

True Believers Live After Death

Introduction and Review

- We defined eschatology as the study of “last things” which is derived from the Greek word “ἔσχατος” that means “last” (2Tim. 3:1).
- We are considering two categories for our study of eschatology: Personal & General.
- General eschatology is the study of last things that will affect the entire universe & all of creation.
- Personal eschatology is the study of last things that affects true believers, false believers & unbelievers.
- Only true believers will persevere in faith until the end of their lives & have the certainty of God’s blessed promises (Jn. 10:27-29; Rom. 8:28)!

I. All Humanity Will Experience Death

A. Believers

Death is the natural end of life for every human being after the sin of Adam & Eve (Gen. 3:19; Heb. 9:27a). A believer’s death is not punishment, but a consequence of sin (Rom. 8:1; 1Co. 15:26). Death completely sanctifies & joins a believer to Christ (1Th. 4:3a; Rom. 8:16-17). A Christian does not fear death & the afterlife (Heb. 2:14-15; 1Co. 15:54d-57).

B. Unbelievers

Unbelievers who die without faith in Christ have no hope of a blessed future after death (Jn. 8:21; Eph. 2:12). Death is a punishment for all unbelievers (Rom. 2:5; 9:22).

Believers & unbelievers experience death, but believers have the hope of God & no fear.

II. Life After Death

A. Believers

After death the body of a believer returns to dust but the soul [or spirit] goes immediately into God’s presence (2Co. 5:6-10; Phil. 1:21-24; Lk. 23:43). This is only an intermediate state – not permanent & eternal. The bible does not teach about purgatory (2Co. 5:8). The bible does not teach “soul sleep” (Jn. 11:11-13; Lk. 23:43) – death is temporary just like sleep.

B. Unbelievers

The bible does not teach reincarnation (Heb. 9:27). The souls of unbelievers go immediately to eternal punishment (Heb. 9:27; Lk. 16:22b-26). Unbelievers grieve without hope after the death of another person (1Th. 4:13).

After death believers experience eternal life & blessing while unbelievers experience eternal punishment.

APPL: Personal eschatology ensures that all people will experience death because of sin. The believer can face death with the hope of being completely sanctified & joined to Christ immediately after death. The unbeliever must face death with no hope of blessing after death, only punishment!