

If I Should Die

The ratio of people living in this world who will die is 1 to 1. No one escapes. We are all terminal. We all have a life fuse that is lit when we are born. At some point it will go out. For some it will be sooner rather than later . . . but everyone's fuse will go out, we just don't know when. The question then is, "Where will I spend eternity? How can I be prepared for what I will face after I die?" The average person thinks about his own death 4 times a week. Please take a minute and read through this paper. It will be the most important thing you will ever do. Let's see what the Bible says . . .

The Dilemma

The dilemma that faces each of us is simple – God is holy and we are sinful, sinful because we have disobeyed God's law and fall far short of God's perfect standard, and therefore we are separated from God.

The Bible says 3 things about us:

1. We all come into this world separated from God. Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death . . ." The consequence (wages) for my sin is death, both spiritual and physical. Spiritual death means I am separated from God because of my sin. Physical death means I will be separated from this life because of my sin. In fact because of our sin & separation from God we are children of God's wrath, meaning that God's anger is continually toward us. Ephesians 2:3 "and we were by nature children of wrath,"

2. We all have sinned (Romans 3:23) "for all have sinned and fall short of God's standard of perfection", You say - "But really, I don't sin that much" But the Bible says if we would only sin once in our entire life we are as guilty as if we had committed every sin - Why? Because God's standard is absolute perfection. James 2:10 "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all."

3. We all will face judgment because of our sin (Heb. 9:27). "it is appointed unto man once to die and then comes the judgment," The only way you will ever escape God's judgment is by the removal of the penalty for your sin. In John 5:24 Jesus says, "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."

The penalty for your sin is going to have to be paid for – either by you suffering the penalty for your sin for all of eternity, or by you trusting and believing in Christ, that He paid for your sin on the cross by His death . . . but it will have to be paid for.

To make the dilemma even worse - No religion can save you, no church can save you, no ritual or tradition can save you, baptism cannot save you, and you can't save yourself. Only God through His Son Jesus Christ can save you. And that's what the Bible is saying in John 11:25 - **Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies."**

In this verse Jesus makes it very clear how you can know for sure when you die that you will go to Heaven and have eternal life. For Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." **He** is the one who will raise you from the dead and **He** is the one who can give you eternal life.

This is no ordinary person speaking here, this is the Son of God (John 10:30; 14:9). He proved He was the Son of God by the sinless life He lived (2 Cor. 5:21), the miracles He performed and the prophecies He fulfilled. That is why He could say in John 14:6 "I am the way, the truth, and the life, **no man** comes to the Father except through me"

So how do we enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ? – look at the next phrase – "he who believes in me". One of the best known Bible verses is John 3:16 – "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever **believes in Me** should not perish but have eternal life." It is not enough to know about Christ – to have some kind of intellectual knowledge about Him – but the word "believe" here means to place your 100% trust in Him and what He has done for you.

So I face 2 problems that must be overcome if I am going to receive eternal life and live forever in Heaven: 1. I must be forgiven of my sin, and 2. my life must be credited with a perfection as though I had never sinned.

The Good News

Here's the good news - Jesus Christ took care of both problems – 1. He died on the cross for the forgiveness of your sin, and 2. He lived a perfect life.

If I will totally trust Him, place my faith in Him for what He has done by dying on the cross for me, I will receive forgiveness for my sin, and His perfect life that He lived will be credited to my life. 2 Cor 5:21 “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

But You May Say . . .

1. “I’m a good person, my good outweighs my bad.” But the fact of the matter is – God does not grade on a curve. You are either 100% perfect or you fail. In fact in the book of Isaiah it says that all of my good works are as worthless as dirty rags(Is. 64:6) – meaning they count for nothing toward my salvation. Eph. 2:8,9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; **not as a result of works**, so that no one may boast.”

2. “I am a religious person.” Again we’re not talking about a religion here but a relationship with God’s Son – Jesus Christ. No religion, no church is going to get you into Heaven – only Jesus Christ. Listen to the Bible in **1 John 5:11-14** - “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and **this life is in His Son**. 12 He who has the Son has eternal life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have eternal life. 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may **know** that you have eternal life.” Notice it does not say “so that you may hope” but rather “that you may know”. You can have the assurance of your salvation **today**.

3. “I go to church every Sunday, doesn’t that make me a Christian?” That no more makes you a Christian than standing in a garage makes you a car. It is not the external around you, but what has happened to you internally as you trust Christ and He transforms your life from within.

4. “I’ve been baptized .” Nowhere in the Bible does it say that by being baptized you receive eternal life. Baptism comes **after** you receive salvation by trusting Christ. Baptism is an outward profession that inwardly you now belong to Jesus Christ.

5. “I was born in a Christian family?” That’s great you were born in a Christian family. It’s wonderful that your parents knew Christ as Savior, but God has no spiritual grandchildren. Everyone, by themselves, individually, has to become a child of God. John 1: 12 says “ But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God,”

So what must I do?

- **Declare spiritual bankruptcy.** That means you are saying to God that you have nothing to contribute to your salvation. You are trusting in Christ **alone**, 100%, for your salvation.
- **You must repent of your sin** – repentance simply means you turn from your sin. You turn from how you have been living, and you turn to now follow Christ.
- **You must place your total trust in Christ** – the sinless life that He lived, His death on the cross, His burial, and His resurrection from the dead.
- **You need to ask God to save you.** And if you are sincere, He will. He will forgive you of all your sin and he will credit you with the perfect life of His Son.

You can have the assurance of your salvation by trusting Christ. If you should die today, you can know that you would go immediately into the presence of God. I urge you to do it today for Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; **he who believes in Me will live even if he dies.**"