

# YOUR FUTURE WITHOUT CHRIST

*Without Christ death is the beginning of eternal suffering away from God*

In 2008 Cathy and I were grateful to receive some of the worst news of our lives; Cathy had cancer. That was a fact. It didn't matter how we felt about it: whether we thought it was fair or God was doing us wrong. She had cancer and knowing she had cancer gave us the chance to find a cure. Knowing Cathy's true condition lead to a cure that saved her life.

Today's message is going to be like getting the news you have cancer. Knowing your true condition hopefully will lead you to the Cure.

Some of you are separated from God. You are spiritually dead. All of us start out in this condition.

The Bible tells us

*...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...<sup>1</sup>*

To *sin* means to *miss the mark*; to miss the mark of God's perfect righteousness. God made us. We're accountable to Him. He has the right to set the standard. The standard is perfection. We lie, we steal, we hate, we resent, we gossip, we covet, we fornicate, we love ourselves, we don't love God, we don't worship Him as He deserves. In all these ways and more we sin and fall short of the glory of God.

The Bible tells us

*...the wages of sin is death...<sup>2</sup>*

Death is separation: physical death is separation of the soul and body. Spiritual death is separation between us and God. God is holy and pure. We are unholy and impure. God cannot have relationship with us. In addition, God is just. The wrongs we have committed must be judged and punished in order for justice to be served.

The Bible tells us:

*...it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment...<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 3:23  
<sup>2</sup> Romans 6:23  
<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 9:27

## IF YOU DIE WITHOUT CHRIST, YOUR SOUL GOES TO HELL TO AWAIT JUDGMENT

Luke 16:19-31 records a story Jesus told that describes the place to which your soul will go to await judgment. This is not a parable. Jesus did not call it a parable. Parables do not use proper names. It is a real situation.

*<sup>19</sup> "There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. <sup>20</sup> And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, <sup>21</sup> who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. <sup>22</sup> The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, <sup>23</sup> and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. <sup>24</sup> And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' <sup>25</sup> But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' <sup>27</sup> And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house— <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers— so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' <sup>29</sup> But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' <sup>30</sup> And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' <sup>31</sup> He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.' "*

If you physically die separated from God your soul will go to the exact same place where the soul of the rich man is still dwelling. Your time in hell will end when you are resurrected and brought to trial at the judgment described in Revelation 20:11-15.

*<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. <sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.<sup>4</sup>*

This is *The Great White Throne Judgment*. This judgment will be for all human beings separated from God down through history. The purpose of this judgment **will not be** to determine if you go to heaven or hell. That will be determined at the moment of your physical death. The purpose of this judgment will be to determine your degree of punishment. God is just. The punishment you receive will be perfectly just for the life you lived.

## **YOU WILL SUFFER FOR ETERNITY AWAY FROM GOD IN THE LAKE OF FIRE**

There is a way to be saved from this future. It is through faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

The Bible tells us

*<sup>1</sup> Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, <sup>2</sup> and by which you are being saved...*

*<sup>3</sup> ...that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.<sup>5</sup>*

You can be restored to God if you will receive by faith what Jesus has done for you. He suffered your punishment of spiritual death. He came back to life proving God accepted His payment.

These are hard things to talk about. But they are fact. Now that you know, seek the Cure: Jesus can save you from this future. Trust in what Jesus has done for you.

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<sup>4</sup> Revelation 20:11-15  
<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:1-6