

Richmond Hill Baptist Church

March 21, 2010

Raised (1C15): Part 2 - What Happens When You Die?

Questions & Answers about Death and the Afterlife

Prelude

Call to Worship: *At the Cross, Bow the Knee* (Choir)

Pray & Welcome: Good morning and welcome to Richmond Hill Baptist Church on this 2nd day of spring. If you are a guest please take a Connect Card and fill it out and drop it in the offering plate when it comes by. Let's take a moment and greet one another!

Sing: *Standing on the Promises, Hallelujah, Mighty to Save, Majesty*

Children's Corner: (Alyssa Baker)

Offering: Thank God for spring, plants, flowers, colors, & for life!

Offertory: *Precious Lord Take My Hand*

Sing: *Glory to His Name*

Sermon:

Video: "Is Death the End?" Is that really all?

Last Sunday we began new series that will culminate on Easter Sunday. The series is entitled:

Raised (1C15): Questions & Answers about Death and the Afterlife

There are lots of questions and ideas regarding death and the afterlife.

Last Sunday was **Part 1 - What Do You Believe?**

Last week we reviewed most of the world religions and took a quick survey of what each of those groups believe regarding the afterlife.

Of all the options we came to two conclusions regarding the afterlife:

Summary of the Options

1. Nothing
2. Something (reincarnation, spirit world, resurrection)

Today: **Part 2 - What Happens When You Die?**

At some point everyone will ask this question. Most people consider this topic in more detail when they have actually lost someone close to them. Last December I lost my grandfather (84) and my cousin lost her 16 year old daughter. Last month Isabel passed away. Last week Eva Thomas father passed away.

So: What happens when you die?

Our text is 1 Corinthians 15 (1C15). In this chapter the word “raised” is used 15 times. The word “death” is used 5 times, “die” is used 3 times, “dead” is used 11 times, and the word “sleep” is used once in reference to death. Let’s see what Paul has to say to the church at Corinth about death.

1 Corinthians 15:12-34

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? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. ²⁰ But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. 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. ²⁵ For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For he “has put everything under his feet.” 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. ²⁸ 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. ²⁹ Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them? ³⁰ And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? ³¹ I die every day—I mean that, brothers—just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. ³² If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” ³³ Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” ³⁴ Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame.

A Christian Understanding of Death

1. Death is viewed three ways: spiritual, physical, and eternal.

Romans 6:11: *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.* (Romans 8, Ephesians 2) Baptism

Joshua 23:14: *Now I am about to go the way of all the earth.*

Revelation 20:14: *Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.*

2. Death is a consequence of sin.

1 Corinthians 15:21: *For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.*

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

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

3. Death is universal.

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

4. Death is the last enemy.

1 Corinthians 1:26: *The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*

5. Death has been overcome by Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4: *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scripture.* (Easter is two weeks away!)

A Christian View of the Afterlife

1. There is a gap between individual death and the final resurrection, when Jesus returns, that is often referred to as the interim or intermediate state.

1 Corinthians 15:22-23: *For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him*

2. Six passages help us divide the interim state into two sections: Paradise for the righteous, and Hades for the wicked.

Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus with Abraham and the rich man is in Hades)

Luke 23:43 (Jesus & the thief on the cross, Paradise)

2 Corinthians 5:1-8 (disembodied spirit, the earthy tent we live in will be replaced with an eternal heavenly dwelling)

2 Cor. 12:2-3 (3rd heaven, paradise, whether in body or apart from the body)

Philippians 1:23 (I desire to depart and be with Christ)

1 Peter 3:19 (spirits in prison)

3. Conclusions on the Interim State of the Righteous:

- they are with God
- they are in Paradise
- they are alive and conscious
- they are at rest awaiting the judgment and final resurrection

4. Conclusions on the Interim State of the Wicked:

- they are separated from God
- they are in Hades
- they are alive and conscious
- they are in torment awaiting the judgment and final resurrection

5. Misconceptions related to the Intermediate State:

- there will be no Purgatory
- there will be no soul sleeping
- there will be no intermediate body
- there will be no opportunity to obtain salvation through your own initiative or by the effort of someone else

1 Corinthians 15:29: Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?

Baptism of the Dead: Just north of Corinth was a city named Eleusis. This was the location of a pagan religion where baptism in the sea was practiced to guarantee a good afterlife. This religion was mentioned by Homer to Demeter 478-79.

Paul used this example from the pagans when he said, "...if the dead are not raised, then why are **they** baptized for the dead?" Paul did not say **we**.

Hebrews 9:27: Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.

2 Peter 2:9: the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment

Video: “Is Death the End?” Is that really all?

1 Cor. 15:32: *If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”*

However, If the dead are raised – I would tell you to live every day like it’s your last. Make every day count because you can impact eternity!

Application

1. Ask yourself: “Do I have the hope of glory?”

Rom 5:1-2: *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,² 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.*

Burial Permit, Lambs Book of Life, Connect Card!

2. Ask yourself: “Who can I encourage with words of hope?”

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.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.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ 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.¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.*

3. Ask yourself: “Who can I share the hope of Christ with?”

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*

Response: *He Is Lord!*

Announcements: Easter Schedule of Events

RMMoG: Family Ski Day, Sunshine, April 10, Last Day to Sign Up

Postlude: *Majestic*