

Did the Early Church Believe in the Doctrine of the Immortal Soul?

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The belief that a person continues to live after death in a different form (the immortal soul doctrine), was not taught by the early church as this is contrary to scripture (Jn. 3:5; Rom. 8:11; 1Cor. 15:13-18, 45; Eph. 2:4-5; Col. 2:13; Ps. 6:5). Rather, it was Plato the philosopher who popularized the ancient lie concerning the immortal soul teaching (Gen. 3:4; cf. Jn. 8:44d; Ez. 18:4) throughout the Greek world during the 4th century B.C.

This false teaching was embraced very early by all the major Christian organizations and considered a fundamental Bible truth. Instead, the church taught the dead are not conscious, knowing nothing (Ecc. 9:5 cf. Ac. 2:29), do not praise the Lord as they are in a state of silence (Ps. 115:17) and waiting to be resurrected at a future date (Jb. 14:14; 17:13; cf. 1Cor. 15:20-22). Death is symbolized as a type of sleep because everyone who has died will eventually wake up in a resurrection (1Cor. 15:50-58; 1Thes. 4:14; Rev. 20:4-6, 12-13).

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor. 11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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