

The Gospel Unashamed

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."

A Controversial Newsletter "The Printed Voice of Summit Theological Seminary"

~ All articles are written by Terry Carter unless otherwise stated ~

Vol. 37 No. 1

January 2024

Terry Carter, Editor

Five Things to Look Forward to After You're DEAD

--By Shane Capps

There are so many views when it comes to the afterlife, but there are two main worldviews in our nation.

The first one is that everyone goes to Heaven.

It doesn't matter if the person ever accepted Christ or not. It doesn't matter if the person ever had a desire to go to the Lord's Church. It doesn't matter if the person ever desired to crack open a Bible and read what is in it. It doesn't matter if the person ever desired to pray.

There are many who have the view that all roads lead to God in the end.

The second worldview is that nothing happens after you're dead.

There are many who don't believe in an afterlife. They never believed in God, His Church, His Word, or anything religious. The only thing these people look forward to is 'nothing'.

The facts are the facts! Right now, in this world the death rate of the human race is 100%. That's right! No matter who you are. No matter how much or little you have. No matter how much or little education you have. No matter your race, gender, religion, options, net worth, or health you and I will one day die if the Lord continues to wait to come back.

Then What?

The Bible teaches that there is an afterlife, or everlasting life. The person may be dead physically, but they are still alive spiritually.

How can this be? We are given a soul when we are created. **Genesis 2:7** says, "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."

"Being" means soul. Man became a 'living soul'. We have a spirit given to us at conception when we were created. Yes, life starts at conception.

In fact, after you're dead you are still alive spiritually. The Bible teaches us this. We need to realize this. Our example is with the rich man and Lazarus.

Luke 16:24-25 says, (24) And he cried out and said "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame." (25) But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony."

Notice: The rich man was dead physically (**Luke 16:22**), but he was still alive spiritually.

He could still... Talk, hear, see, smell, taste, touch, feel, think, reason, understand, and REMEMBER.

He was dead, but very much alive. In fact, the rich man's senses may have been better than when he was alive.

So, when you are dead you are not going to be on a cloud playing a harp.

When you are dead there is not going to be "nothing."

When you are dead it is not going to be whatever you make up or think it is going to be.

After you're dead you will still have something to look forward to.

In fact... **There are five things you and I have to look forward to after we are DEAD.**

By looking at the Scriptures we see what they are.

Number One:

After you're dead you will look forward to... **The Second Coming.**

In the Old Testament there are over 300+ prophecies that foretell the coming Messiah. They start in **Genesis 3:15** foretelling that Jesus would come into the world. The Old Testament teaches that Jesus would die on the cross, be placed in the grave, and arise from the dead. That is just what happened, **1 Corinthians 15:3-4**. After Jesus' resurrection He was on this earth for forty days speaking about the kingdom of God.

It was at Jesus' ascension back to the Father that we are reminded that He will come again.

Acts 1:9-11 says, "(9) And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. (10) And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was departing, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them; (11) and they also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

We are promised that Jesus will come again. He has been waiting now for the last two thousand years. I don't know when Jesus is coming, and no one does; but we are two thousand years closer. It could happen any day now!

1 Thessalonians 5:2 says, "For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night."

The Lord promised He's coming back! So, after you're dead, as well as the living, you will have to look forward to the Great Second Coming of Jesus Christ. It will be a day for the Christian and non-Christian alike.

It will be a day for the living and the dead! Every person will face God's judgment. After you're dead you will still look forward to this day!

Number Two:

After you're dead you will look forward to... **Resurrection of the dead.**

There are many graveyards in our world. The funeral home business is big business. A funeral today can cost you between \$10,000 to \$15,000. Just the grave plot can cost between \$500 to \$1,500.

The truth is, we should not be buying grave sites. We should only be renting them. As with Jesus, what goes in the grave will come out again!

To say it another way, our body goes to the ground and one day our soul will go back into our body, and it will be raised up. At the great Second Coming of Christ there will be a

resurrection of the dead. It is a bodily resurrection.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 says, "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

How can this be? It is simple: because Jesus arose, we will as well. Because Jesus lives, we will live as well.

Matthew 28:6 says, "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying."

We have the victory in Christ. It will be fully realized when He comes back. When Jesus comes, your soul will go back into your body, and it will be resurrected from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 says, "(51) Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) 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."

It will be a day for the Christian and non-Christian. It will be a day for the living and the dead! After you're dead you will still look forward to this day!

Number Three:

After you're dead you will look forward to... **The Judgment.**

It is a lie that the world believes that all roads lead to God. It is a lie in the context that the world means it. Not all roads lead to salvation. Only through Jesus Christ can a person find salvation in the Lord. **John 8:24; Acts 4:12**

What is true is all roads do lead to God's judgment seat!

Hebrews 9:27 says, "And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment."

Every person will face God's judgment. We all judge ourselves by whether or not we accepted Christ. It is our choice, and we choose our own outcome. On the Great Judgment Day God will pass the final sentence and have the last word, as He should. He alone is God!

Revelation 20:12 says, "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds."

We will be judged by the sixty-six books of the Bible. For the Christian, our names are written down in the book of life. The Great Day of Judgment is for everyone. Every person will face God's judgment. After you're dead you will still look forward to this day!

Number Four:

After you're dead you will look forward to... **Heaven or Hell. (It's your choice to make!)**

Jesus died and paid for the sins of the world. Because of what Jesus did on the cross and by being raised from the dead, salvation is now offered to all men. This is God's mercy.

Salvation is for everyone. It is up to each person what they will do with the offer of salvation. It is everyone's choice! That is God's grace.

He has given us the choice to choose for ourselves what we will do with that offer. God doesn't send anyone to Heaven. He has made a way for us to come. God doesn't send anyone to hell. The person sends himself by rejecting Jesus as Lord of their life. So yes, there is a real Heaven and a real hell.

Right now, when Christians die in the Lord, they go to Paradise or Abraham's side.

Luke 16:22 "Now it came about that the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham's

bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried.”

After Christ comes back at the Great Second Coming, we Christians will all go to Heaven together for the first time.

John 14:2-3 says, “(2) In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; (rooms) if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

For those who have died outside of Christ, they end up in hell.

Luke 16:24 says, “And he (rich man) cried out and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame.”

After Christ comes back at the Great Second Coming, the one who rejected Christ and who has been in hell has something far worse to look forward to. The wicked will all go to this place for the first time together.

Revelation 20:14-15 says, “(14) And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. (15) And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

Matthew 25:46 says, “And these (those on His left which is the goats) will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous (those on His right which are the sheep) into eternal life.”

It is our choice where we end up after we are dead. It is up to us. What will you choose?

After you’re dead you will still look forward to this day!

Number Five:

After you’re dead you will look forward to... **Eternity.**

This is a word that we need to think about. The Bible teaches that a full life is 70 years old. A life with strength is 80 years old.

In Arkansas, we used to say that at 90 years old you shouldn’t buy brown bananas and at 100 years old, you don’t need to stock up on food. With all jokes aside, this life only lasts so long and then it’s gone. Time flies. It goes fast. The older you get, the faster it goes.

James 4:14 says, “Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.”

Eternity means “everlasting, or never ending”. After you’re dead there is no more time. Time doesn’t matter anymore. Heaven and the Lake of Fire will last forever, for eternity, for everlasting, and it will have no end.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 says, “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”

That’s great if you are with the Lord in Heaven. Think about it! How about if you are the one who rejected the Lord, and you must spend eternity in pain and suffering?

People don’t want to think about death. They often don’t want to think about the afterlife without the Lord. They don’t want to think about ending up in hell.

Friends, we must face these truths before time runs out!!! Time always runs out for everyone. After you’re dead you will still look forward to eternity!

I leave you with a few more Scriptures to think about while you are still alive.

John 3:36 says, “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

A Christian is one who believes what God says and does what He says. We believe Him and obey Him. Because of this we have eternal life with Him.

For the one who rejects Him as Lord they will only be left with one thing. The wrath of God will remain on them.

Jesus is coming back! What is He coming back to do? We know for the Christian that He’s coming back to take us home.

How about the one who rejects Him as Lord?

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 says, “(7) and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, (8) dealing out retribution to *those who do not know God* and to *those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.*”

Friends don’t be fooled. Do not believe in the lies of this world. Death is not the end. Not everyone goes to Heaven.

There are five things to look forward to after you’re dead. The only thing different is **where you will go** after death. It’s up to you.

Have you become a Christian or do you keep putting it off thinking you have time?

Have you become a Christian or do you think you can just work it out with God after you die?

Have you become a Christian or do you not care about tomorrow?

Come to Jesus while you still can. Today is the day of salvation.

Don’t let it pass you by!

Dr. Shane Capps is the preacher of First Church of Christ and professor of Summit Theological Seminary Peru, IN

You can contact Shane at... shanecapps34@gmail.com