

Is There Life Before Death?

No. 211

Introduction.

- I. In the long ago Job raised a question that has gnawed at man from ancient times to the present, "If a man dies shall he live again?" (Job 14:14).
 - A. Men wonder what lies beyond the grave. They wonder about the mysteries of death.
 - B. The Bible gives us a clear answer to this question.
 - C. **It teaches the grave is not the end of man's existence.** It teaches that man will be raised from the dead.
 1. Daniel spoke of the resurrection. (Deut. 12:2).
 2. Christ taught all men will be raised from the dead. (Jn. 5:28, 29).
 3. Paul also taught there will be a resurrection of all men. (Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15:20-23).

ACT 24:15 having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

1CO 15:20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.

1CO 15:21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.

1CO 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.

1CO 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming,

- II. Today I do not want to fully discuss the after life, but I would like to ask another important question.
 - A. For you and me, another great question arises. **The question is "Is there life before death?"**
 - B. Yes, **we are alive in a biological sense**, but there is more to life than eating, breathing, and sleeping. There should be purpose, commitment, happiness!
 - C. Years ago a **New York hotel chambermaid** found, one morning, the body of a young man with a bullet through his head. On the dresser was a note saying:

"I leave society a bad example. I leave my friends the memory of a misspent life. I leave my father and mother a broken heart, to my children the name of a drunkard and a suicide. I leave to God a soul, who has insulted his mercy."
 - B. **It is tragic** that the young man had lived such a sinful, unhappy life.
 1. It is sad he died prematurely because of his unbearable misery and lack of happiness.

2. It is examples like these that should make us keenly interested in the question, **“Is there life before death?”** In so many cases the answer is “no.”
3. The **masses of the world** are unhappy and are merely existing, not living. There is no life, no genuine happiness, no peace.
4. A **psychiatrist**, Thomas Szasz, offered this sad definition of happiness,

"Happiness is an imaginary condition, formerly attributed by the living to the dead, now usually attributed by adults to children and by children to adults."

III. **I would like to discuss how to have life before death.** God never intended that happiness be an imaginary condition, but intends it be a reality in our lives..

I. **Why We Exist** - We have life before death by learning why we exist.

A. Man was not created to **merely exist**.

1. He was not created to **live a long time on the earth**.
2. He was not created to feel he is **useless and stumble in the darkness**.
3. He was not even created to **do his own thing**.

B. Man was made in the image and likeness of God.

1. As a creature made in God’s image, man’s highest purpose is to obey God. (Eccles. 12:13).
2. Man is here to **glorify God**. (Matt. 5:16).

II. **Accepting Jesus** - We have life before death by accepting Jesus.

A. Christ came to **save us eternally**. (Lk. 19:10; Jn. 12:47). He will save all who will come to Him and live for Him.

B. Christ came to **make us happy now**. (Jn. 10:10).

1. Jesus did not come to make us miserable.
2. He came to make us immensely happy.

C. This happiness does not, however, come through the advent of Christ alone, but by accepting Him.

1. In order to be happy we must accept Jesus and make Him the Lord and Savior of our lives.
2. **Happiness is in Jesus, not outside of Him**. (Phil. 3:1; 4:4).

III. **Following The Rules Jesus Gave For Life** - We can have life before death by following the rules Jesus gave for life.

A. **From a negative viewpoint**, we must not indulge in the evils of the world.

1. **Some of the evils bring temporary pleasure in this life**. The Bible speaks of the “pleasures of sin” that last “for a season.” (Heb. 11:25).
2. But those who indulge in the pleasures of sin will suffer bitter consequences in this life and in the

life to come. (Gal. 6:7,8).

GAL 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

GAL 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.

- a. Paul emphatically affirms that a man will reap what he sows.
 - b. One could spend hours relating the sad, bitter, horrible things that men experience because of sin.
 - c. As **Solomon** said in the long ago, “The way of the transgressor is hard.” (Prov. 13:15).
3. A **cab driver once said he did not like church conventions coming to town**. He said Christians come with the Ten Commandments and a ten dollar bill, and they don’t break either of them. His conception of happiness was the pleasure of sin and spending money. He could not imagine being happy or having fun without breaking at least one of the Ten Commandments.
4. The Christian realizes that happiness is not found by breaking God’s laws and that the way of the transgressor is hard. He knows happiness is found by living for God and following His lofty teachings.
- B. The writer of the first psalm said. (Psa. 1:1, 2)..
1. **Peter** said. (1 Pet. 3:10-12).
 2. **Jesus** said. (Matt. 5:3-12).
 3. **Paul** said. (Acts 20:35).
 - a. Those who give their hearts, time, money, service to other find happiness and inner peace.
 - b. **Happiness is the blessing of givers.**
- C. Here are **Ten Rules For Happier Living**.
1. Give something away (no strings attached).
 2. Do a kindness (and forget it. tell no one).
 3. Spend a few minutes with the aged (their experience is a priceless guidance).
 4. Look intently into the face of a baby (and marvel).
 5. Laugh often (it’s life lubricant).
 6. Give thanks (a thousand times a day is not enough)
 7. Pray (or you will lose the way).
 8. Work (with vim and vigor)
 9. Plan as though you’ll live forever (because you will).
 10. Live as though you’ll live forever (because you will).

IV. **Believing The Promises Of The Lord** - We can have life before death by believing the promises of the Lord.

A. The Lord has many promises that should make us abundantly happy.

1. Jesus promises to **save those** who believe in Him and are baptized. (Mk. 16:16).
2. Jesus promises to **forgive us of our daily sins**. (1 Jn. 1:7, 9).
3. Jesus assures us that **God answers our prayers**. (Matt. 21:22). Paul said. (Phil. 4:6-7).
4. Jesus teaches that though we will have sorrow and persecutions that **God will make these things work out for our good**. (Rom 8:28).
5. Jesus promises that we will be **raised from the dead**. (Jn. 6:47; 11:25).
6. **Paul** teaches that we will receive **a new spiritual body**. (1 Cor. 15:49-53).
7. **Jesus** teaches that we will have an **everlasting home in heaven**. (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 14:13; 21:4).

B. These precious and exceeding great promises should make us happy and fill our hearts with immense joy.

Conclusion.

I. **An Englishman**, a Frenchman and a Russian were discussing happiness. The Englishman said, "Happiness is when you your return home tired after work and find your slippers by the fire." The Frenchman said, "You English have no romance. Happiness is having dinner with a beautiful woman at a fine restaurant." The Russian said, "You are both wrong. True happiness is when you are at home in bed, and at 4 A.M. hear a hammering at the door, and there stand the secret police, who say to you, 'Ivan Ivanovitch, you are under arrest' and you say, "Sorry, Ivan Ivanovitch lives next door."

A. Different people define happiness in different ways, but the happiness that counts and lasts and gives us life before death and after death is in Christ and Christ alone.

B. **It is found** by making Jesus Lord and Savior.

1. It is found by having your sins washed away in the waters of baptism by the blood of Jesus.
2. It is found by walking in the newness of life and by glorifying God.

III. We urge you to make Jesus the Lord and Savior of your life. Commitment to Jesus will mean everlasting happiness. Come to Jesus as we sing.

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