



Introduction:

There is a lot of confusion about what happens to us after death. The Bible is clear that there are only **two options** for where you go when you die: Heaven or Hell. The Bible also makes it clear that you get to determine where you go when you die. It's up to you!!!

Heaven

- Heaven is most certainly a real place.
- No verses give us a geographical location.
- Heaven is where God is.
- Heaven is a place of fellowship and eternal joy.
- The **first heaven** is most frequently referred to in the Old Testament as the “**sky**” or the “firmament.” This is the heaven that contains clouds, the area that birds fly through.
- The **second heaven** is outer space, which is the place of the stars, and planets. (**Genesis 1:14-18**)
- The **third heaven**, the location of which is not revealed, is the **dwelling place of God**.

- Heaven is also the destination of the Saints who died trusting God's promise of the Redeemer (**Ephesians 4:8**). Whoever believes in Christ shall never perish but have eternal life (**John 3:16**).
- Heaven is a place of "no more." There will be **no more tears**, **no more pain**, and **no more sorrow** (**Revelation 21:4**). There will be **no more separation** because death will be conquered (**Revelation 20:6**).
- The best thing about heaven is the presence of our Lord and Savior (**1 John 3:2**). We will be face to face with the Lamb of God who loved us and sacrificed Himself so that we can enjoy His presence in heaven for eternity.

Hell

- Hell is a place of **separation** and **punishment**.
- More people believe in the existence of heaven than believe in the existence of hell.
- According to the Bible, hell is just as real as heaven.
- Hell is a real place to where the **wicked/unbelieving** are sent after death.
- The punishment of the wicked dead in hell is described throughout Scripture as "**eternal fire**" (**Matthew 25:41**)

Description of hell

- "**Unquenchable fire**" (**Matthew 3:12**)
 - "**Shame and everlasting contempt**" (**Daniel 12:2**)
 - a place where "**the fire is not quenched**" (**Mark 9:44-49**)
 - a place of "**torment**" and "**fire**" (**Luke 16:23-24**)
 - "**Everlasting destruction**" (**2 Thessalonians 1:9**)
 - a place where "**the smoke of torment rises forever and ever**" (**Revelation 14:10-11**)
 - "**lake of burning sulfur**" where the wicked are "tormented day and night forever and ever" (**Revelation 20:10**).
-
- Some believe after death, everyone "**SLEEPS**" until final judgement, after which all will be sent to heaven or hell.
 - Others believe that at the moment of death, people are **instantly judged** and sent to their eternal destinations.

- Others claim that when people die, their souls/spirits are sent to a “Temporary” heaven or hell, to await the final resurrection, the final judgement, and then the finality of their eternal destination?

1. Which one do you believe? Or is that important?

2. What does the Bible say happens after death?

Believers: Souls/Spirits are taken to heaven because their sins are forgiven by having received Jesus Christ as savior. How do I know that? (John 3:16, 18, 36)

- If our soul and spirit is taken to heaven as soon as we die, who’s at the funeral?
- For believers, death is to be away from the body and at HOME with the lord.

- (2 Corinthians 5:6–8)

⁶Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. ⁷For we live by faith, not by sight. ⁸We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

- If believers go to be with Christ immediately after death, what is the purpose of the resurrection? (1 Cor 15:50-54), (1 Thess 4:13-17) Describe believers being resurrected and given glorified bodies.

- (1 Corinthians 15:50–54)

⁵⁰I declare to you, brothers, and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed ⁵²in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

- (1 Thessalonians 4:13–17)

Believers Who Have Died

¹³ Brothers and sisters, **we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death**, so that you **do not grieve like the rest of mankind**, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and **so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him**.

¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, **will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep**. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and **the dead in Christ will rise first**. ¹⁷ **After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever.**

Answer: The soul/Spirit of believers go to be with Christ immediately after death, the **PHYSICAL BODY** remains in the grave "**SLEEPING**." At the resurrection of believers, the physical body is resurrected, glorified, and then reunited with the Soul/Spirit. This reunited and glorified body-soul/spirit will be the possession of the believers for eternity in the new heavens and new earth. **(Rev 21:22)**

Unbelievers: Those who do not receive Jesus Christ as Savior. Death means **EVERLASTING** punishment.

- Similar to the destiny of believers, unbelievers also are sent **immediately** to a temporary holding place, to await their final resurrection, judgement, and eternal destiny.

(Luke 16:22-23) Describe the rich man being tormented **immediately** after death.

- **(Luke 16:22-23)**

²² "The time came when the beggar died, and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ **In Hades**, where **he was in torment**, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

(Rev. 20:11-15) Describe all the unbelieving dead being resurrected, **judged at the great white throne**, and then being cast into the lake of fire.

- **(Revelation 20:11-15)**

The Judgment of the Dead

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹² And I saw the **dead, great and small, standing before the throne**, and books were opened. Another book was opened, **which is the book of life**. **The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.** ¹³ **The sea gave up the dead that**

were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done.¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.¹⁵ Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

(2nd Death) This is for those who have rejected Christ. It's not a place that believers in Christ should fear. (REV 20:6), (Rev 20:14-15) The second death is a reference to the Lake of fire where those who are separated from God by their sin will dwell for **Eternity**. This judgement was recorded in scripture as a **warning to unbelievers** to **seek the salvation that only Jesus Christ can provide**. **This Judgement should also challenge believers to share their faith**. There is a big difference between the final destinations of those who know Christ and those who do not!!!

- So, Unbelievers are not sent to hell (**The lake of Fire**) immediately after death, **but in a temporary realm of judgement and condemnation**. However, even though unbelievers are not instantly sent to the lake of fire, their immediate fate after death is not a **PLEASANT ONE**. The rich man cried out, I am in agony in this fire.

- **(Luke 16:24)**

24 So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because **I am in agony in this fire**.

- Therefore, after death, a person resides in a **"TEMPORARY"** heaven or hell.
- After this **"TEMPORARY REALM"** at the final resurrection, **a Person's eternal destiny will not change**. The precise **"LOCATION"** of that eternal destiny is what changes
- Believers will be granted entrance into the new heaven and new earth.

- **(Revelation 21:1)**

A New Heaven and a New Earth

21 Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

- Unbelievers will be sent to the Lake of fire. **(Rev 20:11-15)**

Conclusion:

These are the final **ETERNAL DESTINATIONS** of all people based on whether they believed and trusted in Jesus Christ alone for Salvation.

- **(Matthew 25:46)**

⁴⁶ “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

- **(John 3:36)**

³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them.