

Thanatology:

The Believer's Relationship to Death

Sunday, March 31, 2024

Jesus' curious statements:

John 11:25–26 (NASB95)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

1. Unbelievers are dead.

- **All are spiritually dead until they are in Christ (Ephesians 2:1-3,5; Colossians 2:13).**
- **Their works are dead (Hebrews 6:1; Hebrews 9:14).**
- **Their faith is dead (James 2:17, 26).**
- **Churchgoers can be dead (1Timothy 5:6).**
- **Churches can be dead (Revelation 3:1).**
- **The gospel is preached to the dead (1Peter 4:6).**
- **Unbelievers do not possess life (1John 3:15; 5:12).**
- **The dead will be judged (1Peter 4:5; 2Timothy 4:1; Revelation 20:12).**

2. Unbelievers will die.

- **Romans 5:12, 14**
- **Romans 5:21**
- **1Corinthians 15:22**
- **Hebrews 9:27**

3. Unbelievers will die again.

- **Revelation 2:11**
- **Revelation 20:6,14**
- **Revelation 21:8**

4. Believers died already.

- Believers died at conversion (Colossians 3:3).
- Believers died with Christ (2Timothy 2:11; Philippians 3:10; Romans 6:3, 4, 5, 8).
- Believers died in relationship to sin (Romans 6:2, 6, 7; 1Peter 2:24).
- Believers died in relationship to the Law (Romanas 7:4, 6; Galatians 2:19).
- Believers died in relationship to the world (Galatians 6:14; Colossians 2:20).
- The old “you” is no more (Galatians 2:20; Galatians 5:24; Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-10).

5. Eternal life begins at new birth.

- John 5:24
- John 8:51
- Romans 6:4, 5, 8, 11, 13
- Romans 8:2
- Colossians 2:12
- Colossians 3:1

6. A believer’s life is a kind of death.

- Death to self is the starting point for following Jesus (Mark 8:34).
- Considering oneself dead to sin is an ongoing practice (Romans 6:11; Colossians 3:5).
- Putting to death the deeds of the body identifies one as a child of God (Romans 8:13).
- Believers are dead to the world in which they live (Galatians 6:14).
- Believers can find themselves in danger of death because of their loyalty to Christ (2Corinthians 1:9; 2:16; 4:11; 6:9; 11:23; Revelation 2:10).
- Daily discipleship is one of death-to-self (Luke 9:23).

7. Believers still face physical death.

*except for those who are alive at the rapture! (1Thessalonians 4:13-18; John 14:3; 1Corinthians 15:51-52)

- Romans 14:7-9
- Romans 8:38

- Philippians 1:20
- 1Thessalonians 4:16
- Hebrews 11:13
- Romans 8:28

8. A believer's death is different.

The language reflects a change in believers' relationship to death:

A believer's physical death can be called "death", being "killed", etc.

This often occurs when death is spoken of generally (1Cor 7:9; Php 1:20).

This often occurs when martyrdom / persecution are in view (Rev 2:13).

Often, a believer's physical death is referred to by "euphemism".

"go out of this world" (1Cor 5:10).

"sleep" (1Cor 11:30; 15:6,18,20,51; 1Thess 4:13,14,15; 5:10

"surrender my body..." (1Cor 13:3).

etc...

9. Death itself will die.

- Acts 2:24
- Romans 6:9
- 1Corinthians 15:26
- 1Corinthians 15:54-57
- Hebrews 2:14-15
- Revelation 1:18
- Revelation 20:14
- Revelation 21:4