

**Bible
Teachings
Series II**

*A self-study
course on how
God gives us
eternal life*



Life After Death

Life After Death

A self-study course on
how God gives us eternal life



Multi-Language Publications

Bringing the Written Word to the World

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Getting Started

In this book you will learn about life after death. That may sound like a pretty big topic to study in a small book. It is! So we are going to limit ourselves a little bit. We are going to look at what life and death are, and what some people believe about life after death. Most important, we are going to look at what God teaches us about life after death. We will do this by studying his Word, the Bible.

Each of the five chapters begins with a list of goals marked by a small star (*). These goals tell you what you will be learning in that chapter. Within each chapter there are some questions for you to answer. At the end of the chapter there is a short test. If you go back to the beginning of the chapter and check the goals, (*), you will see that you learned about those goals in the chapter.

After each set of questions, and after each chapter test, you will see a page number where you can find the correct answers to those questions. Check each of your answers and correct them if necessary.

At the end of the book is a final test. Before you take the test, go back and review the chapter tests. When you complete the final test, you can either turn it in to the person who gave you this book or mail it to the address found on the back cover.

May God help you as you learn more about life after death. May he bless your study!



Jesus speaks to the woman at a well in Samaria.



Chapter One

What is Life?

In some ways, that question can be very simple to answer. Look in the mirror: the fact that you can see yourself moving and your eyes blinking shows that you are alive! The very fact that you are able to read this book shows that you are alive!

But is “life” limited to what we can see and touch? Do we only know we are alive because we can

think? Some people ask hard questions like, “What is the *meaning* of life?” Can we really answer questions like that?

In this chapter we will try to come up with a basic definition of *true* life. We will look at what some people believe life is. We will also look at what God says in the Bible about life. When we do that we will especially look at what God wants for us in this life (during our time on earth).

At the end of this chapter you will be able

- * to know some of the false ideas people have about life;
- * to understand what God’s definition of life is; and
- * to see that God’s definition of life is much better than anyone else’s!

There was once a farmer who was very rich. One year his fields produced a great crop. His crop was so great he did not have room to store all the grain. So he decided he would build bigger barns. He was so happy with his crops and with himself he

thought, “Next year, I really do not have to work very hard. I can sit back, relax, and take life easy.”

This is part of a story Jesus told when he was talking about what true life is. (You can read the whole story in Luke 12:16-21). We know people like the farmer in the story, do we not? The kind who want to sit around and take life easy. The kind of people who are only interested in getting all they can out of life while they have the chance. The kind who think that this life is all there is, so we need to make the most of it!

But if life is only about getting what we can out of it, will we ever be truly happy? If we somehow could get \$100,000, would not \$200,000 sound even better? If we get a bigger house than what we had before, would we not start wanting an even bigger house? Will we ever be happy with life if we only think about getting more and more things? Jesus answers this question for us in Luke 12:15 – “Watch out! Be on your guard against wanting to have more and more things. Life is not made up of how much a person has.”

1. Many people think _____ is only about getting more and more things.
2. Many people think the purpose of life is to make _____ happy.
3. Jesus says that life is not about what we _____.

(Check your answers on page 8)

Instead of believing that life is all about what we have, there are some people who believe life has no real meaning at all! Many of these people believe that some “god” or some “power” created the earth, people, and everything else as a big joke. They picture this “god” sitting in the skies having one laugh after another at us as we make mistake after mistake.

Other people believe that what we *think* is real is *not* real. Take pain, for example. When is the last time something fell on your toe or dropped on your head? Or, you twisted an ankle? It hurt, did it not? But some people believe that pain is all in your mind. They believe that it is an illusion, something only your mind creates. “Life” is only what you

believe it is. And so life has no real meaning in their minds.

Sadly, still others end up becoming very depressed and sad because they believe life has no true meaning. "After all," they think, "if life has no meaning, what is the point? If my life does not matter to anyone, if I cannot make any real difference in this world, what does it matter if I am here?"

4. Some people believe life has no _____.
5. Some people believe any pain we suffer is not _____.
6. Some people become very _____ because they believe their life has no meaning.

(Check your answers on page 8)

So what is life all about? The best answers to this question come from the one who created life: God himself!

God created the whole world. The last and most important things God created before he rested

were two people, Adam and Eve, a man and a woman. In fact, when God created these people he put them in charge of the whole world! To the first people he said, “Fill the earth and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the waters and the birds of the air. Rule over every living creature that moves on the ground” (Genesis 1:28).

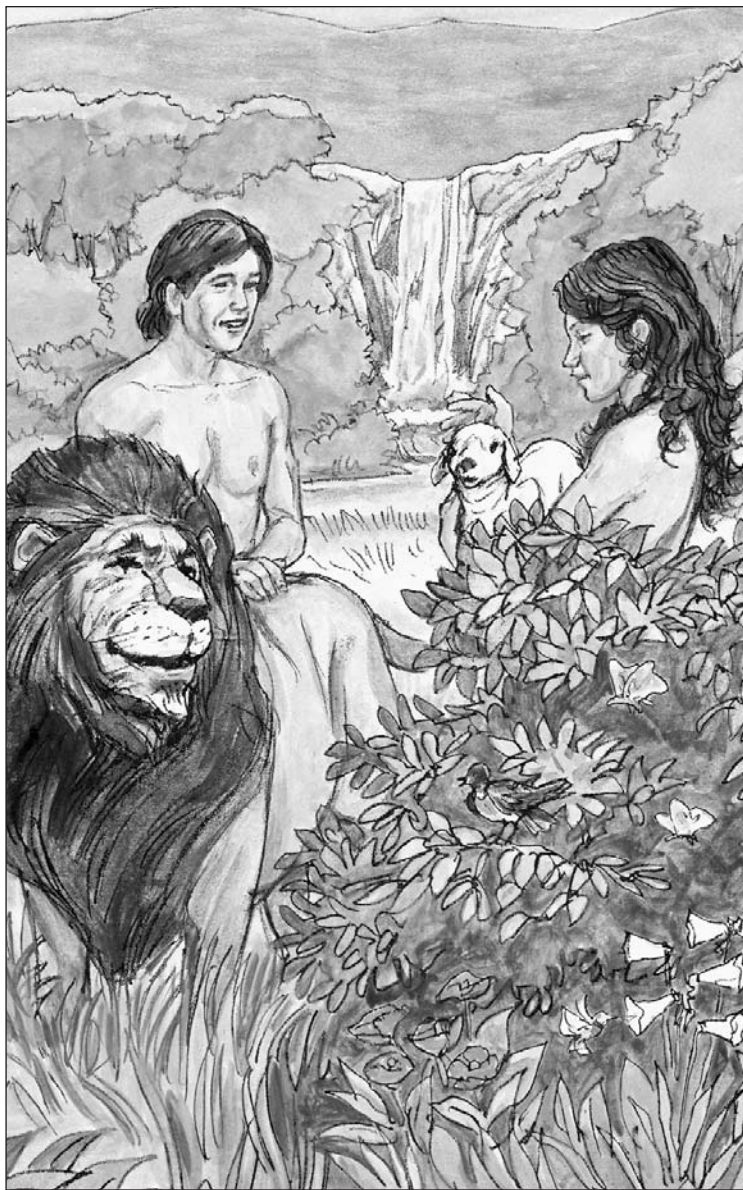
It is even more important that God created people in a perfect relationship with him. Just think of it! Adam and Eve did not have to pray to a God they could not see – they talked face-to-face with him just like you talk to the person next door to your home. Adam and Eve never wondered whether God existed or if he cared about them – God spoke directly to them and showed them he loved them.

It is clear that from the very beginning God gave life meaning. He loved all people and wanted us to be his dear children who loved him back. He provided us with a wonderful world to live in. He



Answers from page 6: 1. life; 2. themselves; 3. have.

Answers from page 7: 4. meaning; 5. real; 6. depressed or sad.



God creates Adam and Eve as our first parents.

gave us everything we would ever need. He planned for us to live forever with him in this beautiful and perfect world. He was the perfect Father who made us his perfect children. God's plan from the beginning was that our life with him would be absolutely perfect.

Does not this sound better than what many people believe "life" is? When God created the world, people did not have to worry about how much "stuff" they had. The entire world was theirs! God created the world so that man and woman could walk and talk with their Creator. Life was enjoyable. It was filled with meaning and purpose.

7. When God created the world, he put _____ and _____ in charge.

8. When God created people, the relationship between God and people was _____.

9. God gives life _____.

(Check your answers on page 12)

Chapter Summary

What is life all about? That is probably a question we all have asked at some time. As people try to find meaning in life, they come up with all kinds of answers. Some people believe life is all about getting more and more “stuff.” They live by the motto, “He who dies with the most possessions wins!” Some people do not really think life has much meaning. They try to create some meaning for their own life, or they give up hope.

But God’s way of looking at things is different. God created life in the first place! He not only created the whole world, he created the first two people. He created them to be in a perfect and loving relationship with him. He gave them all they needed so they would not have to worry about how to get more “stuff.” He made them as the most special part of his visible creation. God intended for all of us to have this perfect and loving relationship with him.

Chapter One Test

1. Many people think _____ is only about getting more and more things.
2. Many people think the purpose of life is to make _____ happy.
3. Jesus says that life is not about what we _____.
4. Some people believe life has no _____.
5. Some people believe any pain we suffer is not _____.
6. Some people become very _____ because they believe their life has no meaning.
7. When God created the world, he put _____ and _____ in charge.
8. When God created people, the relationship between God and people was _____.

(Check your answers on page 67)



Answers from page 10: 7. Adam & Eve; 8. perfect; 9. meaning.



Chapter Two

What Is Death?

Think about the last time you went to a funeral. Undertakers work so hard at making the dead person look “natural.” And as you look at the person lying in the coffin, maybe it is easy to think of that person simply being asleep, since he or she looks so peaceful.

Is death really all that bad? Is it not more like a really long nap from which we do not wake up?

Is it not a good way to escape from whatever problems we have right now? What is death anyway?

Let us take a brief look at death in this chapter. Just as we saw when we looked at “life,” there are different ideas about what “death” is. We will look at how some people have incorrect or wrong views about death. We will also see that in many ways death is something terrible.

When you finish this chapter you will be able

- * to understand that “glamorized” ideas about death are false;
- * to know that God did not intend people to die; and
- * to see that death, for someone who does not believe in God, *is* a terrible thing!

Maybe you have heard the story of “Romeo and Juliet.” It is a story about two young people who were very much in love. But their parents did not approve of their relationship. Romeo and Juliet were not allowed to see each other.

Secretly they would meet and they made plans to run away together. But Juliet's parents had decided she would marry another man. So Juliet took a drug that caused her to appear dead. The plan was that her family would bury her, Romeo could rescue her from the burial vault, and they would run away together. But when Romeo found Juliet, he believed she was really dead. So he took poison and killed himself. When Juliet awoke and found Romeo dead, she also killed herself (for real, this time).

It is not a very happy ending. But many think of this story as being a great "love story." And shouldn't they? After all, these two young people in love were willing to die, because they loved each other so much!

But what did Romeo and Juliet gain by killing themselves? By showing their love for each other in this way, they simply ended up dead.

We see similar ideas about death in our lives. A hero is shown to be so dedicated to his cause that he is willing to die fighting hard, even though he knows it will cost him his life. But the hero still ends up dead!

1. Romeo and Juliet were willing to _____ because they loved each other.
2. Romeo and Juliet simply ended up _____.
3. Sometimes in life the hero ends up _____.

(Check your answers on page 19)

At times we start to believe everything we read and see about death. We start to believe that death is not all that bad. (Note: We will see later in this book that death really *isn't* that bad for the Christian!) We see death all around us in our lives so that we lose the sense of how awful it is.

Remember from Chapter One that God created people to live forever. God did not create

death. There was no death in the world until Adam and Eve, the first people, sinned against God. God had told Adam and Eve that they could eat fruit from any tree *except* for one. He told them that if they ate fruit from that one tree, they would die. And what happened? That is right – they ate from that one tree! (You can read the whole story in Genesis chapter 3.)

Now, Adam and Eve did not fall down dead on the spot. Many years later their bodies would finally wear out and they would die. But for the moment they suffered the worst effect of sin, a spiritual death by which they were separated from God, their loving father. They were afraid to be around him anymore and tried to hide. Instead of thinking of God as their kind father, they started thinking of him as their mean and angry judge.

From then on every person who has been born has to die someday. And before we die, we suffer many other bad effects of that first sin against God. We get sick. We have pain of all



Jesus speaks to Martha at Lazarus' grave.

kinds. We get cancer. We have heart attacks. We break bones. We get cut.

Again, this is not what God wanted for us in the first place. He loves us and only wants us to be with him. Just think – if Adam and Eve had not sinned, we would live forever in a perfect relationship with God! There would never be any trouble or pain or death in our lives at all.

4. Sometimes we begin to think death is not all that _____.
5. God did not create _____.
6. After Adam and Eve sinned, they saw God as their _____ instead of their loving Father.

(Check your answers on page 22)



Answers from page 16: 1. die; 2. dead; 3. dead.

But because Adam and Eve did sin, the ugliness of death is now real. Death takes away hope. Death can be tragic or terrible. Death makes us sad, especially when someone close to us dies.

This is true especially for people who do not believe that Jesus is their Savior from sin and death. People who do not believe that Jesus died on the cross to take away their sin can only see death as a tragic end. Death brings an end to all hope.

But for us who believe Jesus *is* our Savior, is death the end of all hope? We will see the answer to this question coming up in the next chapter. (Hint: Christians do not see death the same way non-Christians do!)

7. Adam and Eve's sin made death _____.

8. In many ways, death takes away _____.

(Check your answers on page 22)

Chapter Summary

What is death all about? Because we are alive right now, and because we know we will not live forever, that is a question we have to think about.

Some people believe that death is not all that bad. Books sometimes show people dying and being better off dead. But God's plan for us when he created us was that we would never die! Death is a result that God never wanted to happen. It is a result of sin.

And because of sin we all must die someday. If we do not believe that Jesus saved us from sin, this fact brings fear to our hearts. Even if we do believe Jesus is our Savior, we may still be afraid of dying.

But death is not the end!

Chapter Two Test

1. Romeo and Juliet were willing to _____ because they loved each other.
2. Romeo and Juliet simply ended up _____.
3. Sometimes in life the hero ends up _____.
4. Sometimes we begin to think death is not all that _____.
5. God did not create _____.
6. After Adam and Eve sinned, they saw God as their _____ instead of their loving Father.
7. Adam and Eve's sin made death _____.
8. In many ways, death takes away _____.

(Check your answers on page 67)



Answers from page 19: 4. bad; 5. death; 6. judge.
Answers from page 20: 7. real; 8. hope.



Chapter Three

Is There Life After Death?

As you might imagine, some people have different ideas about how to answer the question, is there life after death?

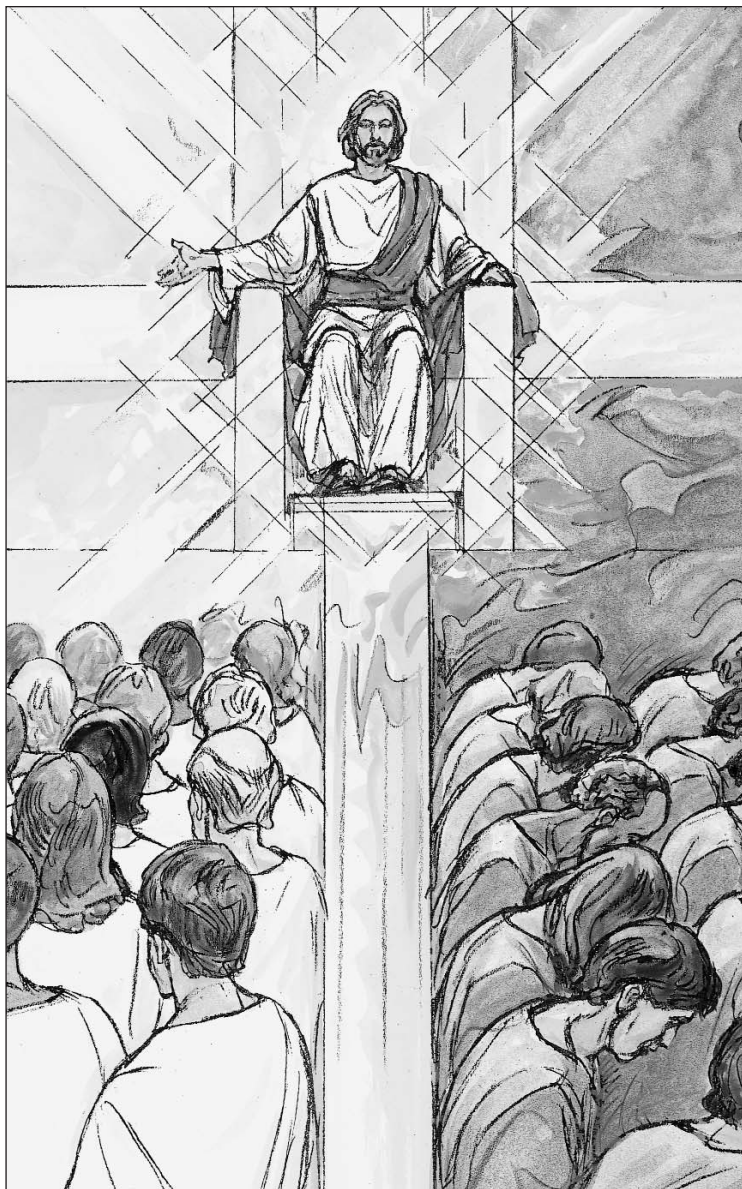
But go back and read the last sentence of the last chapter again (right before the chapter test). So really, the answer to the question of this chapter is already answered. There is life after death.

But how do we know for sure? After all, there have not been that many people who have died and lived to tell about it! When we look to what the Bible says, we can answer that question, “Is there life after death?” with confidence.

In this chapter you will learn

- * that there are people who do not believe in life after death;
- * that there are people who believe in life after death but have wrong ideas about it; and
- * that God alone tells us what to believe about life after death.

The Bible tells us that people are made up of two parts—body and soul (Matthew 10:28). It tells us that when we die, the body decays (Genesis 3:19) and the soul lives on after death (Philippians 1:23,24). The souls of believers in Jesus go to heaven, and the souls of those who do not believe in Jesus will go to hell (Mark 16:16; Luke 16:22,23). On the last



Jesus judges the people of the world on the Last Day.

day, God will raise the dead and reunite souls with their bodies (Job 19:25-27). Believers in Jesus will live in heaven with Jesus forever (Matthew 25:34). Unbelievers will spend eternity in hell (Matthew 25:41).

A man was very sick and about to die. He once said that he did not really worry too much about what was going to happen to him after he died. "I have had a pretty good life," he said. "I have a good family and good friends. And since this life is all there is, what more can I ask for?"

This man did not believe in life after death. He believed that his soul was simply going to stop existing when he died. This is called *annihilation* (ah-nye-ill-LAY-shun) of the soul.

But in the Bible God is very clear that a person's soul does not die. In Matthew 10:28 Jesus says, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but can't kill the soul. Instead, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul

and body in hell.” When Jesus speaks of “destroying” someone’s body and soul in hell, he is speaking about someone being punished forever in hell. Jesus says that in hell, the fire never goes out (Mark 9:48).

1. The Bible tells us that we are made up of two parts: _____ and _____.
2. If a person’s _____ ceases to exist when he dies, it does not matter how he lives.
3. Jesus makes it very clear that hell is a place of _____ punishment for body and soul.

(Check your answers on page 29)

Some people believe in *reincarnation* (ree-in-car-NAY-shun). Reincarnation is a belief that when a person dies, his soul comes back in a different physical body. After that physical body dies, his soul returns in another physical body. Some believe this cycle continues forever, with the soul simply moving from one physical body to the next. Others believe that this cycle only continues until the person’s soul reaches some sort of “higher” existence. Different religions,

such as Hinduism and “New Age” religions, have a strong belief in reincarnation.

People who believe in reincarnation have it partly right: a person’s soul never dies. But are souls “reincarnated” over and over again? Does a person die, be reborn in another body, die, be reborn in another body, and so on and so on forever? God tells us, “No,” in the Bible. In Hebrews 9:27 we read, “People have to die once. After that, God will judge them.”

Reincarnation’s endless cycle of life-death-life-death is just not true. According to the Bible, the cycle is either life + death equals hell or life + death equals heaven!

4. Reincarnation teaches that when someone dies, his _____ comes back in another physical body.
5. Some believe this cycle of life-death-life-death goes on _____.
6. The Bible says that when a man dies his soul is _____.

(Check your answers on page 30)

Still others have at least some sort of belief that when someone dies, he goes on to a “better place.”

Ancient Egyptians believed that one’s body had to be well preserved when it died. This was so that the person could live in a better place after this life. (That is why they were so good at making mummies!)

Viking warriors believed that when they died in battle they were allowed to go to a place called “Valhalla.” This was a place of eternal eating and drinking.

Buddhism (a religion) believes that after a person dies, he comes back like reincarnation and lives another life even better than the first. If he keeps living good lives, he may reach “Nirvana,” which is the highest form of life possible.



All these lies have people heading to the wrong place!

Every person has a desire to live forever. The Bible says that the only true life after death is in heaven. In fact, the Christian's true home is heaven. Paul writes in Philippians 3:20, "But we are citizens of heaven."

When you think about it, this makes perfect sense. Remember that God created people to live forever with him in a perfect world. Because people sinned, this perfect world was ruined. Death came into the picture also. Would not God want to erase all this evil and start again?

In God's plan, death is not the end. In God's plan, there is not only life after death – **there is perfect life after death**. This perfect life is with him in heaven. In Matthew 25:34, Jesus tells the people who are going to enter heaven, "My



Answers from page 28: 4. soul; 5. forever; 6. judged.

Father has blessed you. Come and take what is yours. It is the kingdom prepared for you since the world was created.” Again, God has always wanted people to live forever with him. He wants people to have life in heaven after they die. Life in heaven with God is *true* life after death.

The best thing about this true life after death is that we do not have to do anything to get it. God gives it to us as a gift! Romans 6:23 tells us, “But God gives you the gift of eternal life because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done.” (More on this in Chapter 5.)

7. Any idea of life after death that is not God’s idea ends up in the _____ place.

8. _____ is the true home of any Christian.

9. In God’s plan, there is _____ life after death.

(Check your answers on page 32)

Chapter Summary

Every person believes *something* about life after death. Some people believe there is no life after death! They believe that the only “life” people have is what we are experiencing or enjoying right now, living in this world. Some people believe that once you die, your body and soul stop existing.

Many other people believe that a person’s soul keeps living after his body dies. But his soul moves to another body...and then to another body when that one dies...and then to another body when that one dies....

Still other people believe that a person’s soul will go to a place better than this world. But the only true “better” place to look forward to is heaven. This final destination is the only true home that lasts forever.



Answers from page 31: 7. wrong; 8. Heaven; 9. perfect.

Chapter Three Test

1. The Bible tells us that we are made up of two parts: _____ and _____.
2. If a person's _____ ceases to exist when he dies, it does not matter how he lives.
3. Jesus makes it very clear that hell is a place of _____ punishment for body and soul.
4. Reincarnation teaches that when someone dies, his _____ comes back in another physical body.
5. Some believe this cycle of life-death-life-death goes on _____.
6. The Bible says that when a man dies his soul is _____.
7. Any idea of life after death that is not God's idea ends up in the _____ place.
8. _____ is the true home of any Christian.
9. In God's plan, there is _____ life after death.

(Check your answers on page 67)



Chapter Four

How Do I Get Life After Death?

Imagine that you are visiting a huge mansion or house on the seacoast. As you walk through the mansion, you see beautiful pictures on the walls. You see very fine furniture that looks too nice to sit on. You see gorgeous and colorful rugs that look too good to walk on. Everything

in this wonderful house is amazing.

You walk into a huge living room. Someone in the house says, “I am happy to tell you that before the owner of this mansion died, he included each one of you in his will.” You and your group listen very carefully. “That is right,” your friend says, “the owner gave each one of you one million dollars. The money is yours.”

Everyone lets out a little cry. Finally a person next to you asks in a quiet voice, “Where is it? How do we get the money?”

You are told, “Oh, umm, OK. Well, we are still looking for the money in the house. We think it is in a hidden place in one of these rooms. But do not worry – the money is still yours!”

Now, what kind of gift would that be? Not much of one! It is wonderful that life after death is not a “gift” like that missing million dollars. Getting life after death is actually fairly simple.

In this chapter you will see that

- * life after death is not given to you because of anything you do, but rather
- * life after death is given to you because of what Jesus Christ did!

Ask someone, “How do you think you get to heaven?” More than likely he will tell you something like this: “Sure, I have made mistakes in my life. But I have paid for them. I am a pretty good person when it comes down to it. And besides, I have tried to make up for all the bad things I have done by doing good things. God just has to let me into heaven. He just has to give me life after I die.”

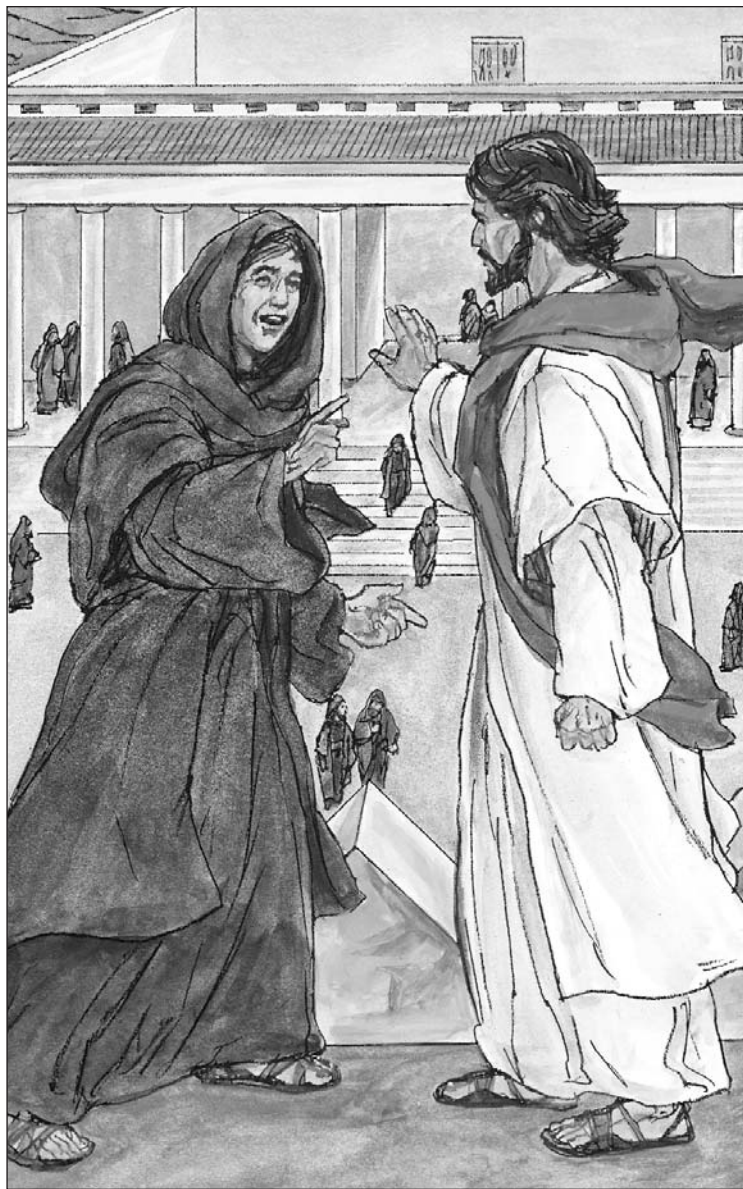
Just because this is a common answer does not mean it is right. The Bible tells us, “There is a way that may seem right to a man. But in the end it leads to death” (Proverbs 16:25).

There is a problem with believing that we can do more good things to outweigh the bad

things we have done. The problem is that God says to have life after death we cannot do *any* wrong things. Never. Not in our whole life! Jesus tells us, “So be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). Even if we slip up just once we lose out on life after death! “Suppose you keep the whole law but trip over just one part of it. Then you are guilty of breaking all of it” (James 2:10).

But getting life after death is not a lost cause because we cannot be perfect. Jesus, our Savior, was perfect in our place. The Bible says about Jesus that he “has been tempted in every way, just as we are. But he did not sin” (Hebrews 4:15). And because Jesus lived a perfect life, God takes that perfect life and gives it to us. In other words, he counts Jesus’ perfection as being ours. (Read Romans 5:11-19 for more about this.)

1. Many people believe they should get a good life after death because of _____



Jesus overcomes the temptations of the devil.

things they do.

2. God tells us that to get life after death with him we have to be _____.

3. _____ was perfect in our place.

(Check your answers on page 40)

But then there is the problem of punishment. That is something we get used to from the time we are young. If you do something wrong, you get punished.

When we break God's law we sin and we must be punished. But God's punishment for sin is not just a few years in jail. God's punishment for sin is death and damnation in hell (see Chapter 2). Now, since we all sin, should not all of us die? And not just die physically, but also die forever and ever, suffering in hell?

Yes, that is what should happen to us. The Bible tells us that each one of us deserves this death penalty. But what if God were to tell you that someone else took that punishment *for* you? What if God told you that someone else

died so that you do not have to?

That someone was Jesus. Jesus was not just perfect in our place. Jesus also was punished in our place! Peter tells us, “[Jesus] himself carried our sins in his body on the cross” (1 Peter 2:24). When Jesus was killed on the cross, he was not killed for his own sins (he did not have any). He allowed himself to be killed for the sins of all people. The punishment that God requires for our sins has already been taken care of by Jesus.

4. If we do something _____, we get punished.

5. The punishment we deserve for breaking God’s law is _____.

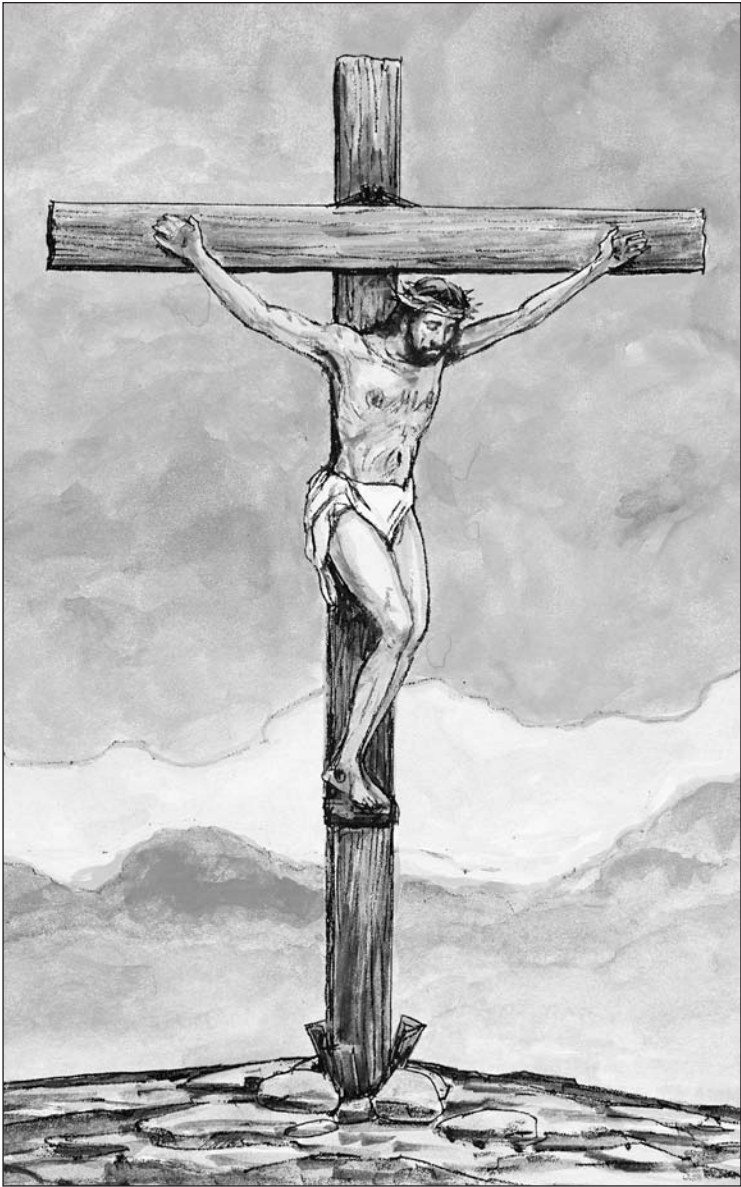
6. _____ was punished instead of us.

(Check your answers on page 42)

Jesus was perfect for us. Jesus was punished for us. And because of that, we have true life after death! Or do we? Yes, we still have to die.



Answers from page 39: 1. good; 2. perfect; 3. Jesus.



Jesus dies on a cross.

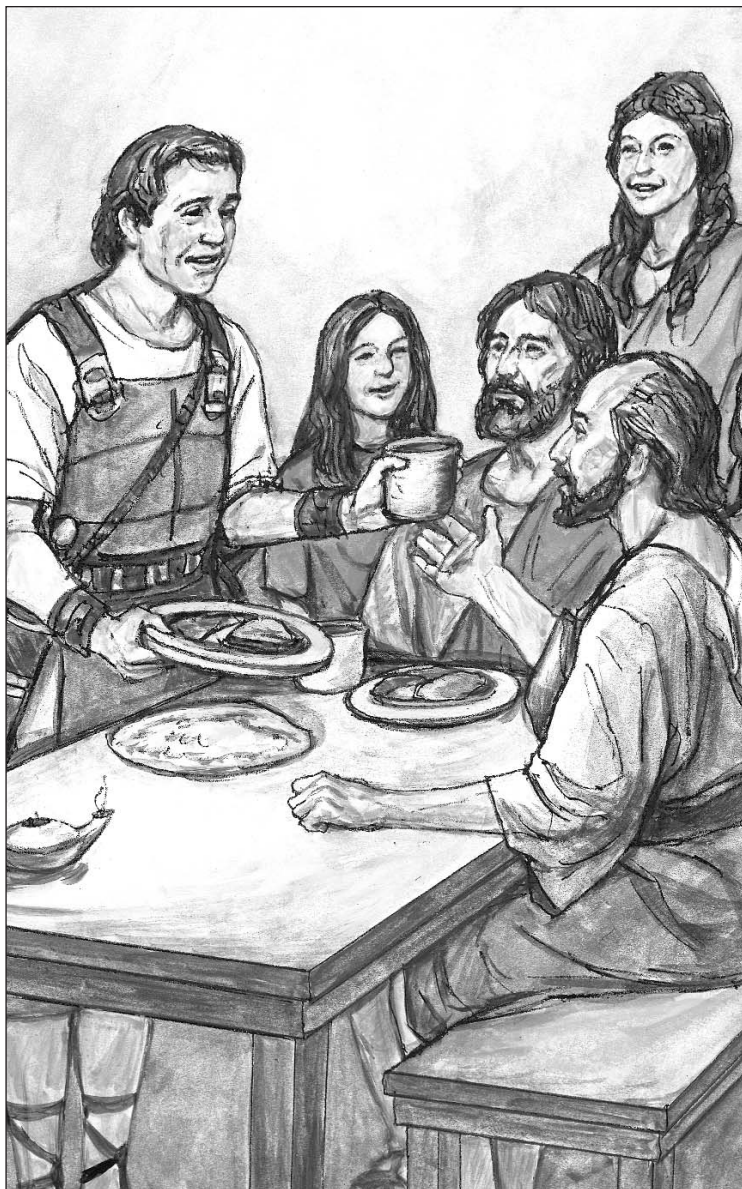
But is physical death for someone who believes in Jesus a bad thing? Exactly *how* do we get life after death? Do we get it simply because we are human? Or is it like that gift of a million dollars that is hidden and no one can find?

The gift of true life after death, the gift of life forever in heaven with Jesus, is not hidden. It is right where Jesus put it for all people to see. Jesus gives us the gift of life after death in the Bible, his Word.

Very simply said, the Bible tells us that Jesus gives us eternal life in heaven through *faith*. “Faith” is simply believing that Jesus is your Savior. It simply believes that Jesus lived a perfect life for you, and that he died in your place to take the punishment of your sins. When the jailer in Philippi asked the apostle Paul how to be saved (how to have true life after death), Paul simply told him, “Believe in



Answers from page 40: 4. wrong; 5. death; 6. Jesus.



A jailor gives food to the apostle Paul and to Silas.

the Lord Jesus” (Acts 16:31).

This faith is what one of the men who was crucified next to Jesus had. When Jesus hung on the cross, two other men were crucified at the same time. At first, both of these men hated Jesus. Even though they were criminals and Jesus was innocent, they said all kinds of bad things to him. After a while one of the men started defending Jesus. He told the other criminal to stop saying bad things. And then this now kind man said to Jesus, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom” (Luke 23:42). This criminal now believed that Jesus was the Savior of the world and he now believed Jesus was his personal Savior. And how did Jesus answer the thief on the cross? “Today you will be with me in paradise (heaven)” (Luke 23:43). So even after the criminal was to die, he was going to live again. Jesus promised him it would be in heaven. We, too, as sinners have this same promise!

7. The gift of life after death is not

_____.

8. The gift of life after death is given to us through _____.

9. One of the criminals crucified next to Jesus _____ in him.

(Check your answers on page 46)

Chapter Summary

How do you get life after death? It is really not hard. You cannot work for it. When you try, you have to remember that God says you have to be perfect in everything you do. He says you have to be perfect to get into heaven. You cannot do that. You cannot be perfect.

You also have to remember that every sin you do means God has a right to punish you. He punishes sin with death. And the death he means here is not just the end of life. The punishment for sin is eternal death in hell.

So how do you get life after death? You do not get it by doing anything! You get it by what Jesus did for you. God gives you true life after death as a gift. His Son, Jesus, lived a perfect life in your place. Jesus also died in your place. Now he simply says, "Believe." Believe that Jesus is your Savior. Believe he is the one who rescued you from *eternal* death and gives you life *after* death.

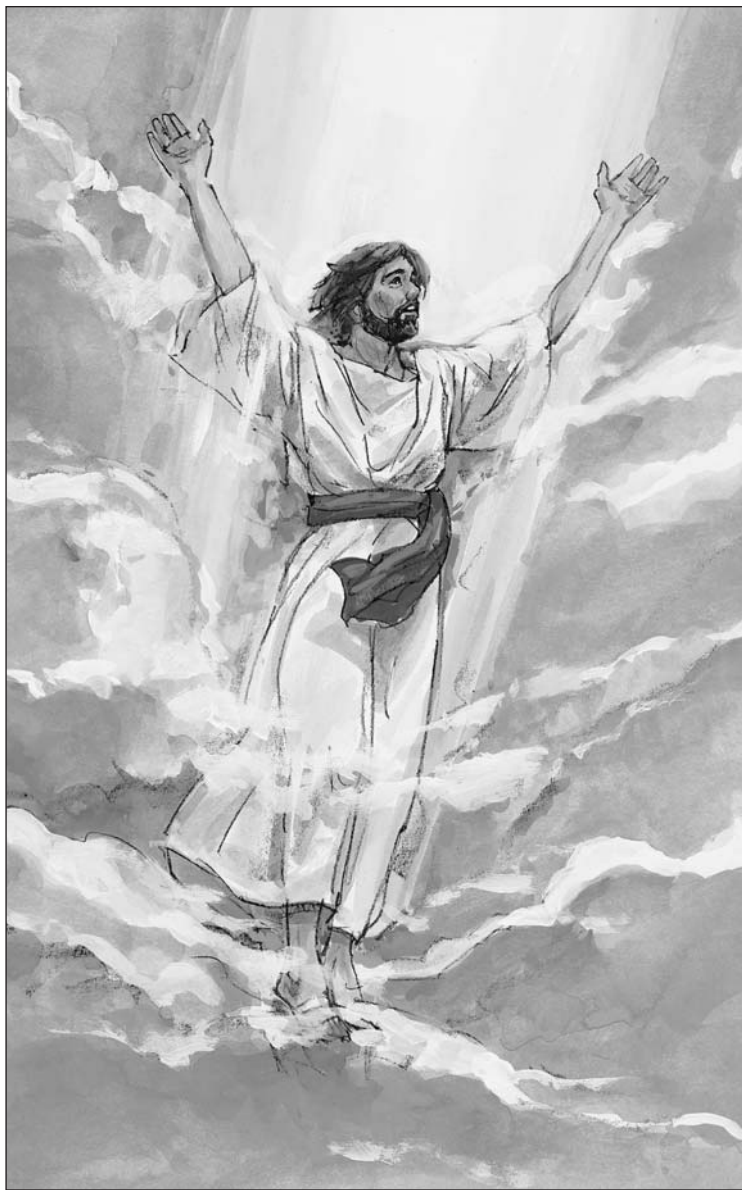


Answers from pages 44-45: 7. hidden; 8. faith; 9. believed.

Chapter Four Test

1. Many people believe they should get a good life after death because of _____ things they do.
2. God tells us that to get life after death with him we have to be _____.
3. _____ was perfect in our place.
4. If we do something _____, we get punished.
5. The punishment we deserve for breaking God's law is _____.
6. _____ was punished instead of us.
7. The gift of life after death is not _____.
8. The gift of life after death is given to us through _____.
9. One of the criminals crucified next to Jesus _____ in him.

(Check your answers on page 67)



Jesus returns to heaven.



Chapter Five

Why Should I Want Life After Death?

Ever since death came into the world, people have looked for ways to escape death. Some of the great explorers of the world looked for some magic spring of water, that would keep them alive forever. Today scientists keep looking for ways to help people live longer.

So maybe you are thinking to yourself, “Why wouldn’t I want life after death?!” And you are right, there is really no good reason.

Remember that when God first created us he made us to live forever. In Ecclesiastes 3:11 it says that God “has also given men a sense of what he's been doing down through the ages.”

Another way of saying that is that “God has put *eternity* into the heart of man.” In other words, by nature, the way we are born, we know that there is more to life than *this* life. We *want* to live forever.

At the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- * understand that some people do not want to have life after death;
- * see that eternal life in heaven is something to be wanted; and
- * know that this present life does not last long.

You may not feel that your life right now is all that great. You are stuck in a place you do not

want to be. Other people are always telling you what to do, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. “Freedom” is something that you really would like to have but you cannot have it. Maybe you even wonder if every day of the rest of your life will be like this!

A young man named Jim had similar thoughts. As he sat in prison he thought about his life. His father had walked out on him and his mom when Jim was really young. His mom could not handle the stress of being a single mother and started taking drugs. After she was arrested Jim ended up in a foster home. He got sent from place to place, getting in more and more trouble at each new home. Jim was arrested a few times for some small stuff. Finally he got in a fight and killed a man. He was sent to prison for life.

A pastor visited Jim one day in prison. The pastor told him about Jesus, and about how wonderful a place heaven was. In heaven, the pastor told Jim, he could live forever.

All Jim could think was, “Why? Why would I want to keep going through all the troubles and problems I have had in this life forever and ever? Thanks but no thanks!”

That makes some sense, doesn't it? If “life after death” is only more of the same of what *this* life is, would anyone want it? Even if your life does not seem that bad or it is not as bad as some people have it, would you still want to have sickness and pain and heartache ... *forever*? Would you want to wonder if the doctor is going to tell you you have cancer? Would you want to fight every day against the evil thoughts that suddenly come into your head?

1. Your life right now might not be all that _____.
2. A pastor told Jim he could live _____.
3. Will all the _____ things of this life last forever?

(Check your answers on page 54)

The pastor went on to explain to Jim that eternal life in heaven was not just this life going on forever and ever! You see, once you know what heaven is going to be like, it is easy to see why you would want to have eternal life there.

Think back to how life was for people when God first created us. God had to curse us with death because Adam and Eve sinned. But in heaven this curse will be taken away. In Revelation 22:3 we read that in heaven, “There will no longer be any curse.” If there is no curse that means there is no sin. Think about it—in heaven we never have to worry about doing anything wrong ever again. And if there is no sin, there is no death.

When God first created people, life was not going to be filled with hard work. After Adam and Eve sinned, people had to work hard from then on. But in heaven there is no unpleasant work! This eternal rest will include delightful service, perfect ruling, and joyful singing. You

and I will finally rest from the pains and struggles of this life.

In heaven our bodies will be perfect. There are all kinds of bad things that happen to our bodies while we live on earth. Cuts and broken bones and bruises and sicknesses inside us – sometimes our bodies give out before we are ready for them to. In heaven, our bodies will be perfect. St. Paul says in Philippians 3:21, “By his [Jesus’] power he will change our earthly bodies. They will become like his glorious body.” In heaven, our bodies will be like they were first created to be. They will be perfect.

Think of all the hard and bad things in your life. Now, think of them being all gone. Whatever they are will be gone in heaven! Revelation 21:4 also tells us that in heaven God “will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or sadness. There will be no



Answers from page 52: 1. great; 2. forever; 3. bad.



Adam and Eve had to work after they sinned against God.

more crying or pain. Things are no longer the way they used to be.”

**No tears! No death! No sadness! No crying!
No pain! What a perfect place!**

In heaven we will also be brought together with believers we knew and loved who also went to heaven. Our mother who died as a believer in Jesus when we were younger – we will see her again! Our wife or husband who was killed in a terrible accident – since she or he believed in Jesus, we will see her or him in heaven!

Most important, when we get to heaven we will be with our Savior forever. In Chapter Two we learned about some of the things that happened in the world because of sin. One of them, the saddest one, is that God and man no longer walked and talked together as they did before sin. But in heaven, the relationship we had with God will be perfect again. We will see Jesus face-to-face! St. John wrote, “But we know that when Christ appears, we will be like

him. We will see him as he really is” (1 John 3:2).

Since this is what eternal life in heaven is really going to be like, how could anyone *not* want it?

4. In heaven we never have to worry about doing anything _____ again.
5. In heaven, our bodies will not just be better, they will be _____.
6. When something bad happens in this life, sometimes we cry. In heaven there are no _____.
7. The best part of heaven is that we get to be with _____.

(Check your answers on page 58)

Another thing to keep in mind when you are considering why you should want life after death is how long that life will last. During our life on earth we measure everything by time. We count our days by hours. We count our weeks by days. We count our months by weeks. We count our years by months.

Although the Bible teaches that life in heaven lasts forever, all of us wonder, “Just how long is forever?” To a person in prison, maybe a “long” time is however long he or she is going to be locked up. A “long” time to a mother having a baby might be a few hours of pain. A “long” time to a little child might be one hour if he has nothing to do!

But God looks at time differently. Peter tells us, “With the Lord a day is like a thousand years. And a thousand years are like a day” (2 Peter 3:8). In other words, God does not measure everything by hours and days and weeks. He operates or works outside of time. And so we really do not have a complete understanding of the word “forever.”

But one thing we do know. However long our life on earth may be, it is not even a drop in a bucket full of water compared to how long life



Answers from page 57: 4. wrong; 5. perfect; 6. tears; 7. God.

after death in heaven lasts! It will be perfect and it will last forever!

8. During this life we measure many things by _____.

9. God does not measure days and _____.

10. Heaven lasts _____.

(Check your answers on page 60)

Chapter Summary

It is hard to think that there would be people who do not want to live after they die. Deep down that seems like something everyone should want. But some people think that “life after death” only means more of the same of this life on earth.

But life after death is not just a never-ending repeat of this life! To be in heaven will be better

than we can imagine. Think of all the bad things we have in this life. Remove them. Think of all the aches and pains you have in your body. Take them away. Think of how far away from God you feel sometimes. Picture him right next to you. Heaven will be that great and more!

This life on earth definitely has an end. But life in heaven after death has no end. It lasts forever.



Answers from page 59: 8. time; 9. weeks; 10. forever.

Chapter Five Test

1. Your life right now might not be all that _____.
2. Will all the _____ things of this life last forever?
3. In heaven we never have to worry about doing anything _____ again.
4. In heaven, our bodies will not just be better, they will be _____.
5. When something bad happens in this life, sometimes we cry. In heaven there are no _____.
6. The best part of heaven is that we get to be with _____.
7. God does not measure days and _____.
8. Heaven lasts _____.

(Check your answers on page 67)



Glossary

(A list of words you may not know)

absolutely	completely
amazing	wonderful and surprising
annihilation	complete destruction
approve	to agree that something is good or wise
basic	needed; all important
blink(ing)	to shut the eyes and quickly open them again
chance	good luck; an opportunity
coffin	a box used to bury a dead person
confidence	certain or sure about something
considering	thinking about something
criminal	a person who breaks the law
curse	suffering great harm
cycle	circle
damnation	everlasting punishment in hell
decays	to become bad or rotten
dedicated	wanting to finish or complete a task

defend(ing)	speaking good about someone
definitely	clearly; certainly
depressed	saddened and discouraged
destination	a place to which a person goes; the end of a journey
erase	to take away
eternal	lasting forever and ever
exist(ing)	to be real; to be living
experience(ing)	to feel
explorer(s)	a person who travels in or to a place in order to learn about it
glamorize	to make something look beautiful
gorgeous	very beautiful; splendid or very good
hero	a person remembered for being brave or good
illusion	a false idea
imagine	to form a mental picture or idea
intended	planned
joke	something said or done to cause laughter

limited	small in amount or lack of strength
mansion	a large, beautiful house
mistake	an error; a wrong judgment or idea
motto	a short statement to guide our actions
mummies	dead bodies preserved from decay
nap	a short sleep
operate(s)	to work
paradise	heaven
penalty	punishment for breaking the law
permanent	lasting forever
possessions	things we own
relationship	a connection with someone
repeat	to do something again and again
rescue(d)	to save
ruined	destroyed
scientist	a person who studies things in nature
similar	almost the same

stress	pressure or worry caused by difficulties in life
struggle(s)	to put forth a great effort; to work hard
stuff	things; goods or possessions
tragic	very terrible
undertakers	people who prepare the dead for burial
vault	a box or room to bury the dead
Vikings	people who lived in the countries of Norway and Sweden many years ago
visible	something we can see
widow	a woman whose husband is dead and has not remarried
will	the written wishes of a person about how his or her property is to be shared after the death of that person
wonder(ed)	to question or be uncertain about something



Answers to the Chapter Tests

Chapter Test One (Page 12)

1. life; 2. themselves; 3. have; 4. meaning; 5. real;
6. depressed (or sad); 7. Adam/Eve; 8. perfect.

Chapter Test Two (Page 22)

1. die; 2. dead; 3. dead; 4. bad; 5. death; 6. judge;
7. real; 8. hope.

Chapter Test Three (Page 33)

1. body/soul; 2. soul; 3. eternal; 4. soul;
5. forever; 6. judged; 7. wrong; 8. Heaven;
9. perfect.

Chapter Test Four (Page 47)

1. good; 2. perfect; 3. Jesus; 4. wrong; 5. death;
6. Jesus; 7. hidden; 8. faith; 9. believed.

Chapter Test Five (Page 61)

1. great; 2. bad; 3. wrong; 4. perfect; 5. tears;
6. God; 7. weeks; 8. forever.



Final Test

Congratulations! You have completed your study of how you can have a long, perfect life in heaven after you die. Go back through the book and review the chapter tests, especially the questions on which you made a mistake. Also review the goals from each chapter. When you are sure you are ready, take the Final Test.

Complete the Final Test without looking at the book. When you are finished, give the test to the person who gave you this book or mail it to the address on the back cover of this book. You may also ask for more Bible study books in this series.

If you are ready, remove the test from the book and put the book away. Take the test without opening the book.



Life After Death Final Test

Fill in the blank.

1. Many people think _____ is only about getting more and more things.
2. Some people become very _____ because they believe their life has no meaning.
3. God gives life its _____.
4. Romeo and Juliet were willing to _____ because they loved each other.
5. Sometimes we begin to think death is not all that _____.
6. Jesus makes it very clear that hell is a place of _____ punishment for body and soul.
7. Any idea of life after death that is not God's idea ends up in the _____ place.
8. The best part of heaven is that we get to be with _____.
9. God tells us that to get life after death we have to be _____.
10. _____ was perfect in our place.
11. The gift of life after death is not _____.

True or False.

1. ____ The purpose of life is to make myself happy.
2. ____ Life has no meaning at all.
3. ____ When God created the world he put man in charge.
4. ____ Right after Adam and Eve sinned they looked at God as their loving Father.
5. ____ If a non-Christian's soul ceases to exist when he dies, it does not matter how he lives.
6. ____ The Bible says that when a man dies his soul is judged.
7. ____ The earth is the true and permanent home of any Christian.
8. ____ In heaven we never have to worry about doing anything wrong again.
9. ____ Heaven only lasts for one thousand years.
10. ____ Instead of punishing us, God punished Jesus.

Multiple Choice: Pick the best answer.

1. ____ Jesus says that “life” is not all about
 - a. fun.
 - b. how much a person has.
 - c. serving God.
 - d. paying your dues.

2. ____ When God created people, the relationship between God and people was
 - a. ruined.
 - b. shaky.
 - c. perfect.
 - d. somewhat good.

3. ____ God did not create
 - a. death.
 - b. man.
 - c. the world.
 - d. animals.

4. ____ In many ways, ____ takes away hope.
 - a. God
 - b. Jesus
 - c. death
 - d. life

5. ____ To believe that our soul ceases to exist after we die is to believe in
 - a. reincarnation.
 - b. Jesus.
 - c. existentialism.
 - d. annihilation.

6. ____ Reincarnation teaches that when someone dies, his ____ comes back in another physical body.

- a. mind
- b. soul
- c. brain
- d. goodness

7. ____ In God's plan, there is _____ life after death.

- a. sometimes
- b. never
- c. perfect
- d. often

8. ____ In heaven, our bodies will not just be better, they will be ____.

- a. perfect
- b. improved
- c. like ghosts
- d. weightless

9. ____ Most people believe they will get life after death because of ____ things they do.

- a. more
- b. some
- c. good
- d. many

10. ____ The punishment we deserve for breaking God's law is ____.

- a. life in prison
- b. death
- c. unhappiness
- d. a slap on the wrist

11. ____ The gift of life after death is given to us through ____.

- a. works
- b. earning it
- c. paying for it
- d. faith

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