

The million dollar question: where will you go when you die? Everyone has an opinion on the subject. Some say Heaven or Hell, or even multiple levels of Heaven, some say purgatory, some say paradise on earth or destruction, some say nirvana, or enlightenment, and some say nothing. But SOMETHING is true about eternity, and although all these ideas could be wrong, there is no way they could all be right. You can be sure that all of us will be dead a lot longer than we will be alive, so it's a good thing to think about now. After all, none of us are promised tomorrow<sup>1</sup>.

The Bible says something specific is true about eternity. It says it is appointed unto men once to die, and after that, the judgment<sup>2</sup>. But most people don't think much about judgment very often, because they figure that if heaven exists, they are good enough to get in on their own merits<sup>3</sup>. Does that describe you? Do you think you are good enough to go to heaven? Are you sure you are ready to stand before God?

Listen to what the Bible says about God. It says He is perfect and holy<sup>4</sup>. It says He hates sin and that His eyes are too pure to look on evil<sup>5</sup>. It says He is angry with the wicked every day<sup>6</sup>. And it says that He is a just judge who must punish moral crimes, which the Bible calls sin<sup>7</sup>. Have you committed any moral crimes?

Take a moment to look at the Ten Commandments<sup>8</sup>. God gave them to us to act like a mirror, giving us a true reflection of how we compare with His perfect standard, provided we will look with a tender conscience. So ask yourself, have you ever told a lie? Have you ever stolen something, even if it's small? Have you ever used God's name lightly or disrespectfully, or even in place of a curse word? God says that all thieves and liars will not inherit the kingdom of God<sup>9</sup>, but will have their part in the lake of fire<sup>10</sup>, and that He will not hold him guiltless who misuses His name<sup>11</sup>. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

But God will not only look at our actions. He even knows our thought life<sup>12</sup>. Every impure thought and desire that crosses your mind is known to Him. Jesus said that anyone who looks with lust has committed adultery<sup>13</sup>, and no adulterer will inherit the kingdom of God. He said that anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and that no murderer has eternal life in him<sup>14</sup>. God also said that anyone who breaks even one commandment is guilty of breaking them all<sup>15</sup>, and like hitting a mirror with a hammer, it is impossible to break only a small piece of his law while leaving the rest intact. Jesus said to be perfect, as His heavenly father is perfect, and none of us comes close.

So that's our problem. God is a just judge who must punish moral crimes, and by God's standard each and every one of us has committed more sins than we could count. The Bible says God will do right, and justice must be satisfied, so if we get what we deserve, we will end up in hell. But God is not only a just judge, but a loving father<sup>16</sup>. Being rich in mercy<sup>17</sup>, and abounding in steadfast love<sup>18</sup>, He calls His children to him. But the bible doesn't just say that God is love, but tells us how God showed both His love<sup>19</sup> and His justice, not by ignoring our sins but by paying for them. God demonstrated His love in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us<sup>20</sup>. 2000 years ago Jesus Christ, who was fully God and fully man<sup>21</sup>, and without sin<sup>22</sup>, came to earth, lived a perfect life, and then died a perfect death to pay the fine we couldn't pay. When He was on the cross, it wasn't just the nails He suffered from, but the wrath of God<sup>23</sup>. God's anger and hatred of sin was poured out on Jesus Christ so it wouldn't have to be poured out on us<sup>24</sup>. Then Jesus rose on the third day, proving His power over death<sup>25</sup>, and He sat down at the right hand of God<sup>26</sup> as our advocate<sup>27</sup>, our lawyer for the Day of Judgment. God said there is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood<sup>28</sup>, and in His love, He was willing to shed His own son's blood so that you could be forgiven. Jesus Christ, the creator, sustainer and Lord of all that exists<sup>29</sup>, humbled Himself, took on human flesh, and chose to die for the sin of His creation. No other love story in history even comes close. (Continued on other side)