

Eternal Life

What is eternal Life? It refers to continued life after death. An everlasting life, a life without end. It is the abundant life that Jesus came to give to those who put their faith in Him. It is divine life, therefore of a different kind and quality from human life. *"For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*(JOH3:16) It is a gift of God's grace that comes through Jesus. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"*(ROM6:23) This gift is in contrast to death that is the result of sin. When we trust in Christ, God gives us eternal life with Him, sharing in His glory, given to us as a gift.

The existence of life after death is a universal question. In Job 14:1-2,14 stating; *"Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He springs up like a flower and fades away; He flees like a shadow and does not continue. If a man dies, will he live again?"* Like Job, all of us have been challenged by this question. "Is there life after death?" Exactly what happens to us after we die? Do we simply finish existing? Is life a revolving exit of departing and returning to earth? Does everyone go to the same place or do we go to different places? Is there really a heaven and hell?

Can you know what really happens when you die? Our Creator God reveals what happens when you die. As you will see, God has a plan for all who have ever lived, whether or not they knew about God during their lifetime. Bible tells us that there is life after death, eternal life so glorious *"no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him"*(1CO2:9) At this moment you are alive, you breathe, you move about or work. The sun rises and sets; somewhere a child is being born; but somewhere, someone is always dying. But, after a brief earthly-life, man goes to his eternal destiny.(ECC12:5) The grave where you will be buried cannot entomb your soul. Though your body was burned at the cremation fire, it could not consume your soul. If you perished in depth of the sea, your soul would not drown. Your soul will never die! While our present physical bodies will decompose, our souls will live forever, either in God's presence or eternally separated from Him. Creator God has said, *"All souls are Mine."*(EZE18:4) The words imply, not only creator of heaven and earth, ownership, Sovereignty, on the part of God.

Eternal life is both a present possession and a future hope. It doesn't just begin when you die; Rather, eternal life begins moment a person trust Christ as Savior. *"Whoever believes in the Son has (present tense) eternal life."*(JOH3:36). God is "eternal"(DEU33:27) and having eternal life means we have been given God's life, which is Christ in us.(COL 1:27; 3:4). Our future hope of eternal life is that we confidently look forward to eternal life in its final, victorious form when we'll be in our eternal home in heaven, having received our eternal, incorruptible, glorified bodies dwelling in Christ's presence forever. The focus of eternal life is on our current standing in Christ. Jesus said: *"My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."*(JOH10:28) Jesus explained that those who are "His" are like sheep—hear His voice and follow Him. It means to believe what Jesus says is true and submit to His Lordship. Jesus laid down His life on the cross to give His followers eternal life. These sheep have heard call of Christ enter sheepfold who belong to God. Those who truly belong to Christ are kept safe.

God is eternal, so are his love *"His love endures forever"*(1KI10:9) Eternal life is a gift to all those who believe in the Son but will be withheld from all those who reject him. When Jesus met the Samaritan woman at the well, she was thirsty and hurting; reeling from her sin stained past. This woman was thirsty for love, but no one could satisfy her thirst, satisfy her soul. However, as Jesus revealed Himself to her, to show her that He was the well spring of life she was so thirsty for.(JOH7:38) Jesus is the living water that we need. When we put our faith and trust in Him as the living water, we can be satisfying the quenching thirst of our soul. He is the source of peace, joy, love, truth, hope, and satisfaction. Abundant life can only be found in Him.(JOH10:10) Jesus assures her that; she will receive "a fountain of water springing up "within her" to eternal life"(JOH4:14)Next, Jesus was revealed as a prophet, women was surprised by the truth of His words and exposure of her own sin, her eyes are beginning to open to truth of who He is.(v.16-19) Finally, we see Jesus revealed as the Messiah,(v.24-26) and found herself drinking at the well with the Savior of the world. When the woman believed, she immediately ran off to tell others, and live her purpose, to share the gospel, to become disciple. We are reminded that of the only place we can get filled with Spirit and you'll never thirst again. We look to things outside of Christ i.e. worldly pleasures, lust of the eyes, desires of the flesh, cannot satisfy your soul.

Jesus says, *"I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."*(JOH14:2-3) In eternity God the Father as Shekinah Glory and Christ as lamp are on the throne, the flow of living water is the Holy Spirit. Angels are at gates. The city of God, New Jerusalem where bride of Christ will spend their eternal lives. It is a state of being likeness of God, having acquired of his attributes/characteristics, having enjoyed cleansing power of Savior's blood, having been sanctified by the Spirit made holy and transform from glory to glory to stand in the divine presence. *And they shall reign forever and ever.*(REV22:5) When God creates a new heaven and a new earth, He gives redeemed mankind the privilege of ruling with Christ over His creation. They can now enjoy the blessings of the tree of life, the life-giving presence of God. The river that flows from God, the Lamb brings life, nourishment and enjoyment to people of all nations. A glorious future for all who put their trust in the living God. Tabernacle of God is with men, redeemed see face to face their God, bear his name, share his glory. *If we endure. We shall also reign with Him* (2TI2:12)

Why people die because of what is called the original sin—the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, God originally created the world free of sin and death. God had warned men that transgressing His law would result in their death.(GEN2:17;3:24) Death is separation. A physical death is the separation of the soul from the body while Spiritual death, which is the separation of the soul from God. In Gen.2:17, God tells Adam that in the day he eats of the forbidden fruit from the tree of life he will “surely die.” Adam’s fall led to death for all mankind. Spiritual death occurs immediately. This separation from God is seen in Gen.3:8. When Adam and Eve heard voice of the Lord, they “hid themselves from the presence of the God.” The fellowship had been broken. They were spiritually dead, consequences of sin was the loss of those face-to-face moments with the Creator. Sin always separates men from God.

When God created Adam and Eve, He put them in the Garden with the tree of life, intending that they would live joyously forever, but they sinned and brought death to themselves and to all subsequent generations.(ROM5:12–14) God then sent Adam and Eve out from the Garden and stationed cherubim to guard the way to the tree of life, He did so because in His mercy He did not want man to live in sin/evil forever (without death) and isolation from God; and Christ, our Redeemer, would not have been able to die on the cross in redemption. However, our merciful God sent His Son as a perfect sacrifice to suffer, once for all, the punishment due mankind for sin, thereby God graciously restores our access to the tree of life. The tree of life is symbolic of Jesus Christ. This access is provided through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.(JOH1:29) It is in Christ that we trust, in God’s power that we rest, assured of our everlasting life. Now, every sinner is invited to know Christ and to receive eternal life, spend eternity: “*Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life*”(REV 22:17)

As Romans 8:20–23 explains, entrance of physical death in Genesis 3, through Christ, serves the purpose of bringing about the eventual spiritual reconciliation and physical resurrection of all believers; so that creation/earth itself would one day be set free from the curse. The Son of God, Jesus Christ came into this earth in the flesh, to give us this gift of eternal life.(JOH1:1-14)*But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him and by his wounds we are healed*”(ISA53:5) Jesus took on the punishment that all of us deserve on the cross in our place and suffered, died to receive the penalty of God's judgment on our sin. Three days later, He proved victorious over death by rising from the grave. He remained on the earth for forty days and was witnessed by hundreds before ascending to heaven. “*He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.*”(ROM4:25) God raised Jesus from the dead for our justification and made right with God. Jesus had paid full price for our sin and released from death. Once we trust in Christ for salvation, our fellowship with God is restored and becoming spiritually alive by the mercy and grace of God through born-again experience.(LUK15:32)

Through the first Adam, death entered the world. Through the last Adam, Jesus Christ, death on the cross, shed His blood, and rise again becomes means through which Creation is reconciled and restored; and when all is completed, death itself, the last enemy, will be forever destroyed.(1CO15:26) Bible speaks of a coming age from which evil will be expelled and for which God's life and glory will be exists and takes place. “*who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,*”(GAL1:4) For allowing the presence of Satan and evil in this present evil age until they meet their final end, last enemy to be destroyed is death.(ROM5:17) “*that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*”(HEB2:14–15) the devil had the power of death until that power was pulled away from him by Christ. Christ’s victory over the devil and power of death is accomplished by means of death and resurrection. Jesus is victorious on the cross. Something glorious and decisive did accomplish on the cross.

The sting of death was removed by the captain of our salvation. ‘*Death is swallowed up in victory.*’ ‘*O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?*’(1CO15:54) Because of Christ’s conquest of death, we are conquerors through Him.(ROM8:37) Christ’s defeat of death began with His own resurrection from the grave. It will continue with resurrection of all who have believed in Him. In death, God performs the ultimate healing of the body. Death is swallowed up in victory because those dead in Christ will rise again, resurrected like that of the risen Christ. When Christ returns, our souls will be reunited with our new glorified bodies. On that moment, rapture, victory over death will be complete. It should be great comfort to all who have believed in Christ, living and all who have died in Christ.

The very word ‘death’ can cause images of darkness, sorrow and for some fear. But God doesn’t want us to live in fear nor defeat, uncertainty or confusion. He wants us to live, and die, with confidence that comes from knowing we belong to the victorious, risen Lord who defeated death. If we’re in Christ we don’t need to fear death. When Jesus was raised from the dead. Jesus took on death for us, and when the resurrection life and power of God raised Him from the dead, and made Jesus alive eternally! If we’re in Christ, God offers us a destination, we’ll living forever with Him. There will be no tears, sorrow, sickness, pain, or suffering. We are now free of the fear of death; Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. This invitation is open to all who seek Jesus Christ. *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*(PSA23:4)

In short, eternal death is the fate that awaits all people who ultimately reject God, reject the gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ, and remain in their sin and disobedience. Physical death is a one-time experience. Eternal death, on the other hand, is everlasting. It is a death that continues through eternity, a spiritual death that is experienced on a continual basis. Just as spiritual life, by grace through faith in Christ is everlasting life, Second death is never-ending. Yet "the glorious gospel" offers hope, enters into an unending blessed future before the Lord rather than exclusion from it.

The Bible is clear that resurrection is a reality. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the ultimate proof of life after death. The resurrection is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. While death is the end of physical life, it is not the end of human existence. The resurrection to eternal life is described as "the first resurrection" which takes place in various stages, sequences and will occur at the time of the rapture. Jesus Christ Himself as "first fruits" (1CO5:12-34) Christ was the first of those who will be raised to life again. Next come "they that are Christ's at His coming. And the resurrection of the martyrs at the middle of Tribulation. (REV20:4) The first resurrection mentioned is the raising of all overcomers from the dead. Christ was raised from the dead, so we can have faith that we, too, will be resurrected. Just as God raised up Jesus' body, so will our bodies be resurrected upon Jesus' return. All those who have placed their trust in God and the dead in Christ, will be resurrected at the rapture to heaven with Him when Christ returns. (JOH14:1-3) *We shall all be changed--in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet with glorified bodies, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the Heaven and be with Him always.* (1CO15:52) The saints shall arise for everlasting life. (DAN12:2,13)

Although we will all be eventually resurrected, not everyone will go to heaven. A choice must be made by each person in this life, and this choice will determine one's eternal destination. The Bible says: *And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,* (HEB9:27) In Matthew 25, after sharing two parables to reveal realities regarding God's kingdom, Jesus discussed a time when He will separate the "sheep from the goats." Those declared righteous through His blood will receive eternal life, whereas those who rejected Him will "go away to eternal punishment" Those who have been made righteous by faith in Christ will go into eternal life in heaven, but those who reject Christ as Savior will be sent to eternal punishment in hell. (v.46) Hell is a place where the unrighteous will experience, eternal wrath from God. Hell is described as a bottomless pit and a lake of fire, burning with sulfur, will be tormented day and night forever and ever. In hell, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, indicating intense grief and anger.

Unless spiritual death is reversed in this life, the result will be eternal death. Book of Revelation speaks of "second death," which is a final (and eternal) separation from God. Those who have never experienced new life in Christ will partake of the second death. The final judgment is the time when the second death occurs. *But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.* (REV20:14;21:8) Cowardly unbelievers fear for various reasons. Some fear they might lose their possessions or their jobs or their friends or their comfortable life if they trust in the Savior. Matthew 19:16-30 describes Jesus' conversation with a wealthy young man who asks how to attain eternal life. Jesus begins by establishing a standard of goodness, suggesting man keep all commandments. When the man says he has done this, Jesus suggests he give up his wealth to follow Him. The man's sad reaction proves he's unwilling to make God the priority of his life. Those who experience eternal death are all those whose names are not found written in the Book of Life. Eternal death, or the second death, is the eternal separation of a person from God. There is no escape from the second death. There will be no saving after eternal death.

God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but desires them to turn from their wicked ways so that they can live. Lord says, *I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live.*" (DEU30:19) Lord seeks to enter into a covenantal relationship with people. He wants all people to choose life. But He will not force us into submission; if we choose to reject Him, He accepts our decision to live eternally apart from Him. Life on earth is a test, a preparation for what is to come. For believers, life after death is eternal life in heaven with God. For unbelievers, life after death is eternity in the lake of fire. How can we receive eternal life after death and avoid an eternity in the lake of fire? There is only one way—through faith and trust in Jesus Christ. Jesus said, *whoever lives and believes in me will never die.*" In the end, those who say "yes" to God's invitation and therefore participate in his eternal life, those who say "no", thereby choose to eternal death, separate themselves from the Lord. Hence the Lord is finding out who will and will not choose life.

God warns of final judgment "great white throne" judgment of all the earth. (REV20:11) Someday we will stand before our Creator God and to be judged according to our deeds. Will Heaven be your future home? Are You Saved by Jesus? Many Christians don't know they're saved. They go around with their shoulders all bent over—drooping, wondering, and worrying. Get assurance from Christ for all those who are in Him. Choices we make today affect our final destiny! This final judgment as a warning to unbelievers to seek salvation that Jesus Christ provides. Those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ can be absolutely sure that they are saved. Those "*who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.*" (1JO5:13) Continue to believe which is assuring believers of their salvation.

The Hope of Eternal Life

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"Now this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent" (JOH17:3) Eternal life is knowing God. Eternal life is to enter into intimacy of heart, mind, soul in true love with God. To know Him is to have an intimate personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The foundation and basis of such knowledge of God is atoning death of Jesus Christ. Eternal life is God's quality of life. That is to experience glory, joy, peace, holiness which are characteristic of the life of God. Eternal life is God's kind of life and it begins for us when we are born again, or born spiritually through regeneration by the Holy Spirit of God. We who *"were dead in trespasses and sins have been made alive together with Christ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*(EPH2:5-6) Faith in Christ is the condition of receiving eternal life. *In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.*(TIT1:2) Your faith rests on hope of eternal life, it is a destiny.

In John 5:24, Jesus declares there are two groups of people: those who have eternal life and those who are spiritually dead, under judgment. *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.* Those who have life have heard Jesus' words and believed in the One who sent Him. In verse 25-26, state that He inherently has the power to impart eternal life to dead in Christ. Then v.27-30 that in the future He will raise from the dead everyone who has ever lived for all eternity. *"those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.* Since Jesus will judge all people, make sure that you are right with God through faith in Jesus Christ. Those who reject or neglect Christ will go to Hell because they do not repent; rejecting God's perfect plan of salvation.

Bible presents a clear path to eternal life. First, we must recognize that we have sinned against God: *Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins.*(ECC.7:20) We have all done things that are displeasing to God, which makes us deserving of punishment. However, Jesus Christ, the sinless (1PE.2:22), eternal Son of God became a man (JOH1:1,14) and died to pay our penalty. *"God demonstrates His love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"*(ROM5:8) Jesus died on the cross, taking the punishment that we deserve. (2CO5:21) In His mercy He has given us new spiritual birth into a living hope.(1PE1:3) *that 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.*(ROM10:9) Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior from sin and judgment? First of all, confess your sins before Holy God. *"I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin"*(PSA38:18) Confession is good for the soul. By confessing our sins we're able to experience: freedom from weight of sin, humility in the light of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, release from regret, the grace with forgiveness from our Father in heaven. Then accept God's provision of a Savior on your behalf. *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved"*(ROM10:9-13) Believe good news; trust the Lord Jesus as your Savior, and you will be saved. If you want to accept Jesus as your Savior, here is prayer; *"God, I know that I have sinned against you and deserve punishment. I believe Jesus Christ took the punishment that I deserve so that through faith in Him I could be forgiven. I place my trust in You for salvation. Thank You for Your grace and the gift of eternal life!*

If we place our faith in Him, trusting His death on the cross to pay for our sins, we will be forgiven and receive the promise of eternal life. Faith alone in the finished work of Christ on the cross is the only true path to eternal life!(EPH2:8) When we are born again, the spiritual death is reversed. Before salvation, we are dead but Jesus gives us life. Jesus called us, quickened us; because of his mercy.(TIT3:5) The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ. Our inheritance as God's children is eternal. Even in our suffering, we have reason to rejoice, because we are being saved! God made you alive with Christ. For believers is to share their faith and winning souls from spiritual death. Soul winning is a metaphor for evangelism or witnessing. A witness is who tells what they have seen, heard, experienced. Those who have everlasting life will wait, look for Christ return, set affections on things above, put to death the deeds of the flesh, endure to the end. Jesus is asking us to believe in Him as the ultimate sacrifice required and to take His life into us and be part of our lives. *everyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.*(Lord's supper-Joh6:40,54) Like manna, Jesus came down from heaven; Christ's sacrifice on the cross gives heavenly life. This will result the dead in Christ will be resurrected on the last day. Paul made it his goal to know the Lord, and the power of His resurrection in his life, so that one day he can attain resurrection from among the dead that is going to take place.(PHI3:10-15;1CO9:25) The reality of death can point to blessed hope we have in Christ. Those who believe in God will experience a life after death. We have the promise of God that we will never die, but instead will live forever with our Lord Jesus in heaven..(1TH5:9)

When the believer dies, the body goes into the grave; the soul and spirit go immediately to be with the Lord Jesus (rest)awaiting the body's resurrection, when they're joined together to be forever with the Lord in eternity. You can be sure of where you'll spend eternity by finding salvation in Jesus. You can place your soul's eternal destiny in His hands, you don't need to be anxious about it. We can rest in Him because we can count on Him on His faithfulness. When we find ourselves in heaven one day, we'll praise Him saying, *"The Lord is faithful to all His promises."* *I (Jesus) say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God;*(JOH5:25,28-29)