

*In
Search
of ...*

Truth & Right

GENESIS

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

A publication of the
**Wellsburg
church of Christ**
Which meets at:
112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

We appreciate so much your presence here with us today. We would like to extend an invitation to join us at any of our other times of worship.

TIMES OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Classes* 10:00 AM

AM Worship 10:45 AM

PM Worship 6:30 PM

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes* 7:00 PM

(* Bible Classes for All Ages)

Today's Sermon:

Non-Denominational Christianity

Audio CD's are available free of charge in the foyer.

*Please visit our website:
www.truthandright.org*

If you have any questions regarding what we teach and practice, please feel free to ask

The Immortality of the Soul

*William J. Steward
via—The Charlottesville Beacon*

A recent e-mail correspondent, influenced by Jehovah's Witness doctrine, has stated, "... man does not live on after he dies..." The Witnesses case against life after death is primarily based on the claim that such is pagan philosophy, and not Scriptural. In addition, the misapplication of some Bible texts, in conjunction with the disregard of others, simulates support for this godless doctrine.

It may be true that pagans accepted the existence of an immortal soul. However, this fact does not automatically nullify the validity of such a doctrine in Christianity. If every thought which existed among the pagans invalidated a similar thought among God's people, then we must of necessity reject the Bible account of creation, the flood, the virgin birth, and perhaps much more. Biblical truth needs to be determined by what the Bible says, not what the pagans believed.

Is The Soul Merely The Body?

Having cited Genesis 2:7, the Witnesses conclude, "Clearly, the soul is not what a man has but what he is." ⁽¹⁾ The contention is made that the soul and the body are one and the same. When the body dies, the soul of necessity dies, for the soul is the body. Thus, it is stated, "Before God

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created him from the dust, Adam did not exist. After his death, Adam returned to the same state of nonexistence.” ⁽²⁾

If there is no distinction to be made between the soul and body, why did the apostle Paul pen, “... *may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (1 Thessalonians 5:23)? Surely if body and soul are synonymous, the apostle would have known it! Again, to demonstrate that the soul is distinct from the body, consider the death of Rachel. While giving birth to Benjamin, we are told that “... *her soul was departing (for she died) ...*” (Genesis 35:18). What was her soul departing from? Was it not her body, which was subsequently buried (vs. 19-20)?

“The Soul Who Sins Shall Die”

These words can be found in Ezekiel 18:4, 20. Witnesses use this, and similar texts to support their doctrine of soul annihilation. The text certainly speaks of the soul dying, but it is NOT the same death which come upon the body. Our bodies die a physical death (Genesis 3:19; Hebrews 9:27), the only exceptions being those who are alive at the Lord's coming (1 Corinthians 15:51-53). The soul dies a spiritual death, not related to the physical design of the body (dust), but the actions of the person (Romans 6:23). From the text, note that the wicked will die, but the righteous will live. And yet our constant experience, when it comes to physical death, is that both wicked and righteous die.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all died (Genesis 25:8; 35:29; 49:33), and yet the Lord speaks of them as living (Matthew 22:32). They died physically, as all men do, but spiritually, they live (John 11:25), for they were faithful to the Lord.

The Dead Know Nothing

Ecclesiastes 9:5 is another favorite text of those who believe the soul ceases with the death of the body. Solomon records, “*For the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.*” This verse, by itself, appears to be a solid proof that those who are dead cease to be. But let's set it in context. Verse 6 reads, “*Also their love, their*

hatred, and their envy have now perished; nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun.”

Solomon is not affirming that the dead have slipped into nonexistence, but that they have no more part on this earth. They “*know nothing*” about “*anything done under the sun*”. Consider the circumstances of the rich man and Lazarus, as revealed by the Lord. Neither man is spoken of as annihilated. They existed in a different realm; Lazarus in Abraham's bosom and the rich man in torments. Both had completed their allotted life on earth, and now reaped accordingly. The rich man could not affect the fate of his brothers, though he desired that Lazarus be sent back to them. “*Nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun.*”

The Hadean Realm

Hades is a Greek word which has been translated “hell” in some Bibles, while others simply transliterate it. In Greek mythology, “Hades is the lord of the dead and ruler of the nether world, which is referred to as the domain of Hades or, by transference, as Hades alone.” ⁽³⁾ Again, the Witnesses will focus on the fact that the hadean realm is found in Greek mythology. Shall we set aside a Bible teaching simply because the Greeks had in their mythology something nigh to reality? Jesus taught that Hades was a real place (Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 16:23). The apostle Peter associated it with the Old Testament “*sheol*” (Acts 2:27; cf. Psalm 16:10), the abode of departed souls.

In Luke 16:19-31, Jesus teaches about this hadean realm. Two abodes exist there, Abraham's bosom (paradise) and torments. Souls in Hades are not “asleep in the grave” as the Witnesses would tell us, but in fact are alert, able to receive comfort and torments (v. 25). The body has gone to the ground (v. 22), but the person has gone to a spirit realm.

The common argument levied against this text is that Jesus was simply teaching a parable. A whole complex explanation has been devised to give credence to this interpretation. However, the text does not fit the fabric of a parable. A parable is “a usually short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a reli-

gious principle.” (4) When Jesus taught via parables, He used examples that His audience were familiar with (ie. fishing, sowing seed, harvesting, etc.). Since the living have not died, they would not be acquainted with what He spoke. How were they to learn the spiritual principles involved if they didn't understand the story itself? Furthermore, the Witnesses reject the existence of life after death, and yet, in Jesus' "parable", He declares there to be. Did Jesus speak of things which were not (i.e. lie) in order to teach this "parable"?

This is not a parable. Jesus taught in short about the diverse lifestyles of two men, and their respective rewards after death. The rich man, guided by greed (vs. 19, 21, 25) and wicked living (v. 30), received condemnation; Lazarus, leading a troubled life (vs. 20-21, 25), but apparently faithful to the Lord, receiving comforts.

If we live faithfully, we also have the hope of comfort in Abraham's bosom. While on the cross, Jesus promised the penitent thief, *"Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."* (Luke 23:43). What a blessed hope, and thereafter, to be raised to dwell with the Lord eternally (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

(1) Jehovah's Witnesses, "Should You Believe In Reincarnation?" (www.watchtower.org)

(2) Jehovah's Witnesses, "Should You Believe In Reincarnation?" (www.watchtower.org)

(3) Micha F. Lindemans, "Hades", (www.pantheon.org)

(4) Merriam-Webster Deluxe Dictionary

*Love's Labor
is Never Lost*
Jay Graham

Not all the Christian life is a "bed of roses". In fact very little of it is, for Satan is trying everything in his power to discourage and weary us from "well-doing" (Galatians 6:9). He wants us to feel like we are unloved and unappreciated. He knows if he can convince us that our fellowman, brethren, and even God does not care for the work and labor we are doing, then there is a good chance we will quit. And he watches us go down hill from

there regarding our spiritual life. Part of the Christian life is realizing God does indeed care. And not only God, but our brethren as well, (at least the ones who are truly brethren). Our Father is interested in the work we are doing; not because of its benefits to Him, but because of its benefits to us.

God does not "need" anything we can give Him. He does not need our money, sacrifices, time, or even love. He is completely and totally self-sufficient. We are the ones that benefit from our work. For example, it is to my good if I take the time to assemble with the brethren, and when my good works are helping glorify God, (1 Peter 2:12) it is to my advantage. God knows that.

Therefore I can be of invaluable asset to my brethren as well. Not only can I help teach, learn, and guide, but the very fact I am a brother gives them an opportunity to serve me as well. In turn this helps them please the Master. Part of my love for the brethren is allowing them to serve me when I am in need, (and how many of us are never in need?). Isn't it arrogant of me to offer to serve my brother and not allow him an opportunity to serve me? Am I so strong I don't need help? (1 Corinthians 10:12 *"Therefore let him who thinks he stands lest he fall."*).

Consider our labor for the world. Though most in the world does not acknowledge or appreciate our love toward them, our love is never wasted. At the very least it may be observed by a few who are truly searching for an answer to their life. Through us and our answer they may find it. At the most, it helps us grow and mature into a more perfect image of Christ.

With these thoughts in mind, is our love in any way wasted? The Father cares and is concerned about how we labor with our love. Our brethren are appreciative and thankful for our part in their development. And some in the world may see our example and *"glorify God in the day of visitation"* (1 Peter 2:12). And of those in the world who are not interested; remember the world hated Christ first.

"Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." —Galatians 6:9

Those Serving This Week

Sunday AM

Class Prayer	Nathan Marshall
Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Song Leader	Ken Prager
Scripture	Matthew 13:31-50
Reader	Dan Marton
Prayer	Harold Marshall
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Lord's Supper	
Bread	Don Coen, Sr.
Fruit of the Vine	Earl Miller
Serve	Blake Headen
Serve	Terry Smith
Closing Prayer	Ed Roberts

Please inform the one in charge of announcements if you are unable to fulfill your responsibilities.

Sunday PM

Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Song Leader	Nathan Marshall
Scripture	Matt. 13:51-14:12
Reader	Ken Prager
1st Prayer	Earl Miller
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Communion	Ed Roberts
Closing Prayer	Don Coen, Jr.

Wednesday

Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Class Prayer	Matt Ferrell
Song Leader	Tim Henderson
Invitation	Don Coen, Jr.
Closing Prayer	Nathan Marshall

News N Notes

Please continue to remember these in your prayers:

Travelling:

- Ronald & Charlotte Lancaster

Sick/ Poor Health:

- Zeda Goddard, also her family— sons, Dallas and Terry, and daughter Tammy Garrison
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband, is to go back soon to have a stint put in for the other kidney.
- Jerry & Dottie Henderson as they continue their work in the Northwest region.
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother
- Alfred & Mary Jane Myers
- Paula Prager as she continues to deal with a difficult pregnancy
- Jimmy Roberts, Ed & Marie's son
- Jim Roberts, Ed Roberts' father
- Marie Roberts
- Kris Shane
- Gabriel Taylor, 4 year old great grandson of Don & Phyllis, dealing with cancer.

Don't forget our Shut-ins

Valley Haven:

- Ethel Mahan
- Pauline Sellers

Ann's Retreat:

- Josephine Clow

At Home:

- Mabel Fleming
- Zeda Goddard
- Betty Hunter
- Pauline Midcap
- Ann Rudolph

Send them a card—give them a call—let them know we are thinking about them.

If someone needs to be added to this list, please call:
304-914-2262 or 304-914-2263