

# Body, Soul and Spirit

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## WHERE WILL THEY GO

## WHEN YOU DIE?



*The Bible Way Online*

## **What happens to them following physical death?**

This study presents the writers' personal interpretation and may change after additional study.

### **Physical World**

In the physical world it is easy for us to understand that at death one's physical body begins to decay changing back into earth's elements. Earth's elements were created by God and cannot be destroyed. They only change their form; e.g., solid, liquid or gas as easily seen in its solid form, ice; its liquid form, water and its gas form, vapor.

### **Spirit World**

When God created man, He gave man a spirit, soul and body, all of which are everlasting.

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## Introduction

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void" (Genesis 1:2). "And God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth" (Genesis 1:9-10). "And God said, let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kind - livestock and creeping things and beast of the earth according to their kind. And It was so" (Genesis 1:24). Then God created man, a physical and an eternal being, in His essence or nature. But man sinned by yielding to his desires which resulted in physical and eternal death.

God's desire is for all people to change from their sinful way of life, be washed and made clean by the blood of Christ, forgiven and return to Him. To accomplish this, an acceptable sin offering had to be made. Jesus of Nazareth, God in human form, offered His sinless body as the perfect sin-offering sacrifice for anyone who puts their faith and trust in Him through obedience by being buried in Christ's death, raised a new spiritual being, put in Christ's Church, and given the Holy Spirit as a gift. Then those in Christ are to grow and mature into God's likeness by abiding in Christ's Word and living according to His will.

If those in Christ remain faithful (Colossians 1:23) their destiny is eternal life with God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and others made righteous by the blood of Christ. But, the destiny of the unfaithful and rebellious un-repentant is everlasting death.

People often question what happens after physical death; e.g., "If a man dies, shall he live again" (Job 14:14)? But before addressing this question some definitions of words used in the study and a review of man's existence from the beginning is in order.

First, God created man from previously created earth's elements, "all are from the dust, and to dust all return" (Ecclesiastes 3:20).

Second, God breathed into man the breath of eternal life, man's soul (Genesis 2:7).

Third, God put His Spirit into man, possibly when God breathed into man the breath of life.

Lastly, to those in Christ God gave them the Holy Spirit to help in their weakness. "But the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans too deep for words, and the one who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, for the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to God's will" (Romans 8:22-27).

**BODY** (Gk. *soma*) - that part of man-made from the elements of the earth, flesh and blood.

Referring to the physical body Solomon states "For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity. All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust. Who knows the spirit of the sons of man, which goes upward ...?" (Ecclesiastes 3:19-21).

Genesis 2:7-8 "Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature".

Job 10:8-9 "Your hands fashioned and made me, and now you have destroyed me altogether. Remember that you have made me like clay; and will you return me to the dust?"

**DEATH** (Gk. *thanatos*) - The cessation of the functioning of the heart, lungs, brain, etc. of physical body.

Genesis 7:22 "In the account of the flood it states "Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life (*ruwach, neshamah*) died"

James 2:26 "The body without the spirit is dead."

Hebrews 9:27-38 "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

**GRAVE** (Gk. *tafos*) - The place where the dead physical body is placed, the tomb, sepulcher or something that marks the tomb.

**HADES** (Heb. *sheol*) - The abode of the dead. (Gk. *aidos* or *hadou*) - The "not seen" or unseen world of the souls of those who are dead physically. Some Bibles have erroneously translated them as "hell" (*geénnee* the place reserved for the Devil) which has caused confusion.

Luke 16:19-23 "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side." [Thus, two sides, a paradise side for the righteous and a torment side for those who refuse to obey God, rebellious, and the wicked (rd)].

**HELL** (Heb. *geénnee*) - The place where the idolatrous Jews burned their children alive to Moloch and Baal. After the Exile this valley became the receptacle of the offal of the city and a fire was kept constantly burning there. It came to signify hell as the place of the wicked, the opposite of heaven. (Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible)

**SOUL** (Gk. *psuche*) - man's eternal inner being, conscience awareness, heart

Matthew 10:28 Matthew records Jesus stating "Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy your soul and body in hell (*geénnee* not *aidos*, the word for Hades.)"

**SPIRIT** (Gk. *pneuma*) - referring to man's spirit God created in him which returns to God upon man's death (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Spirit when ascribed to God is generally translated as Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, Holy Spirit or just Spirit.

(Heb. *neshamah* - the breath, the spirit - breath (of God or man); every breathing thing and the spirit (of man).

(Heb. *ruwach -d*) spirit (used of the living, breathing being in man and animals); as gift, preserved by God, God's spirit, departing at death)

Romans 8:16 - "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

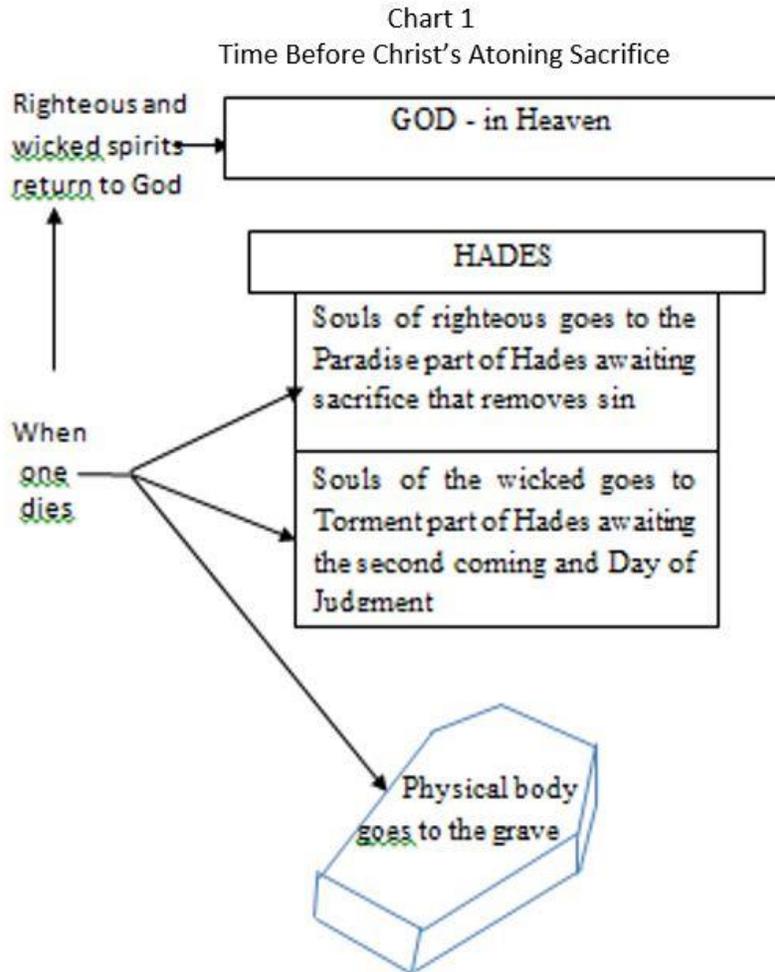
## **Time Before Christ's Atoning Sacrifice**

Adam and Eve were created in God's nature but they rebelled by disobeying bringing pain, sorrow and death. They were united as one; i.e., husband and wife, and children were born. Unlike all other animals new born children are totally helpless in need of nurturing and training. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). As they mature into adulthood temptations are presented requiring decisions. They can choose to do good or yield to the temptation and do evil. "Wherefore, as by one man [Adam] sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men [death but not sin was passed on to man (rd)]" (Romans 5:12) and "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

In Genesis we read that because of man's exceeding wickedness God destroyed all air breathing animals except Noah, his family and the animals in the ark. The period of time from creation up to Moses is called the Patriarchal age.

The Mosacial age began with Moses, the tabernacle, temple, priest and sin-offerings, sacrifices of bulls and goats. Their sin offerings did not forgive them of their sins "Instead, through those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year after year, for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). The souls of those who died prior to Christ ascension back to The Father were detained, held captive, in Hades. Here the righteous, in the Paradise side with their sins being held in abeyance until the sin-offering sacrifice required for forgiveness was offered. The rebellious wicked were in the Torment side of Hades awaiting Judgment. It would be many years later before the atoning sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth could remove man's sins. Since Jesus lived during the Mosacial age, His soul went to Paradise when he died. "Jesus said to the thief on the cross "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

The abode of bodies, souls and spirits of all who died prior to Christ's atoning sacrifice, resurrection and ascension is depicted below.



## Time While Christ Was On Earth

Forgiveness of sins is through Christ.

"An angel of the Lord appeared to him [Joseph] in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins'" (Matthew 1:21-22). [Note: Jesus save HIS people NOT ALL people (rd)].

The apostle John wrote "The next day he [John, the baptizer] saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

"Thus, it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations [Jews and Gentile (rd)], beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47).

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6-7).

"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

Shortly before his crucifixion Jesus told His disciples: "I left the Father and came into the world. Now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father" (John 16:28).

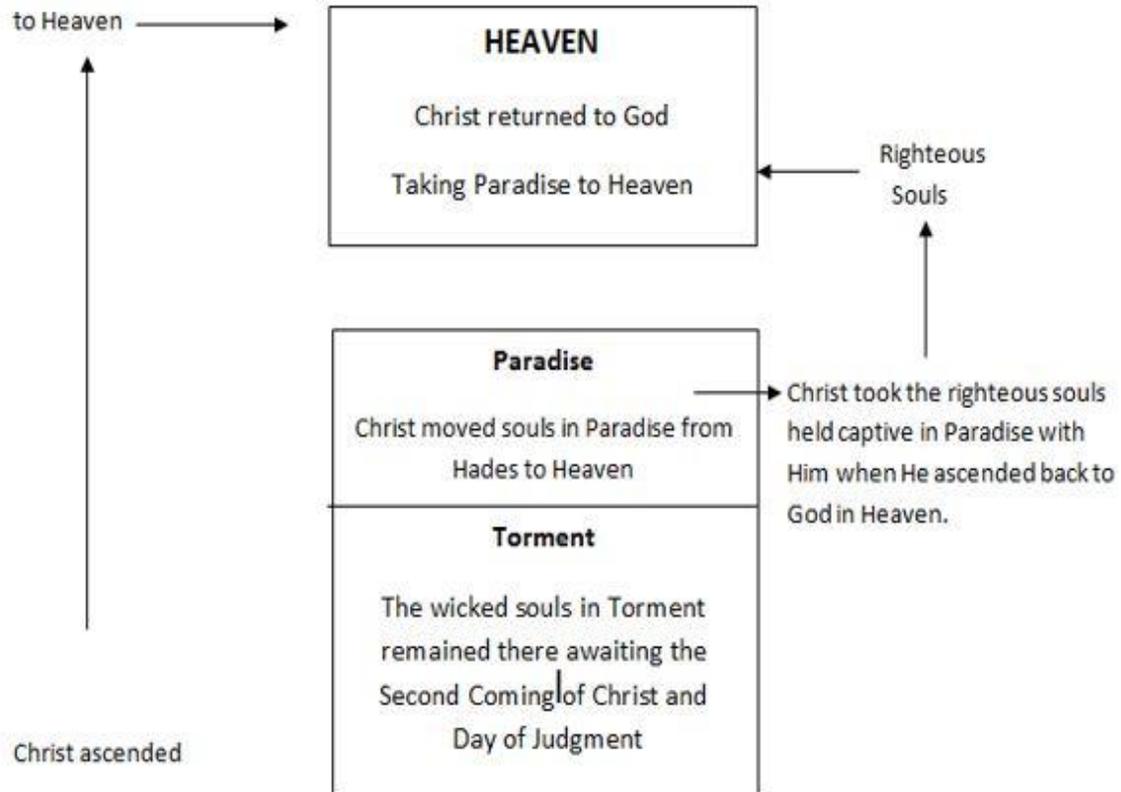
But first Jesus must complete the purpose for which He descended from Heaven. The Lamb of God must offer Himself to God as the atoning sacrifice. What happened at His crucifixion in this regard?

- Peter states that Christ bore man's sins in His body while on the tree [cross] (2 Peter 2:24).
- Jesus told the thief being crucified with Him "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).
- At the ninth hour just short of dying Jesus felt forsaken by God crying out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:26). Note: The spirit of God departed King Saul because he yielded to the wishes of others and rejected God's word (1 Samuel 15 - 15).
- Christ's Spirit then "went and proclaimed (*kerusso* - herald) to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey" (1 Peter 3:19-20). [The Bible is silent regarding the content of His proclamation (rd).]

Something dramatically changed when Jesus ascended back to The Father. He moved Paradise and all the soul therein to Heaven. "When he ascended up on high, he led a host of captives, [the souls of the righteous being held captive in Paradise (rd)] and gave gifts to men" (Ephesians 4:8).

Jesus died, was buried and descended to Hades (Paradise not Torment) "Today you will be with me in Paradise". He then was resurrected and ascended to Heaven, taking with him the righteous who had been held captive in Hades. Imagine Jesus exiting Hades, leaving the gates open on the Paradise side and the saved of Hades leaving with him, also going up to Heaven. Now, after Christ's ascension, the righteous who die go to Paradise in Heaven rather than Hades. The lost remained in the Torment side of Hades awaiting the Day of Judgment.

Chart 2 - Jesus Ascended to Heaven



### Time After Christ Returned to God

Matthew 16:18 - Jesus promised "I will build my church [not a building, temple or sanctuary but a body of people made righteous by Christ's blood (rd)] and the gates of Hades [some Bibles have mistranslated *adois* as Hell (rd)], will not prevail against it."

Hades is seen as a type of prison. Those in the Torment side of Hades are not free to leave at will. A dead person cannot return to life by his own willpower. Imagine Hades as a place with doors to enter and to leave, but the exit doors or gates were closed. Jesus promised that the doors of Hades would not prevail against His Body of saved, His church, the saved people. If today, the gates of Hades do not prevail against the church, then the church, those in Christ, is not held, bound or prisoner therein. Christians who die after Christ's resurrection and ascension are not held captive in the place of the dead. When Jesus left Hades on the third day, he left the exit door open in the good side of Hades (Paradise).

1. Philippians 1:23 - Paul desired "To depart and be with Christ."
2. Corinthians 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."

3. 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 - "For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath [everlasting torment (rd)] but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep [dead (rd)], we [those in Christ (rd)] may live together with him.
4. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." All this agrees with the desire of Paul. His hope, upon dying, was not to go to Hades where Jesus is no longer to be found. Paul would go to Heaven, to be with Christ.
5. Revelation 6:9 - "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained."
6. Revelation 8:3 - "Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne."
7. In the fifth seal of Revelation 6:9 John saw the souls of martyred Christians that were under the altar and that altar was in front of God's throne in heaven. These martyrs were not in Hades but in heaven.
8. John 11:25-26 - "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?'"
9. Jesus promised that those who live and believe, have faith in, trust in and obey him would never die. Since the resurrection, those who believe, trust, obey and live in Jesus don't die! Even though their physical bodies quit working and have to be discarded, their souls do not go to the place of the dead (Hades) but go directly to Heaven to be with the Christ who declared, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6).
10. 1 Thessalonians 4:14 - "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.

"If the saved in Christ who already died are with him in heaven, then 1 Thessalonians 4:14 makes sense for when Jesus returns, he will bring in His company those who sleep in him. The souls of Christians, when their physical bodies die, go to be with Jesus in heaven where they will remain until His return, the 2nd Coming. They will return with him and receive, at the resurrection, their new, glorious, immortal bodies.

11. 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 - "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know-God knows. And I know that this man-whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell."

Paul spoke of a man who was caught up to the third heaven, that is, to Paradise. To the Jews the first heaven meant the atmosphere (aerial heavens), the second heaven meant outer space (sidereal heavens) and the third heaven was God's dwelling place. The third heaven is here called Paradise, the same word Jesus used with the repentant thief on the cross ("Today, you will be with me in Paradise"). It is as if when Jesus was resurrected, he left the gates of Paradise open making it possible for the righteous souls therein to be led to Heaven when He ascended.

12. Acts 7:54-60 - "When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right

hand of God. 'Look,' he said, 'I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.'

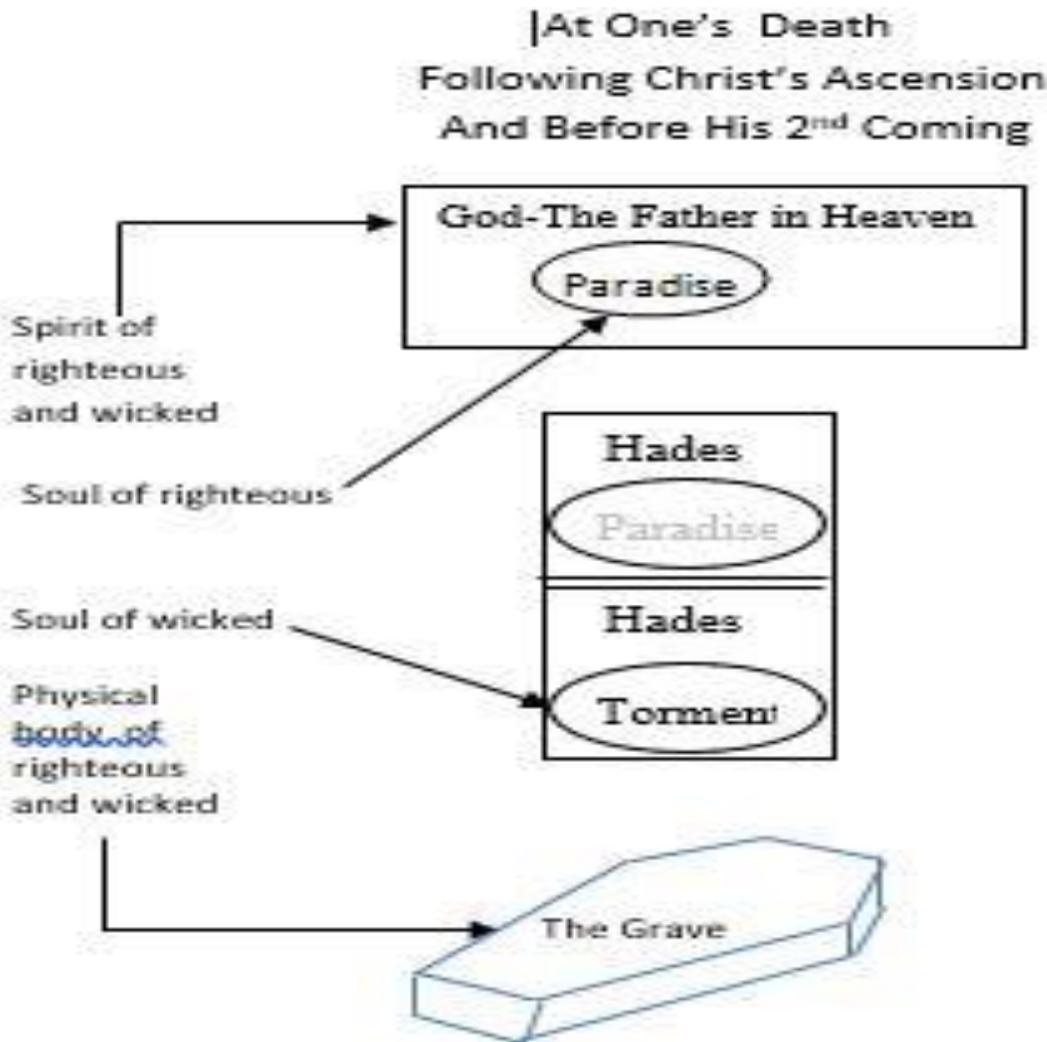
"At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

"While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' Then he fell on his knees and cried out, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he fell asleep."

This may explain why Steven, dying for the gospel said "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit". When he died, his request was granted - Jesus received his spirit. Today, it is in heaven with Jesus.

So, what will be the destiny of the body, spirit and soul when a person dies? It will either be Heaven with God or Hell, the place reserved for the wicked and rebellious as well as the Devil and His angels.

The most critical question, then, has to be "What must I do to be saved eternally?" He who finds the answer to that question will be faced with a serious choice to make.



## Time After The Second Coming of Christ and Judgment

The Bible states that Christ will return but it provides no indication when that will occur. However, it is very clear that God is patient desiring all men "come unto me" and that none perish.

"In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:2-3).

"While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Act 1:9). "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Act 1:11).

"Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him" (Revelation 1:7).

"But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:14-15).

"The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and Death [*Thánatos*] and Hades [*Hádees*] gave up the dead that were in them, and all were judged according to their actions" (Revelation 20:13).

"We who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

"I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

"[W]hen the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)

"And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:12).

The result of physical death is the same for the wicked and the righteous. Their physical body goes to the grave and returns to earth's elements while their spirit returns to God who gave it, but not so for their soul. The souls of the righteous go to Paradise in Heaven with Christ. The souls of the wicked and dis-obedient go to the Torment in Hades awaiting the Second Coming of Christ and then the Judgment.

## **The Physical Body**

### When one dies

- "Remember also thy Creator ... before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed; then the dust will return to the earth as it was" (Ecclesiastes 12:1; 6-7a).

### After it turns back to dust

- Writing to the Corinthian Christians Paul stated "Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies" (1 Corinthians 15:43-44).
- "Don't be surprised at this; because the time is coming when all who are in the grave [the dead] will hear his [Christ's] voice and come out - those who have done good to a resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to a resurrection of judgment"(John 5:28-29).

### When one does not die

- "What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever. But let me reveal to you a wonderful secret. We will not all die, but we will all be transformed! It will happen in a moment, in the blink of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For when the trumpet sounds, those who have died will be raised to live forever imperishable.
- "And we who are living will also be transformed. For our dying bodies must be transformed into bodies that will never die; our mortal bodies must be transformed into immortal bodies. Then, when our dying bodies have been transformed into bodies that will never die, this Scripture will be fulfilled: 'Death is swallowed up in victory'" (1 Corinthians 15:50-55).

## **The Soul**

The souls of those in Christ grow into the likeness and nature of God, their Father - love, faithful, merciful, truthful and peaceful. The souls of the dead in Christ are in Heaven with Christ while the souls of the living in Christ are still in their body. Both are waiting the return of Christ and the 2nd Coming.

The souls of those not in Christ are developing into the likeness of the Devil, their father - liars, murders, rebellious, God haters, lovers of self and the sexually immoral. Their souls remain in the torment side of Hades awaiting the 2nd Coming of Christ and Judgment.

- "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell" [(*geénnee*), the abode of Satan not hades (*aidos*) the abode of departed souls]" (Matthew 10:28).
- In referring to Jesus "For you will not abandon my soul to Hades" (Acts 2:27).
- "Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people'" (Acts 3:22-23).

- "My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

The physical body and man's soul are not the same. The souls of the righteous dead whether in the grave, buried at sea or cremated went to Paradise (in Hades until Christ's ascension and now in Heaven). Whereas, the soul of the wicked go to Torment in Hades awaiting Judgment.

### **The Spirit**

The Bible is silent regarding to what happens to man's spirit at Christ's 2nd Coming and the Judgment.

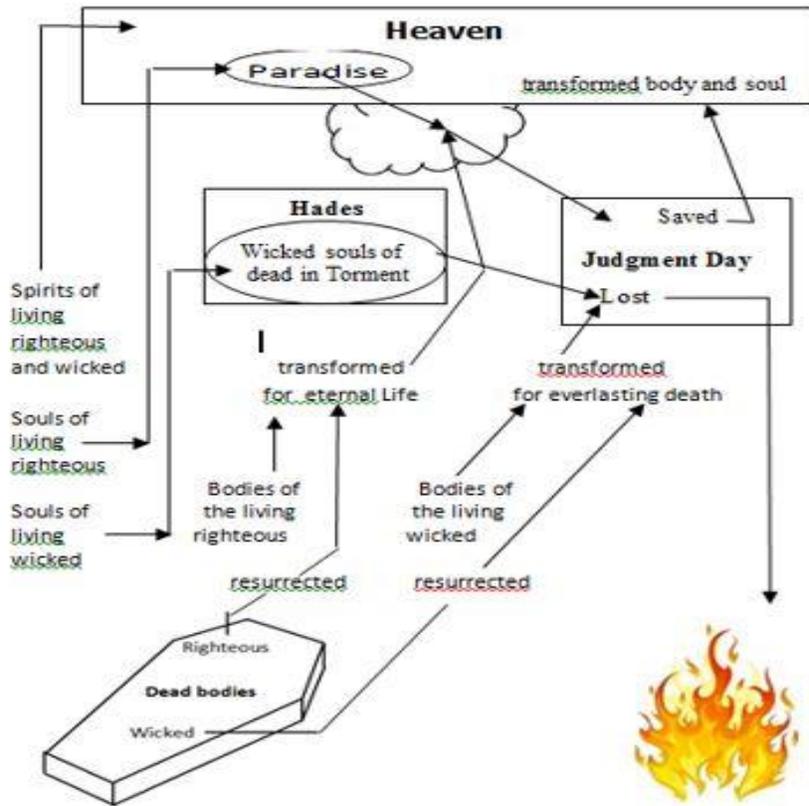
- The body without the spirit is dead, (James 2:26).
- Jesus said "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. When he had said this, he breathed his last" (Luke 23:46).
- At his stoning Stephen called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! ... When he had said this, he fell asleep, [died]" (Acts 7:59; 60).
- The writer of Ecclesiastes states that the body will decay and return to back to the earth from which it came and "the spirit returns to God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:6-7).

Studies of generations, cultures and races, including the isolated American Indians, African tribes and Aborigines of Australia, reveal that mankind has worshipped some object or being. One can only speculate if it is man's spirit or his soul that has this yearning to worship. That yearning or feeling is not sufficient for forgiveness. But those in Christ also have the Spirit of God given to them when God put them into Christ's Body, is church.

### **The Spirit of God Given To Those In Christ**

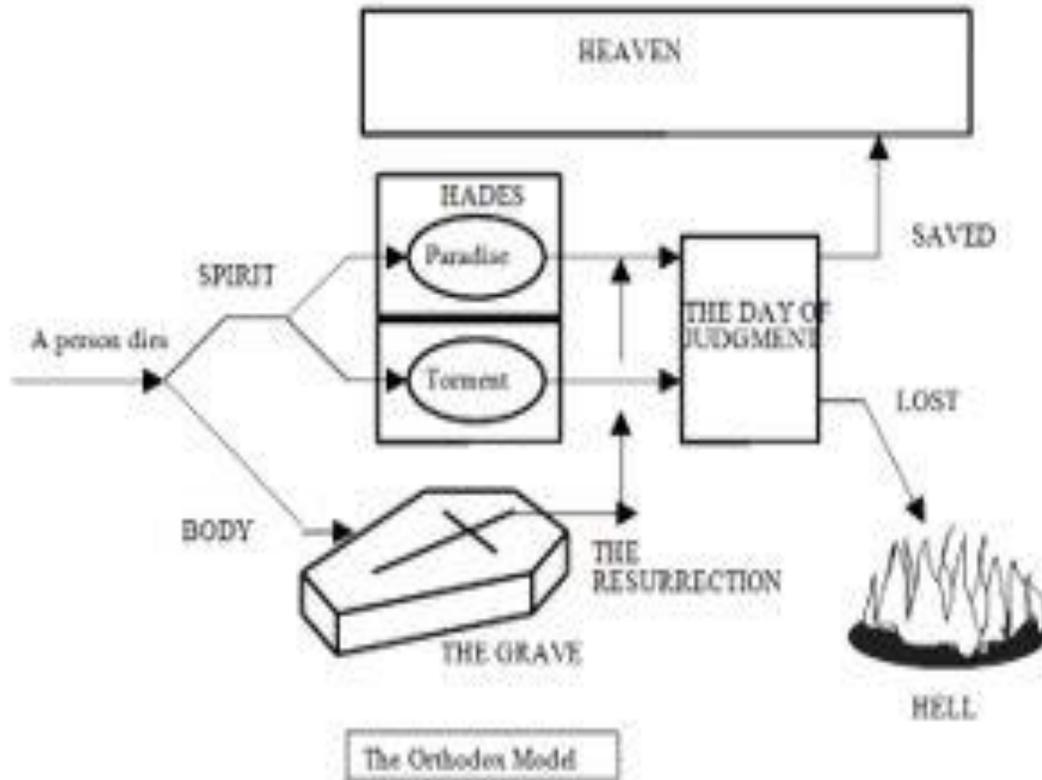
- "And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38).
- And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him" (Acts 5:32).
- "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you" (1 Corinthians 3:16)?
- "In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13).
- "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Romans 8:8-9).
- "The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we don't know how to pray the way we should. But the Spirit himself pleads on our behalf with groanings too deep for words; and the one who searches hearts knows exactly what the Spirit is thinking, because his pleadings for God's people accord with God's will" (Romans 8:26-27).
- "Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you" (2 Timothy 1:13-14).
- The Spirit of God is given by God to the obedient when raised a new spiritual being following his death to sin and burial [immersed / baptized] into Christ's death. The Spirit of God within man communicates with man's spirit feelings he is unable to verbalize in prayer.
- Note: When King Saul rebelled against God by disobeying God by not utterly destroying the Amalekites and blamed his sin on the peoples' wishes, God rejected him and God's Spirit left him (1 Samuel 15).

This chart depicts where One's body, soul and spirit go at 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.



### Another Interpretation

There are several ideas from different theological perspectives based upon their reasoning and interpretation from several scriptures. Many, if not most, believe all people's souls go to Hades (understood to be the unseen abode of the souls of the dead) when they die and remain there until His Second Coming. They do not believe Christ released the righteous held captive in the Paradise side of Hades taking them with Him when He ascended. This interpretation is shown below.



## What Happens on the Day of Judgment?

- "... it is appointed for man to die ONCE, and after that comes judgment" [no second chance, no reincarnation (rd)] (Hebrews 9:27).
- "And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him" (Matthew 17:1-3).

So, Moses and Elijah were still in existence as only the flesh had died and they had their same identity as when in the physical body. Therefore, there could not be any reincarnated beings as their souls were still alive in the Hadean world.

- "For all of us will stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, 'As certainly as I live, declares the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will praise God.' Consequently, each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:10-12).
- "For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of the Messiah [Christ], so that each of us may receive what he deserves [God's righteous judgment (rd)] for what he has done in his body, whether good or worthless" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

### The Righteous

- "For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we

who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).

### The Wicked

- "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ... "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:31-33 ... 41).
- "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

### The author's opinion

The righteous souls, their immortal bodies and spirit given to them by God will be re-united to live eternally with God in Heaven. Not so for the rebellious and wicked for the God's Word has separated their soul and spirit. Thus, their soul and imperishable body will be cast into everlasting torment with Satan and his angles.

Are you living for eternal life or everlasting death? It will either be in Heaven with God or in Hell, the place reserved for the wicked and rebellious as well as the Devil and His angels. The most critical question, then, has to be "What must I do to be saved eternally?" He who finds the answer to that question will be faced with a serious choice to make.

## **What Must I Do To Be Saved From My Sins And Receive Forgiveness And Eternal Life?**

### I must recognize that I am a sinner who needs a savior.

Many people do not feel the need for a savior because they do not feel lost. Whether it comes through hearing a moving sermon; maybe a friend who shares with you the truth; maybe by reading a tract; whichever, in some way you must come to understand that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). As the prophet Isaiah had said long ago: "Our sins have hidden God's face from us so that He will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). Our own sin separates us from God! "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This is a spiritual death, which is a separation from God for those who are lost.

"But what about my good works?" someone may say. The answer returns: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

"But my sins are small" others say, but "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10).

Human pride and self-sufficiency are the greatest barriers against salvation. He who refuses to admit that he is a sinner in need of forgiveness is lost and cannot be saved.

Have you understood the despair of being a sinner in need of a Savior?

**I must recognize that Jesus is the only hope of salvation.**

There is no other way to salvation. By his death on the cross, Jesus is able to save, set free, and ransom sinners. In John 14:6, Jesus declared: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man comes to the Father except through Me." The only way we can get to God is through Christ. We also read in Acts 4:12, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." We cannot be saved by relying on Mohammed, Buddha, Judaism, Hindu gods or any other religion. Neither can we devise our own system of "Christianity" as is being done today and expect it to save us. Only Jesus Christ can specify the conditions for our salvation, because He paid our price and is our only savior. There is no other way.

Are you ready to throw yourself down at the feet of the only one who can save you - Jesus the Christ?

**I must believe this good news that Jesus Christ came to earth, lived a perfect life, was crucified, the perfect atoning sacrifice) for my sins, was buried but arose from the dead on the third day and now lives forever at God's right hand to intercede for me.**

What Jesus did for us is called "the gospel", meaning "good news!" In Mark, Jesus tells us we must believe this gospel to be saved.

Mark 16:15-16 - "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

What a story it is! God in human form, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, passed through so many temptations but never sinned!

1 Peter 2:21 - "To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."

He did so many signs and miracles to prove His divinity.

John 20:30-31 - "Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 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."

He died for us - a sacrifice to God for all our sins!

Hebrews 1:10-14 - "He also says, 'In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.'

"To which of the angels did God ever say, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet? Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?'"

Finally, He was raised from the dead, proving that He is the Son of God.

Romans 1:4-5 - "Who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him and for his name's sake, we

received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith."

1 Corinthians 15:1 - "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand." What a wonderful story!

### **Are you ready to believe and obey this gospel?**

#### I must repent of my sins.

Jesus says in Luke 13:3, "... unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." It is either repent or perish; the choice is ours. Acts 17:30 says, "Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent." All people everywhere, and that includes you and me, are commanded of God to repent. Repent of what? Repent of our sins. Repent of not fully serving and following all that God says. God is pleading with us to repent. He greatly desires that we turn to him. He tells us in 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." God wants us to repent so we can be saved. He is patiently waiting on us. But eventually our time will run out. The longer we put off repentance, the harder our heart gets.

Repentance is not just being sorry. 2 Corinthians 7:10 says, "For Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death." Repentance is a change of heart and a change of mind. We must make up our mind to stop living life our way and start living it God's way. It is making up our minds that we are going to serve God with all our might and do everything He says. Matthew 22:37, "Jesus said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." In other words, we must do it with all of our being.

Romans 2:4 states, "The goodness of God leads you to repentance." God has been so good to us, and this should cause us to want to please Him in every way. God, because of His love for us, has done so much for us, and because of this we read in 1 John 4:19, "We love Him, because He first loved us." This should cause us to want to repent and do all the things that He has asked us to do, otherwise we do not love God. Jesus said in John 14:24, "He who does not love Me, does not keep my words."

Do you love God? If you do, you will want to do everything that He says. In John 14:15 Jesus says, "If you love Me keep My commandments." Are you willing to show your love to God by repenting? By renouncing all your sins and disobedience? By deciding that you will give your life over to following and obeying Jesus? Jesus said: "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Mark 8:34). Have you decided that you do not want to sin anymore? If so, you are now ready to be united with Christ.

#### I must confess Jesus

Jesus wants us to confess Him before men. In Matthew 10:32-33 he says, "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in Heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before my Father who is in Heaven." If we deny Christ we are going to be lost. We must not be ashamed to confess to other people that we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus says in Mark 8:38, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when he comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." If He is ashamed of us that means that we are going to be lost.

There are several examples of people confessing their faith in Christ in the Bible. One is found in Matthew 16:16-17, "Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus

answered and said to him, Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in Heaven." Christ was well pleased with Peter's confession and He will be with ours also.

In Acts 8:36-37 a man asked the question, "See here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then in verse 37, "Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart you may. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." That is the good confession.

But there is more. We not only confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, we also confess Him as our Lord. "... If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9. We name Him as our leader, owner, ruler, chief, boss, the one who has all the authority over our lives. Someday everyone will make this confession ("...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:10-11) but for some it will be too late.

Are you ready to confess to others that you believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God and that He is now the lord and Master of your life?

#### I must be immersed in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of my sins

Acts 2:38 - "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." We are to be baptized, immersed, in order to receive the forgiveness of all our sins.

Acts 22:16 - "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." We are baptized to have our sins washed away and in that action, we are calling on the name of the Lord. To call on the name of the Lord means to invoke Him to action. Calling on the name of the Lord to do what? To save us! (To wash away our sins).

1 Peter 3:21 - "Corresponding to that (eight souls saved by water in the ark), baptism now saves you - not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Baptism, according to Peter, is not an outer cleansing of dirt from the physical body. Rather, the baptism that saves us is an 'appeal' (plea) to God for a good conscience. Baptism is a prayer, an appeal, a pleading to God for an inner cleansing of the guilty soul. Therefore, baptism into Christ is the true biblical sinner's prayer.

What saves us from our sins? The blood of Jesus! When does the blood of Jesus save us? When we call upon God to cleanse us through baptism! So where lies the saving power? It is in the atoning blood of Christ. (The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the event that validated the worth of his death on the cross.) Faith - baptism links us with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

Being baptized "into his death" and being "united with him in his resurrection" (Romans 6:3-5) is how salvation comes to us in baptism.

Salvation (forgiveness of sins) which comes from being united, reconciled, with God in Christ is given when our trusting hearts appeal to God for a good conscience. We do this when we are baptized, immersed. Baptism is faith crying out, a prayer, to God to save us based on the death of Christ on the cross, the atoning sacrifice. Do you need to be baptized?

#### I must be faithful until death

Colossians 1:21-23 - "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight; if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard. ..."

Revelation 2:10 - "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

This is only a brief outline of God's will for your life. Those who enter in the way of Christ spend their whole lives seeking his perfection, preparing for eternal life that the saved will enjoy in His presence. Now you must decide. Each one of us will choose our own eternal destiny. Which will your decision be?

Matthew 7:13-14 - "Enter by the narrow gate for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate difficult is the way which leads to life and there are few who find it."

### Questions

1. God has given all men a  
 Body  
 Soul  
 Spirit  
 All the above  
 Body and Soul
2. Man dies only once after that comes the judgment.  
True  False
3. The soul of man is his conscience awareness.  
True  False
4. The spirit of man is given by God and will return to Him when man dies a physical death.  
True  False
5. The covenant God made with the Children of Israel forgave their sins by the sacrifice of bulls and goats.  
True  False
6. In a dream Joseph was told by an angel of God that Mary, his betrothed, would have a son conceived by the Holy Spirit and He would save people from their sins.  
True  False
7. John the Baptizer testified that Jesus was the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world.  
True  False
8. Jesus declared "I am the way, the truth and the Life."  
True  False
9. When Jesus died his soul went to the Paradise side of Hades?  
True  False

10. When Christ was resurrected He opened the gates of Paradise freeing all in paradise.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
11. When Christ ascended to Heaven He led the righteous souls held captive in the Paradise side of Hades to Heaven to be with Him?  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
12. Jesus stated the Gates of Hades would not prevail against the body of believing, trusting and obedient people, His Church.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
13. Speaking to the Thessalonian Christians Paul told them that Christ died so those obedient to Christ at His coming, whether alive or dead, would live together with Him.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
14. Christ ascension to Heaven to be with His Father was witnessed by:  
\_\_\_\_ Leaders of the Jews  
\_\_\_\_ There were no witnesses to His ascension  
\_\_\_\_ His disciples
15. The soul of all men made righteous by the blood of Christ will reside eternally with God in Heaven whereas the soul of the unrighteous, rebellious and wicked, will have their abode in an everlasting Hell prepared for the Devil.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
16. People who hear God's message of reconciliation (the gospel of Christ) change from current lifestyle (repent) and are baptized (immersed) are given the Holy Spirit to dwell in them.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
17. When Christ returns in the clouds (the 2nd coming of Christ) those in Christ will meet Him in the air.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
18. Is it necessary for one to recognize that he is a sinner on order to seek forgiveness?  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
19. According to the scripture everyone has sinned.  
True \_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_
20. People are saved by  
\_\_\_\_ Grace through faith and obedience.  
\_\_\_\_ Grace  
\_\_\_\_ Living a good and moral life.
21. How many ways are unto salvation?  
\_\_\_\_ Many  
\_\_\_\_ One  
\_\_\_\_ Not told in the Scriptures

22. Repentance is

- regretting an undesirable action
- a change in heart, mind and lifestyle

23. Baptism into Christ is man's plea to God for forgiveness so God can work through Christ's blood given as the perfect sacrifice for sin.

True  False

24. The IF in Colossians 1:22 ("if indeed you continue in the faith") means it is possible for one not to remain faithful.

25. Whether Christian or non-Christian are you living for:

- Eternal life
- Everlasting Death
- Not concerned



