

# What Happens When We Die?

Summary of Tony Evans' Luke 16:19-31 Sermon  
from his series on "Prophecy and Our World View"  
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I'm going to share with you three things about death so hopefully you will not only understand it but also be able to deal with it. The first thing is that death is inevitable. All of us will die unless Christ returns before we die. God knows where to find you. No one will escape death. Heb. 9:27 says "it is appointed unto man once to die." In case you did not know this, you die by appointment. God knows when you will die. This is one appointment you will not miss or be late for.

Secondly, what is death? I have not come today to tell you what everyone else thinks. Speculation is one thing, but revelation is something else. God has not been silent about death. In the Bible death means separation, not cessation (not the stopping of something). God told Adam and Eve "On the day that you eat of this fruit you shall surely die." But on the day they ate of the fruit, they did not die. But God was talking about the **first kind of death** – *Spiritual Death* – which means separation from fellowship with God. They were removed from the garden the day they ate the forbidden fruit. Even though they were physically alive, they were spiritually separated and God called that "death." But because of their sin, enters **the second kind of death** – *physical death* – which is where the soul is separated from the body. Your soul is you; you are your soul; you are not your body. Your body is just a holding tank for your soul. Your mind, your will, your emotions and your consciousness – all that makes up your soul. At the moment you physically die, your soul leaves the body. It separates. The shell remains to deteriorate and disintegrate until the new body is given.

The **third kind of death** is *eternal death* – which is eternal separation from God. Physical death does not mean the end of life – it just means that a separation has occurred. So it is technically incorrect to say that when a person dies that their life is over. Their life has just begun. Death lets you escape time and exits you into one of two different destinies – you choose – but you only have two choices. That's it, there is no third choice. Everyone will enter one or the other eternal destinies. We are told in Luke 16:22 that the rich man and the poor man died and were buried. The poor man was taken away by angels to Abraham's bosom. Heb. 1:14 indicates that every believer has an angel assigned to them and one of the jobs of your angel when you die is to escort your soul into paradise – the place of rest and divine provision. You have a personal escort as a believer into the very presence of God.

The rich man dies and opens his eyes in Hades and he can see and recognize the poor man – Lazarus and Abraham and he knows who they are. He also can speak and feel pain. (Whatever is wrong with you now – your retained sinful nature – will remain with you throughout eternity). There is no Alzheimer's in hell; you'll remember your past. Apparently those in hell will be able to see those in heaven but never be able to go there nor be able to touch, hug or talk to those who are there. We will pass into eternity in a conscious state. You are the same person in eternity as you are now because it is your soul that has gone there and you have been created with a form that fits that soul.

Hades is like the county jail where a prisoner is waiting to go to federal prison. It is the interim location until permanency has been declared. Revelation tells us that Hades, the interim, will be cast into the Lake of Fire – the permanent place. This issue is the most important issue in your life because it has to do with forever. And you can only make this decision in this life, you cannot make it in the next. The split second that life ends, is the split second you enter into eternity.

If you are a believer today, the only hell you will experience is the hell you get in this life. If you are not a believer today, the only heaven you are going to experience is the heaven you get in this life. But as long as you are still alive, you have a choice of your eternal destiny. God will allow you to choose. You can choose Him or Not. But the choice is yours and you get to make it. But you don't know when time will run out. If you know Christ, death is an irritant. If you don't know Christ, death is a disaster waiting to happen and you don't know when. The Bible does not leave us with speculation or guess work about what happens when we die. There is a clear definitive statement by the Creator of Life about death and the after-life. Luke 16 summarizes it for us – death is merely a conjunction, it's not a conclusion. What a person does with Christ will determine their eternal state.