

# Week One

Quarter 3

Death and the Intermediate State  
Glorification

# Outline

- Death and the Intermediate State (Chapter 41)
  - Why Do Christians Die?
  - How Should We Think of Our Own Death and the Death of Others?
  - What Happens When People Die?
- Glorification (Chapter 42)
  - New Testament Evidence for Glorification
  - Old Testament Support for Glorification
  - What Will Our resurrection Bodies Be Like?
  - The Entire Creation Will Be Renewed As Well
  - The Unbelieving Dead Will Be Raised for Judgment on the Day of Final Judgment

# The Order of Salvation

1. Election (God's choice of people to be saved)
2. The Gospel Call (proclaiming the message of the gospel)
3. Regeneration (being born again)
4. Conversion (faith and repentance)
5. Justification (right legal standing)
6. Adoption (membership in God's family)
7. Sanctification (right conduct of life)
8. Perseverance (remaining a Christian)
9. **Death (going to be with the Lord)**
10. Glorification (receiving a resurrection body)

# Why Do Christians Die? (1)

- Death is not a punishment for Christians
  - There is “no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1)
  - The penalty for sin is death, but that penalty no longer applies to us
- Death is the final outcome of living in a fallen world
  - God has chosen to apply the benefits of Christ’s redemptive work gradually over time
  - “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every 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.” (1 Cor 15:26)
  - When Christ returns, “then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?’” (1 Cor 15:54-55)

# Why Do Christians Die? (2)

- God uses the experience of death to complete our sanctification
  - “God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Rom 8:28)
  - Jesus was made perfect “through suffering” (Heb 2:10)
  - We should view the aging and weakness and sometimes sickness leading up to death as another kind of discipline that God allows us to go through in order that through this process our sanctification might be furthered and ultimately completed when we go to be in the Lord’s presence (pg 812)
  - “Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev 2:10)
- Our experience of death completes our union with Christ
  - Through death we imitate Christ
  - “rejoice in so far as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed” (1 Pet 4:13)

# Why Do Christians Die? (3)

- Our obedience to God is more important than preserving our own lives
  - The world's goal is to preserve their own life at (almost) all costs
  - “I [Paul] am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 21:13)
  - “I [Paul] do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24)
  - This has given courage and motivation to martyrs throughout the history of the church

# How Should We Think of Our Own Death?

- We are encouraged to look up it with joy
- “We [Paul & others] would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Cor 5:8)
- “For to me [Paul] to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If it is to be life in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better” (Phil 1:21-23)
- Not even “death...(will)...separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39)
- We should have a clear testimony to the lack of fear of death, which will provide a strong witness to non-Christians

# How Should We Think of a Death of Christian Friends and Relatives?

- We will experience genuine sorrow mixed with joy
- It is not wrong to express real sorrow at the loss of fellowship with a loved one
  - “Devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him” (Acts 8:2)
  - Why did Jesus weep? (John 11:35)
  - The Ephesian elders “wept and embraced Paul and kissed him, sorrowing most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they should see his face no more” (Acts 20:37-38)
- We will also have hope and joy
  - Paul tells the Ephesians “that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope” (1 Thes 4:13)
  - “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth...that they may rest from their labors” (Rev 14:13)
  - “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints” (Ps 116:15)
- Worship is also an appropriate response
  - David, after his child died (2 Sam 12:20)
  - Job 1:20-21

# How Should We Think of a Death of an Unbeliever?

- We will experience genuine sorrow, but it will NOT be mixed with joy
- “I am speaking the truth in Christ, I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen by race” (Rom 9:1-3)
- We do not know for sure if faith and repentance came, even on their deathbed
- It would be wrong to speak as if such a person were going to heaven
  - This would be misleading & giving false assurance
  - The “Spirit in the Sky” song simply isn’t true

# What Happens When People Die?

- The souls of believers go immediately into God's presence
  - “We would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Cor 5:8)
  - Paul desired “to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better” (Phil 1:23)
  - Jesus told the thief on the cross “Today you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43)
- There is no purgatory
  - Teaching comes from 2 Maccabees 12:42-45 (Apocrypha)
    - Therefore he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin
    - Indulgences
    - See also 2 Tim 1:18 (Onesiphorus isn't dead), Matt 5:26 (parable is never applied to eternity), 1 Cor 3:15 (fire burns works, not people), Matt 12:32 (error in logic – false negative)
  - This teaching makes us add something to Christ's redemptive work and robs us of assurance of salvation

# Soul Sleep Support

- Definition – when believers die, they go into a state of unconscious existence, and the next thing that they are conscious of will be when Christ returns and raises them to eternal life
- Historically taught by Anabaptists and Irvingites, but fought against by John Calvin
- Biblical support
  - Scripture often speaks of “sleep” or “falling asleep” (Matt 9:24, 27:52; John 11:11; Acts 7:60, 13:36; 1 Cor 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thes 4:13, 5:10)
  - Additionally, it teaches that the dead do not have a conscious existence (Ps 6:5, 115:17; Ecc 9:10; Is 38:19)

# Soul Sleep Rebuttal

- Sleep is simply a metaphor indicating that death is only temporary for Christians
  - “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awake him out of sleep” (John 11:11)
  - Jesus did not say “the soul of Lazarus is sleeping”
- The dead not having any consciousness is to be understood from the perspective of life in this world
  - “The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any that go down in silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and evermore. Praise the Lord!” (Ps 115:117-118)
- All other scripture gives no indication that there is a “pause” between here and heaven

# Did Old Testament Believers Enter Immediately Into God's Presence?

- Some state that before the atonement, a holding place was required (*limbus partum* or *limbo*) – Catholics, some Lutherans, some Baptists, etc.
- All Old Testament scripture that discusses this topic (which is only a few) point to an immediate conscious enjoyment
  - “Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (Gen 5:24)
  - Elijah “went up by a whirlwind into heaven” (2 Kings 2:11)
  - David was confident he would “ dwell in the house of the Lord for ever” (Ps 23:6)
  - Jesus told the Pharisees that “He [God] is not God of the dead, but of the living” (Matt 22:32)
  - Even the parable of Lazarus and the rich man has Abraham in a place that sounds desirable – not on the fringe of hell (Luke 16:25)

# Should We Pray for the Dead?

- No
- The souls of unbelievers who die go to a place of punishment and eternal separation from the presence of God
- To pray for the dead therefore is simply to pray for something that God has told us has already been decided
- It would be like asking God to have Jesus die for our sins → it's pointless

# The Souls of Unbelievers Go Immediately to Eternal Punishment

- There is no hope to get to heaven once decided
  - “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” (Luke 16:24-26)
  - “just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment...” (Heb 9:27)
- There is no concept of a second chance in scripture
- Annihilationism
  - Belief that people will simply cease to exist
  - Avoids the difficulty of reconciling a loving God and eternal punishment
  - “they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matt 25:46)
- Note – even though they pass into a state of eternal punishment immediately, they will also have their bodies raised on the last day for final judgment (Matt 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Rev 20:12,15)

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# Glorification

- It is the final step in the application of redemption
- It will happen when Christ returns and:
  - Raises from the dead the bodies of all believers for all time who have died
  - Reunites them with their souls
  - Changes the bodies of all believers who remain alive
- Thereby giving all believers at the same time perfect resurrection bodies like His own

# New Testament Evidence for Glorification (1)

- “Lo! 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.” (1 Cor 15:51-52)
- “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep” (1 Thes 4:14)
- “the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thes 4:16)
- This only makes sense if the souls of believers who have gone into Christ’s presence who return with Him, and if it is their bodies that are raised from the dead to be joined together with their souls, and then ascend to be with Christ (pg 829)

# New Testament Evidence for Glorification (2)

- “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given Me, but raise it up at the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life; and I will raise Him up at the last day” (John 6:39-40)
- “He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through His Spirit which dwells in you” (Rom 8:11)
- “But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power which enables Him even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil 3:20-21)

# Old Testament Support for Glorification (1)

- Many Jewish people living at the time of Christ had some hope of a future bodily resurrection
  - Martha told Jesus “I know that he [Lazarus] will rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (John 11:23-24)
  - Paul told Felix that he had a “hope in God which these themselves [his Jewish accusers] accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust” (Acts 24:15)
- Abraham “looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb 11:10)
- “they [OT saints] desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one.” (Heb 11:16)

# Old Testament Support for Glorification (2)

- “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see Him with my own eyes – I, and not another” (Job 19:25-26)
- “But God will redeem my soul from the grave” (Ps 49:15)
- “Do not withhold discipline from a child...If you beat him with the rod you will save his life from Sheol” (Prov 23:13-14)
- “Your dead shall live, their bodies shall rise” (Is 26:19)
- “many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan 12:2)

# What Will Our Resurrection Bodies Be Like? (1)

- “What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body...Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor 15:42,49)
- Imperishable – not wear out, grow old, or ever be subject to any kind of sickness or disease, no sign of aging
- In glory – beauty and attractive, maybe a “bright shining radiance”
- In power – fullness of strength and power (not superheroes)
- Spiritual body – consistent with the character and activity of the Holy Spirit

# What Will Our Resurrection Bodies Be Like? (2)

- “When He [Jesus] appears we shall be like Him” (1 John 3:2)
- “He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through His Spirit which dwells in you” (Rom 8:11)
- Jesus “will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body” (Phil 3:21)
- “What you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernal, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as He has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body” (1 Cor 15:37-38)
- Whatever remains in the grave from our own physical bodies will be taken by God and transformed and used to make a new resurrection body (pg 834)

# What Will Our Resurrection Bodies Be Like? (3)

- Believers who remain alive on the day Christ returns will “be changed”, but not replaced (1 Cor 15:51-53)
- Christ’s own resurrection body was very similar to His original body (Chapter 28)
- People will recognize others in heaven
  - People will come from the east and west and “sit at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 8:11)
  - The disciples recognized Elijah at Jesus’ transfiguration

# Isn't This a Little Farfetched?

- What about people who die, turn to feed plants, who absorb the molecules, and then are consumed by another person? How can God use the same molecules?
- Our inability to understand or explain something should never be a reason for rejecting it if it is clearly taught in scripture → **God will raise our mortal bodies from the grave** (pg 835)

# The Entire Creation Will Be Renewed As Well

- The curse of Adam and Eve's sin was also on the ground, so that it would bring forth thorns and thistles as well as fruit (Gen 3:17-19)
- "the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8:21)
- "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God...We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Rom 8:19,22-23)
- See Chapter 57 for further discussion

# The Unbelieving Dead Will Be Raised for Judgment on the Day of Final Judgment

- Unbelievers will also be raised from the dead
- Jesus taught that “those who have done evil” will come forth “to the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:29)
- Paul believed “that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust” (Acts 24:15)

# Application

- Every human will die (except those alive when Jesus returns)
  - Rejoice for believers going home
  - Weep for those who go to eternal punishment
- Evangelize so that more can go to heaven
- All bodies will be resurrected
  - Believers will receive glorified bodies
    - They will be better
    - We do not know “how” God will do it
  - Non-believers will go to eternal punishment

# Reading For Next Week

- Chapter 43
  - Union With Christ
    - Homework – questions 1, 2, 4, 6
- Chapter 44
  - The Church: It's Nature, Marks, and Purpose
    - Homework – questions 1, 2, 6