

## Perspective – How Might We Think About Death?

### Why So Negative?

Why in the world would we want to talk about something so negative as death? Believe me, it's not a matter of wanting to. Unfortunately, it's a necessity. The main reason is death was the introductory point of focus by Satan as stated by the serpent as we've already seen.

That approach was a manipulative use of words that served to distract, mislead, and trap Eve. Only Satan would outright counter God's statement by saying she and Adam would not die. That's a major distraction. Then comes the misleading of Eve by shifting from God's definition of Death, to a completely different definition linked to their physical existence; death. Last was the trap we've already explored.

### Exploring the Difference

As stated earlier there is an opposing difference between what God had said about Death, and what Satan said through the serpent. The two perspectives are 180 degrees opposite of each other. Something that shouldn't be a surprise to us.

Let's consider God's perspective keeping in mind that Death exists for any being who is not filled with the Life that God is eternally. It doesn't matter who we're talking about, but right now we are not including animals or any other part of the creation of this world.

Why? Because only eternal beings, people and angels, have a choice concerning God that can cause their own eternal Death. Also, only people can choose to be filled with Life eternally through God's Son, Jesus. Creation has no say in the matter. It never did. As we've seen Death came through the actions of Adam and Eve and impacted every part of creation.

That doesn't mean, however, that creation has no part in this issue of Death and Life. Paul writes the following in Romans chapter 8.

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now." (Romans 8:18-22)

When Jesus returns to this earth, those of us in relationship with Jesus will be with Him. The new Jerusalem will descend with Him, and Jesus will reign over all the earth and all living things for 1,000 years. All of creation will be set free from the Death grip of Sin during that time. In the meantime, all of creation groans awaiting its freedom in Christ.

These are not symbolic statements made by Paul. He is writing about reality from God's perspective that is superior to the world's perspective of reality. One day for a thousand years the Lion will lay down with the Lamb. Interesting thought: the earth, animals, birds, and all the rest may know more than we think.

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### Implications

What else is a part of God's perspective? We know Death does not mean non-existence. No eternal being will ever cease to exist, human or angelic beings.

Those of us still existing on this earth without the Life of God are currently being held in the Death grip of Sin. Only when our physical presence on the earth ends will we fully experience Death; the absolute absence of God's presence in any form.

While some of us may reject this Truth, it does not alter reality as God knows it to exist. All of us benefit from the creative power of God, and His presence in the world today. God's presence in the world is part of what we call our normal existence. It's part of the good we call life, or that's experienced while living our life.

We all probably have taken God's presence for granted, most of us some of the time, with many of us hardly giving His presence any thought at all. It's like many things that we don't miss until they're gone.

We even do this with some other people. When they're gone from this earth, we suddenly realize it's too late to tell them about the positive difference they made in our life.

For those of us who are Dead while living on this earth, God may not be missed with any depth of awareness until His presence is completely gone at the end of our existence on the earth. When that happens nothing we think of as being good or positive in any way will exist within, or around us forever. Our eternal existence will be utterly devoid of any presence of God.

My perspective is this equates to Hell. Also, my assumption is no person on this earth can imagine such an existence. It carries the knowledge of a deeply penetrating and complete evil that can't be duplicated on this earth.

There have been occasions where it's been my displeasure to look into a person's eyes and see the dark emptiness in their soul. The few times this has happened there has been no doubt that Death existed within the person. At the same time one could sense the presence of their inner being longing to be free.

Hell, however, is not just an emptiness. It's the complete presence of Sin and Death that becomes the essence of who we are to the point of great suffering. A personal suffering that is unbearable yet eternal in its existence.

This comes with the full knowledge of each person in this state-of-being that things didn't have to be this way. It could have been different. Each person will know they brought this on themselves. There will be no one to blame, no love of any kind, and no one present to care about us in the slightest. Forever.

Further, not only do the walking-Dead people still experience suffering while on this earth, they must pass through the experience of the death of their bodies. After experiencing that event they will enter eternal Death. This is the ultimate lose, lose situation without the ability to change anything once they are gone from this earth. God has done all He can to provide a way for us to avoid this eternal tragedy that's beyond the description-boundaries of any language.

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Those of us filled with God's Life in Christ will experience the death of our bodies as well, unless Jesus returns while we still Live on this earth. It seems selfish, however, for me to want Jesus to return soon because it will mean the absence in this world of those of us who can tell others about Life in Christ.

"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

While we remain in our bodies, we might think of them as our Earth suits. They are still subjected to the power of Sin. Thus, through some event, or once our body wears out, each of us must go through the process of our physical existence coming to an end. When that process ends, however, we will be free of these Earth suits and be present with the Lord in Heaven instantaneously.

How our bodies come to the point of not functioning any more has no guarantees from God. We should not expect a pain free physical death because we are faithful and obedient to God. While we may well go to sleep one night only to suddenly find ourselves in the presence of the Lord, there are no guarantees because we live in a Sin dominated world.

If we are not following God's will consistently then we are subjecting ourselves to the possibility of all kinds of Satanic influences. Then we are living like everyone who exists within Death on this earth. What a crazy thing for us to do!

We will not experience God's best for us because we will have chosen to ignore God's will. In this way people needlessly suffer, deprive others of God's presence within them, and get themselves in all kinds of trouble.

If any of us have trusted in Christ unto salvation then we are filled with His Life. The Holy Spirit dwells in us, so we can know what the will of God is, and obey. Then when we approach the end of our physical existence on this earth we'll likely know it is for God's purposes as we look forward to being with Him.

"Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight— we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:6-10)

[Being "absent from the Lord" in this passage doesn't conflict with the presence of Jesus within us, by the power of the Holy Spirit Who enters our body at the time we sincerely accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. It is referring to the fact that while we are on the earth, prior to the return of Jesus, we are not fully in the presence of God in Heaven.]

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#### Clarification of Our Value

Another critical point is that being Dead while existing on this earth does not mean we are of no value to God. He sees us as being of great value, even after Death claims us forever at the final judgment.

Generally, the world sees our value based on performance, so when our bodies quit working we have nothing more to offer. There are only the memories that people hold, and the things we have left behind.

Certainly, the value of a person may be cherished by some people after a person physically dies. The impact of relationships with others may continue until those folks are gone too, unless they pass things along to others. A few of us may have been a person of historical distinction whose life is documented beyond personal or social media.

(Personally, the desire for this seems questionable at best because the world's perspective doesn't align with God's. My desire is to please God regardless of what the world thinks about my obedience. Being recorded in the Lambs Book of Life is enough for eternity.)

Unfortunately, for some people in this world they are just gone. Their body may have some value to the undertaker, but for some people even that is denied them. Physical death is a tragic part of our existence, which is the result of being born into this Sin dominated world.

In contrast to this, God's perspective is we are always valuable to Him. He has gone to lengths far beyond our understanding in order to give us His Life; to give us Himself. Those people who exist on the Earth in Death, and those of us who are filled with God's presence, which is Life, are all so valuable to God that it is beyond our full comprehension.

The fact that someone on the earth is walking around Dead because of the power of Sin does not in any way lessen their value to God. That also means it should not lessen their value to any of us who Live in Christ. In fact, it should compel us to seek God's leading in telling those who are Dead about Life in Christ.

Perhaps the worst thing that could happen for me is someone in Hell wondering, “Why didn’t Harvey tell me about Jesus?” Even though this may never be known to me, it is my hope that it never happens.

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Even people in Hell do not lose their value in God’s eyes. Of course, He always knows where each one of us is because He is God. Even though a person has rejected God, and is totally separated from Him forever, God still Loves them forever. God will never stop Loving us even when His Love results in His great pain from our eternity in Death. Don’t ever forget that, please.

Everyone will always be important to God, so people who are existing in Death while on this earth are just as important to God as those who are filled with His Life; Jesus. One of the concerns of my heart is some people may not understand why it’s so important to be so blunt about people being walking-Dead persons. After all, the idea goes against the grain of most all we’ve been taught about death.

One thing we’ve been taught that’s correct is to avoid death. The problem is we just don’t understand what Death really is in this world.

If people understood they are Dead because of Sin, which results in them committing sins, perhaps they’d want to find a way to become truly Alive. Unfortunately, those without Life are blind to the Truth unless they decide to listen or learn about God Who is Truth.

People don’t have any control over Death. We don’t have any control over the fact that we are born separated from God, thus resulting in each of us being born Dead.

Please, be patient with these thoughts. They can be very difficult to process because they are opposite to what most all of us have been taught. Most people may understand that maintaining an existences on this earth is equal to being alive, and death is the end of our existence on the earth.

We were not born so we would be Dead. In other words, we are not co-created for the purpose of being Dead. That’s Satan’s domain.

Our intended purpose is to be fully Alive, in a unified relationship with God forever. We are meant to be Living demonstrations of God’s Holy will through our unity with Him filled with His perfect Love; His perfect presence.

Unfortunately, that’s not our initial state-of-being at the time of our birth. We can, however, later choose to be filled with God-Life. God then destroys the Death within us as eternal beings by giving us Life. By filling our beings with Jesus-Life Death has no place to exist except for our physical bodies.

He has already proven that His Life, Jesus, is greater than Death. The proof is Jesus arose after dying on the cross in obedience to His Heavenly Father. His resurrection was an eternal pronouncement of Satan’s defeat, God’s victory through Jesus, and the creation of a new form of eternal Life that has already conquered Death.

If a person is Dead then it's impossible for them to please God. Nothing of Life can come from Death. People who exist in Death on this earth can only live out Death. This means they can only act-out, or demonstrate Death. Why? They can't give what they don't have, which is Life.

As with the temptation the earmarks of Death are people, eternally-existing-human-beings, who can only act based on their foundation of human and Satanically-claimed authority. Also, their chosen thoughts, feelings, and actions seek meaning based upon their perspective of the physical, mental, and emotional domains. These conditions are the result of being separated from God; Death.

Those of us who exist within Life, within Jesus Christ, can live out that Life with the Lord. We can also live out Death. How is that possible?

Please recall, that Sin still exists within our bodies, thus its affect also exists within our minds, and emotions. That means at any time, though we are truly Alive, we can allow Sin to rule our thoughts, feelings, and actions. This means a person who is truly Alive can live like they are Dead.

Now that's a tragedy. It's also like a wreck looking for a place to happen. Only by trusting in the Lord for all things, and being obedient to His will can this be avoided.

Believe it or not, there is no enjoyment within me by writing about Death. It is atrocious, and my desire would be to avoid the subject rather than digging into it as we have done here. My hope is that in some way we have learned something by going through this together. My trust is in the Lord for His will to be done through my obedience.

It does seem important that we are able to understand that each of us are surrounded by walking-Dead people in this world. While an awful thought, we need to learn this perspective, so we can better understand the need for us to reach out to people who are in fact Dead, through our partnership with Jesus.

Why not just refer to Dead-people as those who are "lost", and thus need to be "saved"? The word lost is easily interpreted as a person that's misguided, and simply needs to understand the correct path to find their way. That is not the case here. That is not reality.

People don't just need better directions. This isn't something that we can fix. Since Adam and Eve's actions none of us have even caused this to happen to ourselves or others. It is a fact that without Jesus-Life, we are separated from Life completely. We are Dead people acting out what we think is life.

What counters this grim reality is the eternal Truth that God loves Dead people, absolutely, perfectly, and eternally. This means through our relationship in Christ we can participate in His Love as well. By being Living demonstrations of His Love, our partnership with Jesus can help people to realize their need to be Alive in Christ. We need to Live like we are the inseparable partner of Jesus, because that's who we are forever. Praise God!

My prayer is that God's Love will compel all of us who have accepted Jesus as our Life, and the Lord of our Living, to constantly seek out what the Lord wants to do through us to show others Who Jesus is, and how they can be filled with His Life. May God's will be done.