

# Understanding Death, Grief and Resurrection from a Christian Perspective



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## Introduction

At one time or another, everyone is affected by death and the resulting grief. How we handle that grief will determine how we live the rest of our lives. Uncontrolled grief will destroy a person’s life – quite literally sometimes! However Christians are different from the world:

*1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

For a Christian to die is to be with Christ. For the non-Christian, death will be very different – they have no certainty of a life with God (even if they want it).

*John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

We can and should help them in times of grief but their greatest need is to know God through Jesus Christ. We should never give people a false hope of peace with God without Jesus Christ

*John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.*

*2Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

If you are not sure that the person who died was a Believer, encourage their loved ones to make sure of their own future and remind them that God is only a prayer away:

*Acts 2:21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*

As Christians, we must view the Bible through the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This study covers resurrection, death and grief from this perspective.

## **Resurrection**

Instructions about the resurrection of the dead is a foundational teaching

*Hebrews 6:1-3 Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, [or "from useless rituals"] and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the **resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.** And God permitting, we will do so.*

*Heb.9:27-28 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

The resurrection is certain

*John 11:21-27 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."*

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

Matthew 22:23-33 That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question... Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living." When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

1Cor.15:12-28 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he "has put everything under his feet." [Psalm 8:6] Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

The resurrection of Jesus is the core of the Gospel

2Tim.2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel,

Rom.10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

*Acts 1:22 beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."*

*Acts 2:24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*

*Acts 2:31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.*

*Acts 3:15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.*

*Acts 4:2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.*

*Acts 4:10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.*

*Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead--whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.*

*Acts 10:40 but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.*

*Acts 13:30 But God raised him from the dead,*

*Acts 13:34 The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: "I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David." [Is.55:3]*

*Acts 13:37 But the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.*

*Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."*

*Acts 26:8 Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?*

*Also: Acts 4:33; 17:18; 17:32; 23:6; 23:8; 24:15; 24:21*

**The resurrection of Jesus is the proof of our resurrection**

*Rom.6:5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.*

*Rom.8:11 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 through his Spirit, who lives in you.*

*1Cor.6:14 By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also.*

*2Cor.1:9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.*

*2Cor.4:14 because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.*

Jesus resurrection declares Him to be the Son of God and Lord  
*Rom.1:4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God [or “was appointed to be the Son of God with power”] by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Rom.14:9 For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.*

The resurrection of Jesus is verified by evidence

*1Cor.15:3-8 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance [or at the first]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.*

The resurrection of Jesus is now the Believer's experience

*Col.2:12 having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.*

The resurrection of Jesus gives us new birth

*1Pet 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

The resurrection of Jesus saves us

*1Pet 3:21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also - not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge [or “response”] of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*

The resurrection of Jesus is our hope

*Acts 23:6-7 Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. I stand on trial because of my hope in the resurrection of the dead." When he said this, a dispute broke out between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.*

The resurrection of Jesus gives us grace

*Acts 4:33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.*

The resurrection of Jesus causes some to investigate further

*Acts 17:32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject."*

The resurrection of Jesus causes disputes

*Acts 17:18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.*

*Acts 24:21 unless it was this one thing I shouted as I stood in their presence: 'It is concerning the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.'*

The resurrection of Jesus disturbs people

*Acts 4:2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.*

As with all major doctrines, the revelation about **Resurrection** will be found in:

1 the **OT**, often in seed-form in Genesis, as a type in the Law and prophesied by the Prophets

2 the **Gospels** in the Ministry of Jesus, either as teaching or demonstration

3 **Acts** as an event or teaching or continuous practical demonstration

4 the **Epistles**, taught or referred to by Paul, Peter, James, John or Jude

(Never form a doctrine on a single verse or an OT experience and don't let any mystery from Ezekiel, Daniel or Revelation over-rule the clear teaching of Jesus or the Apostles)

### **Resurrection mentioned in the Old Testament**

*Job 19:25-27 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth [or upon my grave]. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet [or And after I awake, though this body has been destroyed, then] in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes - I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!*

### **Resurrection in the Gospels**

*Luke 20:34-36 Jesus replied, "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can*

*no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection.*

*John 11:24-25 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;*

### **Resurrection in Acts**

*Acts 2:24-32 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence." [Psalm 16:8-11] "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.*

### **Resurrection in the Epistles**

*1Cor.15:42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;*

*Phil.3:10-11 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

*2Tim.2:16-18 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.*

*Heb.11:35 Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection.*



## 1st and 2nd Resurrections

We are born with a dead spirit (i.e. a spirit that is separated from God)  
*Gen.2:16-17 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*

*Eph.2:1-5 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature [or our flesh] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.*

*Col.2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, [or your flesh] God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,*

Jesus calls Conversion the 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection

*John 5:24-27 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.*

Jesus calls rising out of the grave the 2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection

*John 5:28-29 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out--those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.*

Eternal death has no power over those who have a part in the 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection

*Rev.20:5-6 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.*

At the 2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection both good and evil are raised from the grave  
*Matt.25:31-34 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.*

*Acts 24:15 and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.*

The righteous are raised to eternal life

*Matt.25:33-34 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.*

The only way we can be righteous (have a right standing with God) is through faith in Jesus Christ

*Rom.1:16-17 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." [Hab.2:4]*

*Rom.3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,*

The wicked are raised to eternal death

*Matt.25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*

*Matt.25:46 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."*

When Jesus returns, the dead Believers will rise from the grave to receive an immortal body and those believers who are alive will be changed! This will be visible, audible and public.

*1Cor.15:50-57 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 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." "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1Thes.4:13-18 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen*

*asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.*

*Matthew 24:30-35 At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.... Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.*

No one knows when this will happen except God the Father. We are just expected to be ready whenever it happens!

*Matthew 24:36 No-one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*

*Acts 1:7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.*

*1Thes.5:10-18 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing... Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

## **Who we are**

Man is made in God's image

*Gen.1:26-27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule ..." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

## **We are made up of spirit, soul and body**

We are a spirit, we have a soul and we live in a body. The Hebrew & Greek word for breath is spirit and this is our real self. Our soul is our personality or character. Our body is our tent or house for our spirit and soul

*1Thes.5:23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole **spirit, soul and body** be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Gen.2:7 the LORD God formed the man from the **dust of the ground** (body) and breathed into his nostrils the **breath of life** (spirit), and the man became a **living being** (soul).*

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

*Psalms 146:4 When their spirit departs, they (their bodies) return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.*

## **Spirit**

Our spirit is our “God part” and is eternal. It is our spirit that communicates with God who is Spirit

*John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.*

*Eccl.3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.*

*Gen.2:7 the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath [spirit] of life, and the man became a living being [soul].*

*Job 32:8 But it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him understanding.*

Conversion is a “re-birth” - our spirit is “born-again”. God doesn’t save our spirit nor patch it up but replaces it with a new holy, righteous and incorruptible spirit. This is a free gift from God and we cannot add to what God has done.

*John 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again (or born from above)”*

*Ezek.11:19 I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. (also Ez.36:26-27)*

*Rom.8:10 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.*

*Rom.3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.*

*1Pet.1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.*

Because our spirit is righteous the moment we are born-again, we can always come to our Heavenly Father (who cannot live with sin) and especially when we need help or forgiveness. This includes our life’s end when we are facing death

*Heb.10:19-20 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,*

*Heb.4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

This righteousness is a gift and is only received by faith

*Rom.1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." (Hab.2:4)*

*Rom.3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,*

Faith is absolute trust in God and His Word

*Heb.11:1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

*John 14:1 Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me (you believe in God, believe also in Me <sup>NKJV</sup>)*

Faith is a "spirit", that is a spiritual force or an attribute of the Holy Spirit

*2Cor.4:13 It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." (Psalms 116:10) With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak,*

Faith is the only way we can please God

*Heb.11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

Faith enables us to understand but understanding or learning will not give us faith

*Heb.11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

*2Cor.5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.*

## **Soul**

Our soul is our personality – our real us. At conversion we don't receive a new personality (soul). Our soul has to be changed (sanctified or matured) and we are responsible for this. Sanctification (maturity) is a process which continues throughout our life and is a result of choosing right from wrong (obedience).

*1Pet.1:9 for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

*James 1:21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you (in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls<sup>NASB</sup>).*

*Phil.3:12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.*

*1Pet.1:16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*

*Heb.5:14 the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

## **Body**

Our present body is mortal and will only last for a few decades but God has a future body for us that is immortal and will last for ever

*2 Cor. 5:1-5 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*

*Romans 8:10-11 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. 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 through his Spirit, who lives in you.*

## **What Happens When We Die?**

Death is separation. When Adam sinned his spirit died (i.e. his spirit was separated from God). All of his descendants have been born with a dead spirit. In other words, the part that communicates with God (the spirit) is dead and we are separated from God

*Gen.2:17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*

*1Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.*

*Col.2:13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,*

*Eph.2:1-5 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins... But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.*

At physical death, the spirit and soul separate from the body and return to God their Maker who is the Judge of all flesh

*Genesis 18:25 Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"*

*John 12:47-48 "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.*

*Acts 17:31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."*

*Romans 2:16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.*

*Hebrews 12:23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,*

*Psalms 146:4 When their spirit departs, [their body] return[s] to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.*

The spirit and soul cannot return to the earth or move between heaven and hell

*Luke 16:23-26 In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'*

*2Sam.12:23 But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."*

The transition from this world into the next is instant and permanent – there is no “Limbo” and there is no “Purgatory”!

*Luke 16:22 "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried.*

*Phil.1:23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;*

*Luke 23:43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."*

*Luke 12:20 But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'*

## **Death**

Wars, diseases and disasters do not increase death - death is total in every generation!

*Heb.9:27-28 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

We have no choice in the timing of our death but God does

*Eccl.8:8 No man has power over the wind to contain it [or "over his spirit to retain it"]; so no one has power over the day of his death. As no one is discharged in time of war, so wickedness will not release those who practice it.*

*Matt.6:27 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life [literally "single cubit to his height (of life)"]?*

*Psalms 139:16 All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*

*Rev.1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.*

Everyone will meet God when they die

*Rom.5:12-14 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned - for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.*

*Eccl.7:2 It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart.*

For the Believer, death is no longer an enemy

*Is.25:6-9 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine - the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away*



*the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."*

*1Cor.15:54 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."*

*Rev.21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

*Is.26:19 But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.*

*1Cor.15:55-56 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.*

*1Cor.15:24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.*

*Hosea 13:14 "I will ransom them from the power of the grave I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?" I will have no compassion*

**Believers (and their children) are precious to God in life and in death**

*Gen.30:19-20 Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. Then Leah said, "God has presented me with a precious gift.*

*Is.43:4 Since you are precious and honoured in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and people in exchange for your life.*

*Psalms 116:6 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.*

**Believers who die before the resurrection go immediately to be with Jesus**

*Phil.1:20-24 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labour for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.*

**Everyone has to die because death is the result of sin**

*Rom.5:12-14 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned - for before the*

*law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.*

*Eccl.7:2 It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart.*

*Heb.9:27-28 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.*

*Psalm 89:47-48 Remember how fleeting is my life. For what futility you have created all men! What man can live and not see death, or save himself from the power of the grave?*

Death is not the “icy hand of the Grim Reaper”. Even in the OT there was no fear in death for believers, but a peace and fellowship with God.

Enoch was walking with God when he died:

*Gen.5:24 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.*

*Hebrews 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*

Jacob was prepared and prayed over his family before he died:

*Genesis 48:1 Some time later Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him.*

*Genesis 49:1 Then Jacob called for his sons and said: "Gather round so that I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.*

*Genesis 49:28-33 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him.*

*Then he gave them these instructions: "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron...When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last and was gathered to his people.*

Moses was talking with God when he died:

*Deut. 34:1-6 Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo... Then the Lord said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it." And Moses the servant of the Lord died there in Moab, as the Lord had said. He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no-one knows where his grave is.*

For the Believer death is no longer an enemy

*Philip. 1:23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far;*

*Luke 23:40-43 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."*

*Heb.2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death - that is, the devil - and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

*2 Samuel 14:14 Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.*

*Is.25:6-9 On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine - the best of meats and the finest of wines. On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."*

*1Cor.15:54 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."*

*Rev.21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

*Is.26:19 But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.*

*1Cor.15:55-56 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.*

*1Cor.15:24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.*

*Hosea 13:14 "I will ransom them from the power of the grave I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?"*

The Bible refers to people who have died as sleeping because their state is temporary and there will be an awakening.

*1Cor.11:30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.*

*John 11:11-15 After he had said this, he went on to tell them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up." His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better." Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."*

*1Thes.4:13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.*

*1 Cor. 15:6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.*

Believers are not asleep as in a coma but they are at rest. In fact they are very much alive

*Heb.12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

*Hebrews 12:22-24 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.*

*Rev.14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them."*

Those who are still alive at the time of the resurrection will not die but they will be changed

*1Cor.15:51-57 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 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] "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is*

*your sting?" [Hosea 13:14] The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*1Thes.4:13-18 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.*

God is our Maker and the source of all life and we have no choice in the timing of our death.

*Psalm 36:7-9 How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings. They feast in the abundance of your house; you give them drink from your river of delights. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.*

*Eccl.8:8 No man has power over the wind to contain it [or "over his spirit to retain it"]; so no one has power over the day of his death. As no one is discharged in time of war, so wickedness will not release those who practice it.*

*Psalm 139:15-17 When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!*

*Matt.6:27 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life [or "single cubit to his height"]?*

*Psalms 139:16 All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.*

*Job 12:10 In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.*

*Job 14:5 Man's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed.*

*Rev.1:18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.*

*Psalm 90:3-9 You turn men back to dust, saying, "Return to dust, O sons of men." ...You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning—though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered... All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan.*

We must live as followers of God

*Psalm 90:12 Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

*Eph.2:1-3 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.*

## **Devils and Ghost**

“Ghosts” or “spirits” are not people who died but are not at rest. They are demons or spirits that were familiar with the person who died (often in tragic or violent circumstances) and so we should not communicate with them.

*Leviticus 20:6 " I will set my face against the person who turns to mediums and spiritists (as have familiar spirits <sup>KJV</sup>) to prostitute himself by following them, and I will cut him off from his people.*

*Deut. 18:11 or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. (a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. <sup>KJV</sup>)*

Although it seems that “ghosts” appear to some people, the Believer has nothing to fear as we have authority over them.

*Luke 10:17-20 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

Samuel did apparently return from the grave but the witch was surprised and afraid showing that she did not expect this to happen

*1Samuel 28:3-15 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his own town of Ramah. Saul had expelled the mediums and spiritists from the land. The Philistines assembled and came and set up camp at Shunem, while Saul gathered all the Israelites and set up camp at Gilboa. When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart. He enquired of the Lord, but the Lord did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets. Saul then said to his attendants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, so that I may go and enquire of her." "There is one in Endor," they said. So Saul disguised himself,*

*putting on other clothes, and at night he and two men went to the woman. "Consult a spirit for me," he said, "and bring up for me the one I name." But the woman said to him, "Surely you know what Saul has done. He has cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land. Why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?" Saul swore to her by the Lord, "As surely as the Lord lives, you will not be punished for this." Then the woman asked, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" "Bring up Samuel," he said. When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!" The king said to her, "Don't be afraid. What do you see?" The woman said, "I see a spirit coming up out of the ground." "What does he look like?" he asked. "An old man wearing a robe is coming up," she said. Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"*

This is the only account of the dead apparently returning in spirit form and so we cannot use this example as evidence or proof. If it really was Samuel returning from the dead, it was an exception and probably unique. But why consult the dead on behalf of the living when our God is alive?

*Luke 20:37-38 But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive."*

*Isaiah 8:19 When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people enquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?*

## **Devil**

The devil was created by God as an angel of light. He is not equal with God and neither has he ever been.

*Luke 10:18 [Jesus] replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.*

*Rev. 12:7-11 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night,*

*has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*

When Lucifer sinned he lost his position in heaven and his name; devil or satan is not a name but merely a description

satan: Σατανα<sup>ς</sup> satanas; *the adversary, satan, i.e. the devil*

devil: διάβολος diabolos; *slanders, accusing falsely, devil*

*Is.14:12 How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star [Lucifer], son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!*

*Job 1:6 One day the angels [Hebrew: the sons of God] came to present themselves before the LORD, and satan [satan means accuser] also came with them.*

*Num.22:22 But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him [the angel of the Lord took his stand in the way as an adversary against him <sup>NASB</sup> [The word oppose or adversary is satan]*

The devil comes to steal, kill and destroy but even before Jesus defeated him at Calvary, he could only speak and act when God gave him permission.

*John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

*Job 2:1-2 On another day the angels came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came with them to present himself before him. And the Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From roaming through the earth and going to and fro in it."*

Jesus defeated the devil and destroyed all his work including death  
*Gen.3:15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring [or "seed"] and hers; he will crush [or "strike"] your head, and you will strike his heel."*

*Col.2:15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

*1John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

*Heb.2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death - that is, the devil - and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*



The devil has no authority over Believers unless believe his lies

*Luke 10:18-20 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

*1 John 5:18-19 We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. (for God's Son holds them securely, and the evil one cannot get his hands on them. <sup>NLT</sup>) We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.*

Don't be concerned about the devil or talk about him

*Is.14:15-17 But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, the man who made the world a desert, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?"*

*Ps.115:3-8 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him. But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but they cannot see; they have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but they cannot smell; they have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but they cannot walk; nor can they utter a sound with their throats. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.*

*Joshua 23:7 Do not associate with these nations that remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them. You must not serve them or bow down to them.*

*Psalms 16:4 The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods. I will not pour out their libations of blood or take up their names on my lips.*

Make sure you base your beliefs on the Scriptures interpreted through the New Covenant, not myths, old wives tales or superstition

*1Tim.4:7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.*

*2Tim.2:16 Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.*

*Tit.3:9-11 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless. Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.*

*2Pet.2:2-3 Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.*

Rather than fight the devil, let your light shine!

*James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.  
John 1:4-5 In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it [the darkness has not overcome it]*

*Matt.5:14-16 “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

*2Cor.4:6 For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” [Gen. 1:3] made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

*Eph.5:8-12 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

## **Heaven**

Our culture has various misguided ideas about heaven: that it consists of departed souls eternally playing harps in comfy cloud-chairs, or that it means doing or being everything you love best. Perhaps the most tragic misconception is that heaven is the place where everyone goes after death-or at least everyone who has lived a “good” life. The Bible, by contrast, presents a picture of heaven as the glorious, awesome home of the triune God. And the Bible is also very specific about who will live there.

Heaven, (which in both Hebrew and Greek is a word meaning “sky”), is the biblical term for God’s home (Ps. 33:13-14; Matt. 6:9) where his throne is (Ps. 2:4); the place of his presence to

which the glorified Christ has returned (Acts 1:11); where the church militant and triumphant now unites for worship (Heb. 12:22-25); and where one day Christ's people will be with their Saviour forever (John 17:5, 24; 1 Thess. 4:16-17). It is pictured as a place of rest (John 14:2), a city (Heb. 11:10), and a country (Heb. 11:16). At some future point, at the time of Christ's return for judgment, it will take the form of a reconstructed cosmos (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1).

To think of heaven as a place is more right than wrong, though the word could mislead. Heaven appears in Scripture as a spatial reality that touches and interpenetrates all created space. In Ephesians, Paul locates in heaven both the throne of Christ at the Father's right hand (Eph. 1:20) and the spiritual blessings and risen life in Christ of Christians (Eph. 1:3; 2:6). "The heavenly realms" in Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; and 6:12 is a literary variant for "heaven." Paul alludes to an experience in the "third heaven" or "paradise" (2 Cor. 12:2, 4). No doubt the heaven of God's throne is to be distinguished from the heavenly realms occupied by hostile spiritual powers (Eph. 6:12). A resurrection body adapted to heaven's life awaits us (2 Cor. 5:1-8), and in that body we shall see the Father and the Son (Matt. 5:8; 1 John 3:2). But while we are in our present bodies, the realities of heaven are invisible and ordinarily imperceptible to us, and we know them only by faith (2 Cor. 4:18; 5:7). Yet the closeness to us of heaven and of its inhabitants, the Father, the Son, the Spirit, the holy angels, and the demonic spirits, must never be forgotten: for it is a matter of solid spiritual fact.

Scripture teaches us to form our notion of the life of heaven by (a) extrapolating from the less-than-perfect relationship that we now have with God the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, with other Christians, and with created things to the thought of a perfect relationship, free from all limitation, frustration, and failure; (b) eliminating from our idea of a life lived for God all

forms of pain, evil, conflict, and distress, such as we experience here on earth; and (c) enriching our imaginings of that happy future by adding in every conception of excellence and God-given enjoyment that we know. The visions of heaven's life in Revelation 7:13-17 and 21:1–22:5 draw on all three of these ways of conceiving it.

According to Scripture, the constant joy of heaven's life for the redeemed will stem from (a) their vision of God in the face of Jesus Christ (Rev. 22:4); (b) their ongoing experience of Christ's love as he ministers to them (Rev. 7:17); (c) their fellowship with loved ones and the whole body of the redeemed; (d) the continued growth, maturing, learning, enrichment of abilities, and enlargement of powers that God has in store for them. The redeemed desire all these things, and without them their happiness could not be complete. But in heaven there will be no unfulfilled desires.

There will be different degrees of blessedness and reward in heaven. All will be blessed up to the limit of what they can receive, but capacities will vary just as they do in this world. As for rewards (an area in which present irresponsibility can bring permanent future loss: 1 Cor. 3:10-15), two points must be grasped. The first is that when God rewards our works he is crowning his own gifts, for it was only by grace that those works were done. The second is that essence of the reward in each case will be more of what the Christian desires most, namely, a deepening of his or her love-relationship with the Saviour, which is the reality to which all the biblical imagery of honorific crowns and robes and feasts is pointing. The reward is parallel to the reward of courtship, which is the enriching of the love-relationship itself through marriage.

So the life of heavenly glory is a compound of seeing God in and through Christ and being loved by the Father and the Son, of rest (Rev. 14:13) and work (Rev. 7:15), of praise and worship (Rev.

7:9-10; 19:1-5), and of fellowship with the Lamb and the saints (Rev. 19:6-9).

Heaven will not end (Rev. 22:5). “Its eternity is part of its glory; endlessness, one might say, is the glory of glory. Hearts on earth say in the course of a joyful experience, “I don’t want this ever to end.” But it invariably does. The hearts of those in heaven say, “I want this to go on forever.” And it will. There can be no better news than this”. *(taken from Encyclopedia, iLumina, Tyndale House Publishers & Visual Book Productions)*

## **Hell**

The word “Hell” is derived from the Saxon helan, to cover; hence the covered or the invisible place. In Scripture there are three words so rendered: **Sheol, Hades, Gehenna (Hinnom)**

**(1.) Sheol**, occurring in the Old Testament sixty-five times. This word sheol is derived from a root-word meaning “to ask,” “demand;” hence insatiableness (Proverbs 30:15-16). It is rendered “grave” thirty-one times (Genesis 37:35; Genesis 42:38; Genesis 44:29, 31; 1 Samuel 2:6, etc.). The Revisers have retained this rendering in the historical books with the original word in the margin, while in the poetical books they have reversed this rule. In thirty-one cases in the Authorized Version this word is rendered “hell,” the place of disembodied spirits. The inhabitants of sheol are “the congregation of the dead” (Proverbs 21:16). It is (a) the abode of the wicked (Numbers 16:33; Job 24:19; Psalm 9:17; Psalm 31:17, etc.); (b) of the good (Psalm 16:10; Psalm 30:3; Psalm 49:15; Psalm 86:13, etc.).

Sheol is described as deep (Job 11:8), dark (Job 10:21-22), with bars (Job 17:16). The dead “go down” to it (Numbers 16:30, 33; Ezekiel 31:15-17).

**(2.)** The Greek word **Hades** of the New Testament has the same scope of signification as **Sheol** of the Old Testament. **Hades** is used to denote the state or place of the dead. All the

dead alike go into this place. To be buried, to go down to the grave, to descend into hades, are equivalent expressions. In the LXX. this word is the usual rendering of the Hebrew sheol, the common receptacle of the departed (Genesis 42:38; Psalm 139:8; Hosea 13:14; Isaiah 14:9). This term is of comparatively rare occurrence in the Greek New Testament. Our Lord speaks of Capernaum as being “brought down to hell” (hades), i.e., simply to the lowest debasement, (Matthew 11:23). It is contemplated as a kind of kingdom which could never overturn the foundation of Christ's kingdom (Matthew 16:18), i.e., Christ's church can never die. It is a prison (1 Peter 3:19), with gates and bars and locks (Matthew 16:18; Rev. 1:18), and it is downward (Matthew 11:23; Luke 10:15).

The righteous and the wicked are separated. The blessed dead are in that part of hades called paradise (Luke 23:43). They are also said to be in Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22).

In Luke 16:23 it is most distinctly associated with the doom and misery of the lost.

In Acts 2:27-31 Peter quotes the LXX. version of Psalm 16:8-11, plainly for the purpose of proving our Lord's resurrection from the dead. David was left in the place of the dead, and his body saw corruption. Not so with Christ. According to ancient prophecy (Psalm 30:3) he was recalled to life.

**(3.) Gehenna**, in most of its occurrences in the Greek New Testament, designates the place of the lost (Matthew 23:33). The fearful nature of their condition there is described in various figurative expressions (Matthew 8:12; Matthew 13:42; Matthew 22:13; Matthew 25:30; Luke 16:24, etc.).

**Hinnom** a deep, narrow ravine separating Mount Zion from the so-called “Hill of Evil Counsel.” It took its name from “some ancient hero, the son of Hinnom.” It is first mentioned in Joshua 15:8. It had been the place where the idolatrous Jews burned their children alive to Moloch and Baal. A particular part of the valley

was called Tophet, or the “fire-stove,” where the children were burned. After the Exile, in order to show their abhorrence of the locality, the Jews made this valley the receptacle of the offal of the city, for the destruction of which a fire was, as is supposed, kept constantly burning there.

The Jews associated with this valley these two ideas, (1) that of the sufferings of the victims that had there been sacrificed; and (2) that of filth and corruption. It became thus to the popular mind a symbol of the abode of the wicked hereafter. It came to signify hell as the place of the wicked. “It might be shown by infinite examples that the Jews expressed hell, or the place of the damned, by this word. The word **Gehenna** [the Greek contraction of **Hinnom**] was never used in the time of Christ in any other sense than to denote the place of future punishment.” About this fact there can be no question. In this sense the word is used eleven times in our Lord's discourses (Matthew 23:33; Luke 12:5; Matthew 5:22, etc.).

*(taken from Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary)*

## **Death of Believer's Children**

Children are precious to God in life and in death

*Gen.30:19-20 Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. Then Leah said, "God has presented me with a precious gift.*

*Is.43:4 Since you are precious and honoured in my sight, and because I love you, I will give men in exchange for you, and people in exchange for your life.*

*Psalms 116:6 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.*

Children of Believing parents are holy

*1Cor.7:14 For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.*

*[For the Christian wife brings holiness to her marriage, and the Christian husband brings holiness to his marriage. Otherwise, your children would not have a godly influence, but now they are set apart for him.<sup>NLT</sup>]*

## Children can respond to God

*1 Samuel 3:1-10 The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli... Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him...The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."*

*Mark 10:15-16 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.*

If children of Believers die, they go to heaven

(We know David was a Believer. When he died David joined his son in heaven)

*2 Samuel 12:22-23, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept.... But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."*

We should give thanks to God in every situation

*1Thes.5:10-18 He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing... Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Stillborn children have peace

(We live under the New Covenant, so we must understand the whole of the Bible through the Death, Resurrection, Ascension of Jesus and the subsequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This is especially true of Ecclesiastes and Job, which accurately records conversations and studies of human philosophy. Whilst it may sound plausible, human philosophy when promoted by unbelievers and backsliders often opposes true faith. However all Scripture is useful and as Believers we can learn from these Books)

*Eccl.6:3 A man may have a hundred children and live many years; yet no matter how long he lives, if he cannot enjoy his prosperity and does not receive proper burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he.*

*Job 3:11-16 "Why did I not perish at birth, and die as I came from the womb? Why were there knees to receive me and breasts that I might be nursed? For now I would be lying down in peace; I would be asleep and at rest with kings and*



*counsellors of the earth, who built for themselves places now lying in ruins, with rulers who had gold, who filled their houses with silver. Or why was I not hidden in the ground like a stillborn child, like an infant who never saw the light of day?*

Believers don't lose their children at death

Although Job had twice as much wealth at the end of his troubles as he had at the beginning, he only had 10 more children. Thus clearly implying that his first children were safe (in heaven) rather than lost (in hell)!

*Job 1:2 He had seven sons and three daughters,*

*Job 42:10-13 After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before... And he also had seven sons and three daughters.*

## **Grief**

Grief is intense sorrow, great sadness, especially as a result of a death - the reaction to loss.

### **Grief is a reaction of the soul**

*1 Samuel 2:33 Every one of you that I do not cut off from my altar will be spared only to blind your eyes with tears and to grieve your heart, and all your descendants will die in the prime of life. [your eyes will fail from weeping and your soul grieve<sup>NASB</sup>]*

*Lament. 3:51 What I see brings grief to my soul because of all the women of my city.*

### **Grief can affect us socially, psychologically, physically and spiritually:**

**Social** – it can affect relationships with other people

*Eccles. 4:8 There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless - a miserable business!*

*Job 7:16 I despise my life; I would not live for ever. Let me alone; my days have no meaning.*

**Psychological** – it can affect our feelings and state of mind (our soul realm)

*Eccles. 2:23 All his days his work is pain and grief; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is meaningless.*

*Lament. 1:4 The roads to Zion mourn, for no-one comes to her appointed feasts. All her gateways are desolate, her priests groan, her maidens grieve, and she is in bitter anguish.*  
*Ezekiel 21:6-7 "Therefore groan, son of man! Groan before them with broken heart and bitter grief. And when they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' you shall say, 'Because of the news that is coming. Every heart will melt and every hand go limp; every spirit will become faint and every knee become as weak as water.' It is coming! It will surely take place, declares the Sovereign Lord."*

**Physical** – it can affect our appetite, body and physical health

*Psalm 102:4-5 My heart is blighted and withered like grass; I forget to eat my food. because of my loud groaning I am reduced to skin and bones.*

*Psalm 31:9-10 Be merciful to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and my body with grief. My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak.*

*Job 17:7 My eyes have grown dim with grief; my whole frame is but a shadow.*

**Spiritual** – it can affect our spirit and our relationship with God

*Job 2:9-10 His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.*

*Job 3:1 After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth.*

**Grief is a natural response to the loss of someone close**

*2 Samuel 1:26 I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women.*

*Psalm 35:14 I went about mourning as though for my friend or brother. I bowed my head in grief as though weeping for my mother.*

*Genesis 37: 34-35 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. All his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. "No," he said, "in mourning will I go down to the grave to my son." So his father wept for him.*

*Matthew 17:23 They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life." And the disciples were filled with grief.*

*John 16:5-6 "Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief.*

*Zech. 12:10 And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.*

Even Jesus wept at Lazarus grave

*John 11:33-36 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"*

Grief can also be a response to the loss of something important

*Joel 1:11 Despair, you farmers, wail, you vine growers; grieve for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the field is destroyed.*

Because we have hope, the Christian's grief is different from the world's grief

*1 Thes.4:13-18 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.*

Biblical hope is always certain and is linked to faith

*1Cor.13:13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

*Heb.11:1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

*Hebrews 6:19-20 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest for ever, in the order of Melchizedek.*

*Romans 5:1-2 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.*

Christ in us is our "hope"

*Col. 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

*Matthew 1:23 "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."*

*Hebrews 13:5-6 ...God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"*

We must be ready to explain the reason for this hope

*1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

God does care about our grief.

*Psalm 10:14 But you, O God, do see trouble and grief; you consider it to take it in hand. The victim commits himself to you; you are the helper of the fatherless.*

Unresolved grief can destroy a person.

*Psalm 6:6-7 I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears. My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes. [My eye has wasted away with grief; It has become old because of all my adversaries.<sup>NASB</sup>]*

Grief can be healed but remember, God is our healer and it is His Word that heals us

*Exodus 15:26 ...for I am the Lord, who heals you."*

*Ps.107:20 He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.*

*Psalm 119:28 My soul is weary with sorrow [My soul weeps because of grief<sup>NASB</sup>]; strengthen me according to your word.*

*Isaiah 55:11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

*Proverbs 4:20-22 My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body.*

Jesus is that Word which heals us

*John 1:1-2 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*

*Rev.19:13-16 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God... On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords.*

*Luke 4:18-21 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." ...and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."*

When Jesus died on the cross, He carried all our griefs and sorrows  
*Isaiah 53:3-5* He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. [acquainted with grief<sup>N<sup>A</sup>SB</sup>] Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

*Lament. 3:28-33* Let him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on him. Let him bury his face in the dust—there may yet be hope. Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace. For men are not cast off by the Lord for ever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.

God truly does bring joy out of sorrow

*Nehemiah 8:10-11* Nehemiah said, "Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." The Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for this is a sacred day. Do not grieve."

*Psalms 126:5-6* Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.

*Isaiah 61:3* and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour.

*John 16:20* I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

*John 16:22* So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no-one will take away your joy.

The Believer can rejoice in desperate situations

*Psalms 84:5-7* Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, (Valley of Weeping) they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.

*Psalms 23:1-6* The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup

overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

*Philip. 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*

*Philip. 2:17 But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you.*

*1 Peter 1:6-7 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

## **Dealing with Grief**

David dealt with grief by: a)washing; b)putting on lotion; c)changing clothes; d)worshiping; e)eating; f)comforting.

*2Samuel 12:19-24 David noticed that his servants were whispering among themselves and he realised that the child was dead. "Is the child dead?" he asked. "Yes," they replied, "he is dead." Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the Lord and worshipped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate. His servants asked him, "Why are you acting in this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!" He answered, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live.' But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The Lord loved him;*

### **a) Wash:**

Freshen yourself up and look different.

*Genesis 43:29-31 As he looked about and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, he asked, "Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son." Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there. After he had washed his face, he came out and, controlling himself, said, "Serve the food."*

This physical action will help you feel better and focus your mind.

*Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is.*<sup>NASB</sup>

The spiritual washing is also important. This is more than repentance from sin – it is recognising what God has done for us and appreciating our acceptance by Him

*Psalm 51:2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.*

*Psalm 51:7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

*Isaiah 1:16 wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong,*

*Ezekiel 16:9-10 I bathed you with water and washed the blood from you and put ointments on you. I clothed you with an embroidered dress and put leather sandals on you. I dressed you in fine linen and covered you with costly garments.*

*1 Cor. 6:11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

The Word of God cleanses our mind and heart

*Ephes.5:26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,*

*Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,*

*Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

## **b) Put on lotion:**

This will help us feel better

*Proverbs 27:9 Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of one's friend springs from his earnest counsel.*

*Matthew 6:1-18 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

Lotion and perfume in the Bible signifies the beauty that comes from the Holy Spirit –that is the anointing of God

*Esther 2:12 Before a girl's turn came to go in to King Xerxes, she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments prescribed for the women, six months with oil of myrrh and six with perfumes and cosmetics.*

*1 Peter 3:3-6 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of*

*your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.*

*Isaiah 10:27 In that day their burden will be lifted from your shoulders, their yoke from your neck; the yoke will be broken because you have grown so fat [the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing<sup>KJV</sup>].*

The name of Jesus is likened to perfume

*Song 1:3 Pleasing is the fragrance of your perfumes; your name is like perfume poured out. No wonder the maidens love you!*

We have also been given a good name

*Eccles. 7:1 A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.*

*Isaiah 62:2 The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow.*

*Rev. 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.*

*Rev. 3:12 Him who overcomes... I will also write on him my new name.*

We should let the aroma of Jesus name be on us

*2 Cor. 2:14-16 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?*

### **c) Change clothes**

A change of physical clothes will help us feel better but our real need is to put on the spiritual clothes of Jesus Christ and His character

*Romans 13:14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

*Galatians 3:27 for all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

*Isaiah 52:1 Awake, awake, O Zion, clothe yourself with strength. Put on your garments of splendour, O Jerusalem, the holy city.*



*Col. 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.*

*1 Peter 5:5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility towards one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."*

We are also to put on a garment of praise

*Isaiah 61:3 ... to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendour.*

#### **d) Worship:**

Worship is adoring and honouring God Himself.

*John 4:23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.*

*Psalm 95:6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker;*

Worship is the “worthship” of Jesus - the value and honour we give to Him:

*Rev. 7:11-12 All the angels were standing round the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"*

To Worship God is the first and greatest call on our life

*Matthew 22:36-38 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.*

Worship is a spiritual activity (that is, an activity of our spirit)

*John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth."*

However, you cannot separate worship from your everyday life and work. The Hebrew word “abad” is translated work and also worship and means to serve

*Genesis 2:15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work (Hebrew: abad) it and take care of it.*

*Exodus 23:25 Worship (Hebrew: abad) the Lord your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you,*

*Col. 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

*Col. 3:23-24 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

*Eccles. 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.*

*Romans 15:5-6 May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop maturity in you so that you get along with each other as well as Jesus gets along with us all. Then we'll be a choir—not our voices only, but our very lives singing in harmony in a stunning anthem to the God and Father of our Master Jesus!<sup>TM</sup>*

**Worship is also obedience**

*Genesis 22:5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."*

*Genesis 22:18 and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."*

*Matthew 7:21-24 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

*James 1:21-25 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says... But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.*

*James 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

### **e) Eat:**

A cup of tea or a bite to eat will make you feel better physically and raise your blood sugar levels

*Psalms 104:15 wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread that sustains his heart.*

*1 Kings 19:7-8 The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he travelled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.*

*Matthew 15:32 Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way."*

We need to eat spiritual food too – that is God's Word

*Matthew 4:4 (Deut. 8:3) Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "*

*Psalms 119:103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

*Psalms 19:9-10 The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring for ever. The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.*

*Job 23:12 I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.*

*Isaiah 55:10-11 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

*1 Tim. 5:17-18 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."*

## **f) Comfort:**

*Proverbs 12:25 An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.*

*Psalms 94:19 When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul. [When doubts filled my mind, your comfort gave me renewed hope and cheer<sup>NLT</sup>]*

## **Recovering from Grief**

Sympathy will never heal a broken heart or heal suffering

*Job 2:11-13 When Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathise with*

*him and comfort him. When they saw him from a distance, they could hardly recognise him; they began to weep aloud, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads. Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No-one said a word to him, because they saw how great his suffering was.*

*Job 26:1-4 Then Job replied [to Bildad]: "How you have helped the powerless! How you have saved the arm that is feeble! What advice you have offered to one without wisdom! And what great insight you have displayed! Who has helped you utter these words? And whose spirit spoke from your mouth?"*

*Job 42:7-8 After the Lord had said these things to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has... My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has."*

**We can comfort others when we have been comforted by God**

*2 Cor.1:3-5 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.*

**Our comfort and strength must be in the Lord, His love and His Word**

*Psalm 119:76-77 May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant. Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight.*

*Psalm 4:8 I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.*

*Psalm 62:5 Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.*

*Psalm 119:50 My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life.*

*Psalm 119:52 I remember your ancient laws, O Lord, and I find comfort in them.*

*1 Samuel 23:16 Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him to find strength in God.*

*1 Samuel 30:6 David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.*

*1 Thes. 3:2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow-worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,*

God is generous and it is His nature is to give

*Matthew 20:1-15 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard... Or are you envious because I am generous?"*

*John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

## **“If you have a need, then sow a seed!”**

An important part of recovering from grief is to do something constructive to help others. To be a generous giver is to be like God  
*Genesis 12:2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.*

*Acts 20:35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*

*2 Cor.9:6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.*

*Prov.21:26 All day long he craves for more, but the righteous give without sparing.*

*Prov.22:9 A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.*

*Proverbs 11:24-25 One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.*

*Isaiah 32:8 But the noble man makes noble plans, and by noble deeds he stands. [But a generous man devises generous things, And by generosity he shall stand<sup>NKJV</sup>]*

Our response to life and death, including grief, will be determined by our theology - our relationship with God and understanding of the Scriptures

*Matt.22:29 Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.*

*2 Cor. 5:7 We live by faith, not by sight.[for we walk by faith, not by sight<sup>NASB</sup>]*

*Romans 4:12 ...who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham*

This walk of faith is simply agreeing with God

*Amos 3:3 Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?*

*Isaiah 45:9 Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker,*

*Rom.4;18 When everything was hopeless, Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not on the basis of what he saw he couldn't do but on what God said he would do.<sup>TM</sup>*

*Rom.4:20-22 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. He was absolutely convinced that God was able to do anything he promised. And because of Abraham's faith, God declared him to be righteous.<sup>NLT</sup>*

If we don't accept the scriptures we will have no guidance for our faith

*2 Tim. 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

*John 10:35 ...and the Scripture cannot be broken*

*Mark 14:49 ...But the Scriptures must be fulfilled."*

*Luke 16:31 He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'*

We must stand firm in our faith

*Isaiah 7:9 ...If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.*

*2 Cor. 13:5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.*

*Do you not realise that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?*

*Jude 1:20-21 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. [But you, dear friends, must continue to build your lives on the foundation of your holy faith. And continue to pray as you are directed by the Holy Spirit. Live in such a way that God's love can bless you as you wait for the eternal life that our Lord Jesus Christ in his mercy is going to give you.<sup>NLT</sup>]*

*1 Tim. 6:12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

*2 Tim. 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

**Here is a check list to help you stand firm in your faith:**

**✓ Know God**

*2 Tim. 1:12 That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.*

*John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

*John 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

*Daniel 11:32 ...but the people who know their God will firmly resist him. [shall be strong, and do exploits.<sup>ASV</sup>. will display strength and take action.<sup>NASB</sup>]*

### ✓ **Know that you are born again**

*John 1:12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*

*John 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no-one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."*

*1 Peter 1:3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

*1 Peter 1:23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.*

*2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

### ✓ **Know that Christ is in you**

*Col. 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

*1 John 4:13 We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.*

### ✓ **Know that satan and his work has been destroyed**

*Heb.2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil - and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

*1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

*Col. 2:14 having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.*

*1 John 5:18 We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him. [We know that those who have become part of God's family do not make a practice of sinning, for God's Son holds them securely, and the evil one cannot get his hands on them.<sup>NLT</sup>]*

### ✓ **Know that sin does not control you**

*Romans 6:6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin*

*Romans 6:11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

*Romans 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*

*Romans 6:18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.*

*Romans 6:22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.*

**✓ Know that you can come boldly to God and receive the help you need**

*Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

*Hebrews 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

*Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

Although death is a separation of spirit and soul from the body, the Christian's emphasis is the eternal union with God

*2Cor.5:6-8 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.*

*Psalms 116:6 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.*

*Rev. 21:2-4 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

*Rev. 19:6-8 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)*

**We should not be caught off guard by circumstances but know what God has revealed to us in His Word.**



## FAQ

Below are some questions often asked by those affected by grief – research God’s answers before you face the tough times!

### **Q Where is God in all of this?**

#### **A He is with us**

*Psalm 139:1-18 O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. You hem me in—behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast... your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you.*

*Romans 10:6-13 But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) "or 'Who will descend into the deep?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

### **Q Why did God allow this to happen?**

#### **A Things happen!**

*Luke 13:1-5 Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they*

*were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."*

*Eccles. 9:11 I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favour to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all.*

**Q Does God still love me?**

**A Yes! God is Love and His love is everlasting**

*Jeremiah 31:3 ...I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.*

*1 John 4:8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

*1 John 4:16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.*

**Q How can I be sure that God is not angry with me?**

**A He has promised that He will not be angry with us again.**

*Isaiah 54:9 "To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again.*

**Q Why does not God sort this mess out right now?**

**A Because He is still waiting for others to be saved**

*2 Peter 3:4-10 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.*

**Q Why does not God destroy (annihilate) the devil and save all this trouble?**

**A God has destroyed the devil's work and power over the Believer.**

*Hebrews 2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

*1 John 3:8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

**However the devil is a spirit and spirits (including our own spirit) are eternal.** This means they can never be annihilated but only contained. So God has prepared a place to contain the devil with his angels

*Eccles. 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.*

*Matthew 25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*

Anyone who does not accept God's salvation will also go there

*Matthew 25:46 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."*

*Rev. 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

**Q Why does not God answer my prayer?**

**A He does!** However His answer may not be the one we were expecting so we must trust God with the results

*1 John 5:14-15 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.*

*1 John 3:21-22 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.*

## Scripture and Suicide

### Is suicide really a “mortal sin”?

There is only one sin that is unforgivable and Jesus makes no mention of suicide there

*Matthew 12:31-32 And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.*

*Mark 3:29 But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin."*

(Gk βλασφημέω blaspheômos) = *slander*: abusive language (from Gk βλάσφημος *a saying or report*)

### Will Jesus welcome home a believer who died at their own hands?

I believe He will, tenderly and lovingly. The hope-giving promise of Romans 8:32, that neither life nor death can separate the believer from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

How can I trust in this promise and then deny its comfort to people who doubly grieve for brothers, sisters, fathers, and mothers who in horrible moments of despair decided to end their lives? I believe that Jesus died not only for the sins of us all but for all of our sins, including the forgotten ones, including suicide--if indeed he reckons it always as sin.

The Bible does not seem to condemn suicide. There are, I think, six accounts of suicide in the Bible, the most notorious being those of King Saul (1 Sam. 31:2-5) and Judas (Matt. 27:3-5). Others are Abimelech (Judg. 9:50-54), Samson (Judg. 16:23-31), Ahithophel (2 Sam. 17:23), and Zimri (1 Kings 16:15-20). As far as I can tell, none of the six is explicitly condemned for taking his life.

It has often been debated that suicide cannot be forgiven because the person who did it could not have repented of doing it. But all of us commit sins that we are too spiritually

cloddish to recognize for the sins they are. And we all die with sins not named and repented of.

As Christians, we should worry less about whether Christians who have killed themselves go to heaven, and worry more about how we can help people like them find hope and joy in living. Our most urgent problem is not the morality of suicide but the spiritual and mental despair that drags people down to it.”

Samson committed suicide and he is recorded with the “Greats” in Hebrews 11

*Judges 16:30 Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" Then he pushed with all his might, and down came the temple on the rulers and all the people in it. Thus he killed many more when he died than while he lived.*

*Hebrews 11:32-34 And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.*

## **What about War?**

(Pre 2007AoG Constitution: *Inasmuch as the Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to love our enemies, we who are followers of the Prince of Peace cannot participate in war and bloodshed, but desire to render unswerving loyalty to Her Majesty's Government as far as morally possible.*)

Current Assemblies of God Working Practices:

Participating In Acts Of War: *The Bible teaches us to love our enemies.*

*Within AoG we accept that there are two points of view held by our leaders regarding participating in acts of war – pacifism (ie refusing military service) and participating in a moral war. The desire of AoG is to render unswerving loyalty to Her Majesty's Government as far as morally possible.*

God's Kingdom is not of this world.

*John 18:36 Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."*

*Luke 20:25 ...Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.*

God's weapons are spiritual weapons

*2Cor.10:35 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

*Matthew 26:50-53 Jesus replied, "Friend, do what you came for." Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"*

*(**Legion** was a regiment of the Roman army. It originally consisted of three thousand men, but in the time of Christ consisted of six thousand, exclusive of horsemen, who were in number a tenth of the foot-men. The word is used (Matthew 26:53; Mark 5:9) to express simply a great multitude.)*

If Jesus was a “pacifist” he would have told Peter not to take any weapons instead of allowing him to take two!

*Luke 22:38-49 The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords." "That is enough," he replied... When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?"*

Law enforcers are God's agents

*Rom.13:1-4 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.*

I believe there is a place for our civil authorities to uphold justice and maintain peace by force BUT God's Kingdom can **NEVER** be extended or maintained by physical force because God's Kingdom is the rule of Jesus Christ and is a spiritual kingdom.