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Do You Believe in Life After Death?

Do You Believe?



Barry Johnson
CHURCH OF CHRIST, BROOKFIELD

DO YOU BELIEVE IN LIFE AFTER DEATH?

John 5:28–29 (NIV)

²⁸ “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.

Thesis:

Mortality is the consequence of sin and is countered by the gospel promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

Objectives:

- Mortality originated in the fall
- The natural reaction to mortality
- The godly reaction to mortality
- Death is not the end

Mortality originated in the fall

Genesis 2:16–17 (NIV) — **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; **17** but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

It is the decree of God

Psalms 90:3 (NIV) — **3** You turn people back to dust, saying, “Return to dust, you mortals.”

Genesis 3:19 (NIV) — **19** By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

Genesis 6:3 (NIV) — **3** Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

It is universal

Ecclesiastes 3:20 (NIV) — **20** All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return.

1 Corinthians 15:22 (NIV) — **22** For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

It is inevitable

2 Samuel 14:14 (NIV) — **14** Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But that is not what God desires; rather, he devises ways so that a banished person does not remain banished from him.

Job 30:23 (NIV) — **23** I know you will bring me down to death, to the place appointed for all the living.

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Ecclesiastes 3:2 (NIV) — 2 a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot,

Romans 6:23 (NIV) — 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is a judgment from God

Romans 5:12 (NIV) — 12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

Romans 5:15–19 (NIV) — 15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! 16 Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. 17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! 18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

It leads to judgment

Hebrews 9:27 (NIV) — 27 Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,

2 Corinthians 5:10 (NIV) — 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

The natural reaction to mortality

A sense of oppression

Job 10:8–9 (NIV) — 8 “Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? 9 Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again?”

Carefree abandon

1 Corinthians 15:32 (NIV) — 32 If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus with no more than human hopes, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

Isaiah 22:13 (NIV) — 13 But see, there is joy and revelry, slaughtering of cattle and killing of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine! “Let us eat and drink,” you say, “for tomorrow we die!”

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The godly reaction to mortality

Humility

Job 20:6–11 (NIV) — **6** Though the pride of the godless person reaches to the heavens and his head touches the clouds, **7** he will perish forever, like his own dung; those who have seen him will say, ‘Where is he?’ **8** Like a dream he flies away, no more to be found, banished like a vision of the night. **9** The eye that saw him will not see him again; his place will look on him no more. **10** His children must make amends to the poor; his own hands must give back his wealth. **11** The youthful vigor that fills his bones will lie with him in the dust.

Psalms 22:29 (NIV) — **29** All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him— those who cannot keep themselves alive.

Psalms 89:48 (NIV) — **48** Who can live and not see death, or who can escape the power of the grave?

Ecclesiastes 3:21–22 (NIV) — **21** Who knows if the human spirit rises upward and if the spirit of the animal goes down into the earth?” **22** So I saw that there is nothing better for a person than to enjoy their work, because that is their lot. For who can bring them to see what will happen after them?

Trust

Luke 12:25 (NIV) — **25** Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?

The pursuit of wisdom

Psalms 90:12 (NIV) — **12** Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Saving faith

Isaiah 55:6 (NIV) — **6** Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

Psalms 39:4–8 (NIV) — **4** “Show me, LORD, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is. **5** You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Everyone is but a breath, even those who seem secure. **6** “Surely everyone goes around like a mere phantom; in vain they rush about, heaping up wealth without knowing whose it will finally be. **7** “But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you. **8** Save me from all my transgressions; do not make me the scorn of fools.

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NIV) — **2** For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.

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The struggle with sin

Romans 6:12 (NIV) — 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

Romans 7:14–25 (NIV) — 14 We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. **15** I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. **16** And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. **17** As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. **18** For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. **19** For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. **20** Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. **21** So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. **22** For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; **23** but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. **24** What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? **25** Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Death is not the end

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They, then, who are destined to die, need not be careful to inquire what death they are to die, but into what place death will usher them.

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Be More Concerned with What Happens after Death

2 Corinthians 5:1; Philippians 1:21

That death is not to be judged an evil which is the end of a good life; for death becomes evil only by the retribution which follows it. They, then, who are destined to die, need not be careful to inquire what death they are to die, but into what place death will usher them.

*Augustine of Hippo*¹

The spirit returns to God

Ecclesiastes 12:7 (NIV) — **7** and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

Philippians 1:23 (NIV) — **23** I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;

¹ Ritzema, E. (Ed.). (2012). *300 Quotations for Preachers*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

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The body will be raised

Daniel 12:2 (NIV) — 2 Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

1 Corinthians 15:53–54 (NIV) — 53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. **54** When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

Isaiah 25:8 (NIV) — 8 he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove his people’s disgrace from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

Romans 8:11 (NIV) — 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

1 Corinthians 15:42–44 (NIV) — 42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; **43** it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; **44** it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

2 Corinthians 5:4 (NIV) — 4 For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

Eternal life through Jesus Christ

John 11:25–26 (NIV) — 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; **26** and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

Matthew 25:46 (NIV) — 46 “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

2 Timothy 1:9–10 (NIV) — 9 He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, **10** but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

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1 John 5:11–12 (NIV) — **11** And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. **12** Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Revelation 22:3–5 (NIV) — **3** No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. **4** They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. **5** There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Eternal punishment for the wicked

Matthew 25:46 (NIV) — **46** “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

Revelation 14:11 (NIV) — **11** And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name.”

Revelation 20:10 (NIV) — **10** And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Revelation 20:15 (NIV) — **15** Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Invitation:

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Romans 10:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ So faith comes from **hearing**, and **hearing** through the word of Christ.

Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)

⁶ And without **faith** it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must **believe** that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Acts 17:30 (ESV)

³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to **repent**,

Acts 26:20 (NIV)

²⁰ First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should **repent** and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.

1 Timothy 6:12 (ESV)

¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good **confession** in the presence of many witnesses.

Acts 2:38 (ESV)

³⁸ And Peter said to them, “Repent and be **baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 3:21 (NIV)

²¹ and this water symbolizes **baptism** that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Revelation 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. **Be faithful unto death**, and I will give you the crown of life.

