took the little scroll from the angel’s hand and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I ate it, my stomach became bitter. ¹

2. We may know one another in heaven

Luke 9: ³⁰ Suddenly, two men were talking with him—Moses and Elijah. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.

³² Peter and those with him were in a deep sleep,^[a] and when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who were standing with him. ³³ As the two men were departing from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it’s good for us to be here. Let’s set up three shelters: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he was saying.

I Sam 28: ¹³ But the king said to her, “Don’t be afraid. What do you see?”

“I see a spirit form^[a] coming up out of the earth,” the woman answered.

¹⁴ Then Saul asked her, “What does he look like?”

“An old man is coming up,” she replied. “He’s wearing a robe.” Then Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he knelt low with his face to the ground and paid homage.

¹⁵ “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Samuel asked Saul.

3. We may be aware of things happening on earth

Revelation 10: 9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered because of the word of God and the testimony they had given.^[f] **10** They cried out with a loud voice, "Lord,^[g] the one who is holy and true, how long until you judge those who live on the earth and avenge our blood?" **11** So they were each given a white robe, and they were told to rest a little while longer until the number would be completed of their fellow servants and their brothers and sisters, who were going to be killed just as they had been.

Luke 15: 7 In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away!

4. We may have some kind of "body"

Luke 9: 30 Suddenly, two men were talking with him—Moses and Elijah. **31** They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem.

32 Peter and those with him were in a deep sleep,^[g] and when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who were standing with him. ³

Luke 16:22,24 22 One day the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's side.^[g] The rich man also died and was buried. Father Abraham!' he called out, 'Have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this flame!'

Revelation 10:9-10 9 So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take and eat it; it will be bitter in your stomach, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."

10 Then I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I ate it, my stomach became bitter.

C. Heaven is guaranteed to all who follow Jesus

Ephesians 1:13 In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed.

Close:

“If you read history you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this.”

C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity