

ANTHROPOLOGY (12)

Scripturally speaking, there are three types of death:

Type #1 - There is spiritual death.

Spiritual death means that every person is born spiritually separated from God because of his sin. Many passages of Scripture make it clear that every human being is spiritually dead and is, in fact, physically born in this condition (Eph. 2:1-5; Rom. 3:10-18). It is precisely this reason why physical birth is not enough to make one right with God and why a person must be “born again.” Although a person is physically alive, he is spiritually dead and thus there is the need to be “born again” (John 3:1-8).

Type #2 - There is physical death.

As we have previously stated, at physical death the immaterial part of a person is separated from the material part of a person. II Corinthians 5:1-8 makes it very clear that at death, the immaterial part of a person is separated from the material part of a person.

Type #3 - There is eternal death.

In eternal death, the person is separated from God forever in eternal torment. Several passages speak of eternal condemnation: John 3:18, 36; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:8.

As pertaining to the different types of death:

1. For spiritual death, there is a cure = salvation !
2. For physical death, there is a cure = resurrection !
3. For eternal death, there is **NO** cure = damnation !

One obvious question that must be considered when dealing with the subject of death is the question of “Why”? Why do people die and why do they have to die? Any form of anthropology that is true to facts must deal with this subject for this is clearly one that is connected to every human being.

The answer to this important question is clearly found in Romans 5:12 (Compare Gen. 2:17). It is clear from these passages that death is a penalty for sin.

Dr. C.I. Scofield writes:

“The first sin wrought the moral ruin of the race. The demonstration is simple. 1) Death is universal (vv. 12, 13); all die—little children, moral people, and religious people equally with the depraved. For a universal state there must be a universal cause; that cause is a state of universal sin” (NASV, p. 1594).

The proof and evidence that every person needs to be saved is that every person will physically die. The reality of the need for salvation is established by the reality of death.

ANTHROPOLOGY (13)

The Bible teaches that there are two specific groups of people who will not face physical death:

(Group #1) - Those who are alive at the Rapture . I Thess. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:51-53

(Group #2) - Those who are alive at the Second Coming. Mt. 24:29-31

One of the great misconceptions which is often times stated at funerals is that the grave is the “final resting place” of a person. The Bible makes it clear that all bodies will be raised from the dead (John 5:26-29; Acts 24:15; Rev. 20:13).

This reality is particularly exciting for the believer in Jesus Christ and we do have some biblical information as to what our resurrected bodies will be like:

(Fact #1) - Our resurrected bodies will be Christ-like . Phil. 3:20-21; I John 3:2

(Fact #2) - Our resurrected bodies will be tangible . John 20:26-28; Lk. 24:36-42;
Acts 10:39-41

(Fact #3) - Our resurrected bodies will be glorious . Mt. 17:1-3; Rom. 8:18.

(Fact #4) - Our resurrected bodies will be recognizable . Mt. 17:3-4

(Fact #5) - Our resurrected bodies will be powerful . Jn. 20:11-14, 19-20, 26-27

One central passage that teaches us much concerning the resurrection of the body is I Cor. 15:35-53 . This passage makes it very clear that God not only has the power to raise the body, but also very pointedly describes information regarding the new body of a believer.

To understand this important passage (**I Corinthians 15:35-53**) of Scripture, there are six anthropological observations we want to make:

(Observation #1) - The word “sown” refers to dying and burying . 15:36-37, 42-44

(Observation #2) - The word “sleep” refers to lack of life in the body. 15:51

(Observation #3) - The word “perishable” refers to a body that can decay . 15:42, 53

(Observation #4) - The word “imperishable” refers to a body that cannot decay . 15:42, 53

(Observation #5) - The word “mortal” refers to a body that can die . 15:53

(Observation #6) - The word “immortality” refers to a body that cannot die . 15:53

The basic idea of mortality is that of a body which is capable of suffering a mortal wound. These terms are not speaking of the soul, but specifically deal with the resurrection of the physical body. What Paul is saying is that the believer will someday have a physical body that will be raised from the dead by the God who created all forms of life. This new body will never decay or die. The old body may decay and turn to ashes and dust, but the new, glorified body will never decay or die. There are those who do not understand this important doctrine and as a result they place far too much emphasis on our present body. The Apostle Paul minimized his temporal body, referring to it as a tent or a house about to be torn down (II Cor. 5:1-2). Paul certainly believed in glorifying God while in our present bodies (I Cor. 6:19-20), but he longed for the day when he could get out of his temporal body and go home to be with the Lord.