

## The Keys of Death and Hell

Some things in the course of life almost universally strike fear into the hearts of human beings. Today we will examine three of these fears.

### Jesus is Master & Sovereign Over These Three Fears:

1. **Fear of the \_\_\_\_\_(Future).**
  - a. *“Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.” Revelation 1:17 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says the Lord God,’ who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.’” Revelation 1:8*
  - b. Have you ever had days you didn’t want to get out of bed? Health or relational or job problems, etc. have seemed overwhelming.
  - c. When God created the universe, he created time. Theoretically, if we could travel the speed of light, time should stand still, and if we can go faster than the speed of light, we should be able to travel in time. Only God is everywhere present, spanning light years instantaneously. Therefore, God is able to see time in its entirety.
  - d. *“For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done.” Isaiah 46:10*
  - e. God foreknows and in some sense, determines your future, without ever negating your free will. Jesus could accurately predict Peter’s denial and his being a “rock” in the early church, yet Peter freely chose his actions at all times. Therefore we can place our trust in him completely. Only He holds the keys the mystery of the future.
  
2. **Fear of \_\_\_\_\_(Death)**
  - a. *“The last enemy to be destroyed is death.” I Corinthians 15:26 “I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.”*
  - b. Many have reported near-death experiences where they go through some sort of tunnel, and in the distance see a great light that warms and enlightens them as they draw near. Many reported not wanting to “go back”. Less common are near-death experiences that leave people terrified, such as have been cataloged by Dr. Maurice Rawlings in his book *To Hell and Back*.
  - c. Charles Lindbergh, the great American aviator, had no time for God in his life, until the end was near, when he spent some time in a Catholic convent. Yet as he personally planned his funeral, he included elements from all of the major religions. Tragically, he died in Hawaii without, to our knowledge, any type of personal relationship with Jesus.
  
3. **Fear of \_\_\_\_\_(Hell)**
  - a. *“I hold the keys to death and Hades.” Revelation 1:18*
  - b. In the Old Testament, the abode of those who died was called “Sheol”, or “Hades”. From 400 BC to the time of Christ, there developed the view that there are two compartments in Sheol, an idea that Jesus confirmed in Luke 16. There was Abraham’s bosom (where the righteous were held) and Hades

(where the unrighteous were held), and “*a great chasm has been fixed*” – vs. 26 – between the two abodes.

- c. The biblical evidence seems to suggest that Christ, after his crucifixion, did indeed descend with his keys and unlock Hades where he proclaimed his triumph to inhabitants of both compartments, as well as to demonic spirits who were imprisoned. Then Jesus led the Old Testament saints out of Abraham’s bosom into Paradise, into a more intimate presence of the Lord himself. Now when believers die, they go to Paradise.
- d. *“When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men. What does ‘he ascended’ mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.” Ephesians 4:8-10*
- e. *“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body, but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah.” I Peter 3:18-20*
- f. *“And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home – these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.” Jude 6*

**For centuries, man has pondered great philosophical questions like, “Is there life after death?, What does the future hold?, How will everything end?, Is there a real heaven and a real hell? , Are heaven and hell eternal?” Only one man offers a definitive answer that rings with clarity, triumph, and authority. That Man, Jesus Christ, holds the keys to death and Hades. Therefore, we are not to fear!**