

Wide Awake and Ready! I Thessalonians

The King is Coming! Part 2 4:13-17



For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

1

When a believer's heart stops beating, their soul is ushered immediately into the presence of Jesus in Heaven.

(I Thessalonians 1:10; 4:16)



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



For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. Philippians 1:21-23



We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. II Corinthians 5:6-8



As they stoned him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” He fell to his knees, shouting, “Lord, don’t charge them with this sin!” And with that, he died. Acts 7:59

Spirit - pneuma: Literally, air or breath. “The rational spirit, the power by which the human being feels, thinks, decides. The soul.”

2 In Heaven, we will anticipate the resurrection of our bodies. He has something greater in store: being resurrected from the dead so that we will live soul and body forever in the new Heavens and the new earth.

And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Romans 8:23



We tend to assume that the condition that the departed Saints are in now without their bodies is the way it will always be. And we have encouraged ourselves so much with how good it is for them now, we tend to forget that it is an imperfect state and not the way it will be, nor the way Paul wanted it to be for himself. Yes, to die is gain, and yes, to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord, but no, this is not our ultimate hope. This is not the final state of our joy. This is not our final or main comfort when we have lost loved ones who believe.

(John Piper, *“What Happens When you Die?”*)



3

At death, believers will be made perfect and cleansed of all sin. Heaven is fully pure and perfectly holy, and God makes us fit for Heaven. We will be completely like Christ and He will present us to Himself without spot or wrinkle.



For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Romans 8:29



Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it. I Thessalonians 5:23, 24



... so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:27

4 Those who did not trust Christ in this life will be separated from God and enter a reality completely devoid of His Common grace and blessing.

The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. Luke 16:22-26



But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Luke 12:5

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. John 3:36

How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?
Hebrews 10:29

Heaven is a place of resplendent glory, and being
5 with Christ in the glory of Heaven will be far
superior to our present lives!



My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.
Philippians 1:23b



... we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for
then we will be at home with the Lord. II Cor. 5:8b