

Truth and Spirit Ministries

Life after Death

What do you think of life after death? Do you believe that we are asleep until Jesus comes back or that we go to heaven immediately after death?

The teaching that one's soul is asleep in the grave until Jesus comes back is a doctrine called "soul sleep". Those that hold to this teaching believe that the souls of men do not go to heaven or hell upon death but that the soul remains in the grave with the body until we are resurrected at the return of Christ. According to the Word of God however, this teaching is false.

To truly understand what happens to man after death, one must know this foundational truth- that God has created man as a tri-part being, that is that we have a spirit, soul and body. This is confirmed throughout the scriptures. It is also revealed in the scriptures that we continue living on after death. Jesus told Martha before he resurrected Lazarus, **“He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” (John 11:25-26)** According to Jesus then, those who are saved continue to go on living even after death. The very words of Christ confirm to us that the doctrine of soul sleep really is a false teaching.

The Apostle Paul taught that at the moment of death believers instantly go to be with the Lord. Of course how can this be when their bodies are in the grave? The body goes in the grave and the soul departs and goes to be with God. Our souls are redeemed and go to be with the Lord immediately upon death and our bodies will be redeemed at the first resurrection, which is at the second coming of the Lord. At the moment of death, the soul separates from the body and either goes to heaven or hell, depending on whether that soul has been redeemed by Christ or not.

The Word of God also indicates that the spirit in man goes back to God, who gave it. (*Ecclesiastes 12:7*)

Here are some scriptures to support what I am saying:

II Corinthians 5:1-9, especially verses 6-9

I Corinthians 15:35-54

Luke 23:43

Matthew 22:31-33

Luke 16:19-31

Scriptures on the spirit, soul and body (of man):

I Thessalonians 5:23

James 2:26

Matthew 10:28
Acts 2:27
Hebrews 4:12
Hebrews 4:39
James 5:20
I Corinthians 2:11
Revelation 6:9-11
Revelation 20:4-6
II Peter 2:4-10, especially verse 9
I Peter 3:18-20, especially verse 19

Of course this is not an entire exhaustive list of every scripture, but will give you some understanding about this subject.

—answer by Denise Bostic