

After Death What?

by Zac Poonen

Death has no terror for a disciple of Christ, as Jesus has conquered death and taken paradise to the third heaven.

Scripture: Hebrews 2:14

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Overcoming Fear of Death"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes that death holds no fear for a disciple of Christ, as Jesus has triumphed over death, rendering it a defeated enemy. He explains that upon death, a person's soul immediately goes to either Heaven or Hell, highlighting the reality of these two destinations through the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Poonen clarifies that man is a threefold being, and at death, the spirit and soul separate from the body, entering either paradise or torment. He reassures believers that paradise is now in the third heaven, where they will be with Christ after death. The sermon encourages disciples to live without the fear of death, knowing their eternal destination is secure in Christ.

Transcript

Death has no terror for a disciple of Christ, for Jesus has conquered death. Death is a defeated enemy. Jesus died and made Satan powerless thereby so that we need no longer have any fear of death (Heb. 2:14,15). The keys of death are now in the hand of Jesus (Rev. 1:18). Only He can open the door of death for any of His disciples now. Satan can't touch them.

What happens when a man dies? Jesus answered this question clearly when He spoke about the rich man and Lazarus. It would be good if you read Luke 16:19-31 right now, before proceeding any further.....

This is not a parable - for in no parable did Jesus ever use a man's name as he did here. Both the rich man and Lazarus were real people.

Jesus made it clear here that there are only two places to which the dead go. One is Heaven (also called `Abraham's bosom' or `Paradise') - a place of comfort; and the other is Hell - a place of torture and suffering. As soon as a person dies, his soul goes immediately to one of these places, even before his body is buried on earth. And even though he doesn't have a body, yet he will be conscious of his surroundings and of comfort or pain.

Man is a threefold being, consisting of spirit, soul and body (1 Thess. 5:23). At death the soul and spirit are separated from the body, and go either to paradise or to hell.

While on the cross, Jesus told the repentant thief that he would be with Him in paradise that very day. Both Jesus and that thief went to paradise as soon as their souls left their bodies. Jesus had said that after His death, He would be in 'the heart of the earth' for 3 days and 3 nights (Matt. 12:40). From this we know that paradise, at that time, must have been in the heart of the earth. But when Christ was resurrected "from the lower parts of the earth.... and ascended on high.. He led captive a host of captives" (Eph. 4:8,9). He took paradise and all the souls in it up to the third heaven.

In 2 Corinthians 12, when we compare verses 2 and 4 together, we see that paradise is now located in the third heaven. This is where the disciple of Jesus goes as soon as he dies (Phil. 1:23).

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