

1. **Introduction:** Job asked the question, *“If a man dies, shall he live again?”* (Job14:14)
 - ◆ Jesus answered Job’s question speaking to Martha as her brother Lazarus lay dead: *“Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”* (Jn. 11:25-26). “Do you?” “Do I?”
 - ◆ If we do, since everyone experiences mortal death (the body dies and returns to dust) we are affirming that something recognizable as “us” survives mortal death.
 - ◆ That something is the spiritual soul. It is immaterial but absolutely real. The body dies, the soul lives on. For a period after mortal death, the soul exists without a body.
 - ◆ A soul without a body is unnatural. God’s wonderful promise is that He will not leave souls in that state. On the Last Day, a believer’s soul will be united to a resurrection body.
 - ◆ Human beings in mortal life are a union of a physical body and a spiritual soul created in an image of God. The human spiritual soul is designed to remain in union with God.
 - ◆ Disrupting the “union of body and soul” or the “union of the soul with God” leads to catastrophic change called “death.”

2. **Three Categories of Death:** In the Bible there are 3 categories of human death. In all categories things are separated that God designed to remain together.
 - ◆ Sin brought death to humanity through disobedience. The three categories are **physical (or mortal) death, spiritual death, and eternal or second death.**
 - ◆ Genesis 2:15-17, *“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”*
 - ◆ This command was given to Adam before Eve was created. Later both were tempted and ate the forbidden fruit. Their downfall was desire to become more like God. They were told that eating the forbidden fruit would make them more like God even though God said no.
 - ◆ Their disobedience brought disaster. First came spiritual death for them and a curse on the natural world. Later come mortal death. If they never repented, eternal death would follow.
 - ◆ **(1.) Spiritual death** separates the soul from God. The separation of Adam and Eve’s souls from God was demonstrated when heard the voice of the Lord, and hid *“themselves from the presence of the LORD God.”* Their union with their loving Creator was broken.
 - ◆ **(2.) Mortal death** separates the soul from the body. The soul goes immediately to be with the Lord, and the body ceases to live biologically and returns to the earth.
 - ◆ When Adam and Eve “died spiritually,” that condition was heritable. Every descendant of Adam and Eve is born into the world spiritually dead, isolated from God.
 - ◆ Only God’s regenerating power can restore spiritual life. Nothing a person can do can cause God to regenerate them. He “quickens” because of His grace/mercy (Titus 3:5).

- ◆ Every person who has **not** been regenerated “in Christ” is spiritually dead. Ephesians 4:18 describes spiritual death as “being alienated (or separated) from the life of God.”
 - ◆ (3.) The “**second death**” is a final (and eternal) separation from God. Only being “in Christ” protects from the second death (Rev 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8).
3. **Body and Soul**: The relationship between soul and body cannot be fully comprehended, but we know it is a vital union in that the soul is the source of life for the body.
- ◆ The soul/body union is synergistic, each contributing to the capabilities of the other.
 - ◆ A person is a **subject** composed of body and soul. The soul animates the body. When the soul departs, the body becomes an **object**, no longer a subject. As an object, the body is subject to chemical, and physical laws. The body’s biological life ceases. The soul survives.
 - ◆ The content of a person’s soul is not observable except by God, but in mortal life the effects of soul activity are observable in personal words and deeds.
 - ◆ At justification the Holy Spirit indwells the soul. That indwelling continues through mortal life and all the way to glory.
 - ◆ God declares the soul’s great value. Redemption by Christ is of “body and soul.”
 - ◆ There is nothing a person can give in return for their soul. Christ alone could and did pay the necessary price to redeem believers’ souls.
 - ◆ WSC Q 37: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death? Answer: The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.
 - ◆ WQ 38: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection? Answer: At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.
4. **What is the Status of the Soul After Physical Death**: At mortal death, a person’s soul separates from their body and (Answer to Q 37) goes immediately to be with God. Biological life ceases and their body returns to the earth.
- ◆ 1 Corinthians 15:44, “*It (the mortal body) is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.*”
 - ◆ Is it possible a disembodied soul could be in union with some sort of spiritual body? We don’t know. We do know disembodied souls are pure spirits as are the angels.
 - ◆ The human soul plays a vital role in mortal life. It is also the part of a human person that survives mortal death. The soul contains the inner person and is recognizable as “us.”
 - ◆ The human soul contains consciousness and the source of “I.”
 - ◆ Though bodiless for an interval after mortal death, on the Last Day, believers’ souls will be united to a resurrection body recognizable as their own but greatly enhanced.
 - ◆ The resurrection body will have abilities the mortal body doesn’t have and will be free from all mortal ills. The interval without a body is over. Ultimate bliss has begun.

- ◆ From the description of the resurrected Christ, we have some notion of life in the resurrection body, but what about the life of the soul when it is without a body.
5. **The Intermediate State:** During the interval the soul is without a physical body, it is said to be in “the intermediate state.” Does the soul without a body have intellect, emotions, will and memory? Can it communicate? Will it recognize other souls known in mortal life?
- ◆ Is it without form like a vapor, or does it have some kind of form?
 - ◆ What continuity is there between the soul of mortal life and the intermediate-state soul?
6. **Comments on the Intermediate State Based on the book Immortality by Loraine Boettner (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 16th printing 1989).**
- ◆ In the disembodied intermediate state, our souls will be in the presence of and recognize our triune God, the angels, and those saints who have gone before us.
 - ◆ The Bible treats the subject of the immortality of the soul in much the same way as it treats the existence of God – that is, as a belief assumed as an undeniable postulate.
 - ◆ It takes for granted that the characteristics of our nature are permanent (*our “I” persists*), that we shall continue to possess intelligence, affection, conscience and will.
 - ◆ Every passage dealing with the future life assumes we shall be then as now, reverential and social beings, loving God and one another. This necessarily includes recognition, communion and fellowship with Christ, with the angels, and with the redeemed.” (p. 78)
 - ◆ The state into which the righteous enter at death is one of consciousness, holiness, and happiness, which the resurrection and judgment will augment and make permanent.
 - ◆ The mind loses none of its power or knowledge at the death of the body. On the contrary, it enters on a much higher plane of existence.
 - ◆ In the intermediate state without a body, believers have no physical-sense capabilities like those we use in mortal life. We don’t know what mechanisms will permit recognition and communication in the intermediate state, but there are sufficient biblical comments to assure us that in some manner we will recognize and communicate.
 - ◆ The first and immediate result is that the soul, freed from the limitations of earth and cleansed of the last vestiges of sin, finds its mental and spiritual faculties heightened and is more alive and active than it ever was before.” (p. 94)
 - ◆ (*I personally believe the Holy Spirit cleanses the mind of all sinful memories. Notice – mind not brain. The brain is in the grave but not the mind.*)
 - ◆ The intermediate state, while a state of freedom from sin and pain and a time of great personal advancement, is, nevertheless, in other respects a state of imperfection.
 - ◆ This (*incompleteness*) consists, first of all, in that the spirit is without a body, which for the human species is an abnormal condition.
 - ◆ The body, with its sense organs, enables persons to have contact the physical world.
 - ◆ In the disembodied state, it seems the soul has no instrument by which it can make contact with the physical world or communicate with individuals in the physical world.

- ◆ That *incompleteness of the intermediate state* includes the fact that the reward promised to the Lord's people is not given at mortal death but at the second coming of Christ which is set forth as the time for distributing rewards for the labors and self-denials in mortal life.
- ◆ The blessings received in the intermediate state, great as they may be, are to be regarded only as an earnest and foretaste of the good things to come." (p. 95)
- ◆ There are three "Stages of Life" not two as usually assumed. First, there is the stage from birth until death, which is life in the present world and in the natural body; second, life between death and the resurrection, in the intermediate state, which is life without the body; and third, life in the resurrection body, which is the final and eternal state."(p. 96).

7. **Paraphrase of Details Concerning Souls in Heaven and What They are Doing: (The Bible on the Life Hereafter,** William Hendriksen, Baker Book House, 1959).

- ◆ The redeemed between the moment of mortal death and that of the bodily resurrection are supremely happy in heaven, but their happiness is not yet complete.
- ◆ The ultimate glory is yet to come. They are not yet in possession of the new earth, which along with heaven is included in the promised inheritance.
- ◆ There are many respects in which there is a continuity between mortal life and life in heaven immediately after death (Jn 11:26; Rev 14:15) and between the intermediate state and the final state of glorification (Rev 7:9-17).
- ◆ In the intermediate state, the Lamb is the soul's Shepherd. The Lamb leads souls to springs of living water signifying the source of eternal life and salvation.
- ◆ The Lamb and His redeemed have eternal, uninterrupted fellowship with the Father. ***"For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes"*** (Rev. 7:17).
- ◆ The souls of the redeemed will rest from all life's competition, toil, sorrow, pain, mental anguish, and sin. These redeemed souls will see Christ's face (yes, souls are enabled to see and hear). They will hear glorious choruses and anthems described in Revelation.
- ◆ They will hear what all the other redeemed, the angels, and Christ have to tell them.
- ◆ They will do a great variety of work as willing service. If you think souls without bodies cannot perform service, think about angels – pure spirits – sent out by God to do service.
- ◆ Souls rejoice, truly living, not as shadows, but living and rejoicing in an abundant, glorious fellowship with Christ and His redeemed. They reign, sharing with Christ in His royal glory. Whatever Christ has, He shares with them (Rev. 3:12; 3:21; 4:4; etc.).
- ◆ Scripture rejects the idea of communication between souls in the intermediate state and the mortal world. One seeming exception is at Jesus' transfiguration when Peter, James, and John see Moses and Elijah appearing and talking with Jesus.

8. **What is Next:** January 15, 2023, begins a new trimester. At that time we begin a new study of the Gospel of Mark. Certain themes from the ministry of Jesus will be emphasized.