

100 BIBLE LESSONS

These lessons were originally given at Manila, Philippines, in 1958 and 1959 by former missionary to China, Alban Douglas. Give these lessons to people you visit, youth groups, hospital patients, church visitors and new members. Use them in Sunday School, bus ministry, jail services, nursing homes, Christian schools, small discussion groups and many other places. God's Word will answer your questions and help solve your problems.

LESSON 16 – DEATH

INTRODUCTION

Last week we were talking about life. We tried to define it and understand it. We decided that life was a moment of time to prepare for eternity. Life is saddened by the fact that it must end sooner or later in death unless Jesus returns to call home His church. We found it difficult to define life. Can we define death? Death is the departure of life – the cessation of life. Death is the change from the animate to the inanimate. Death is when the heart stops, when the breath ceases, when the body is a stiff corpse.

Headline, Manila Times, October 9, 1958, "PIUS 12 IN HIS AGONY OF DEATH." The Pope was 82 years old. Can you be assured of living to the age of 82? Story: Boy asked mother, "At what age do people die?" She told him to go to the cemetery and measure the graves. His conclusion, "They die at all ages."

To humans, death is the separation of body, soul and spirit:

1. The body goes to the grave and disintegrates.
2. The spirit goes back to God. Eccles. 12:7, *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*
3. The soul in Luke 16:19-31, goes to one of two places:
 - (a) The soul of the wicked to hell, Luke 16:23.
 - (b) The soul of the righteous to paradise, Luke 16:22 (Abraham's bosom), Luke 23:43. The thief was with Christ in paradise.

I. THE ORIGIN OF DEATH

There are two kinds of death and both of them come from the Garden of Eden.

1. Spiritual death. Gen. 2:17, ... *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* In Eden, Adam and Eve did not die physically when they ate the forbidden fruit. They died spiritually. Eph. 2:1. ...*dead in trespasses and sins.*
2. Physical death. Gen. 3:21, God killed animals to get skins to cover Adam and Eve. The first human to die was Abel the son of Adam, murdered by his brother Cain. Gen. 4:8, ...*Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*

II. THE CAUSE OF DEATH

Spiritual death was caused by disobedience to God. James 1:15, *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* Death is the direct result of sin. In case of physical death the doctor may write any one of many things on the death certificate, but the real answer is SIN. Sin is the basic cause and disease the immediate agency that God used to execute the sentence that was pronounced on mankind in the Garden of Eden. Ezek. 18:20, *The soul, that sinneth, it shall die.* Rom. 6:23, *For the wages of sin is death.* Heb. 9:27, *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*

III. A DESCRIPTION OF DEATH

Physical death is described as:

1. Sleep. John 11:11, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth. 1 Thess. 4:14.
2. As requiring the soul. Luke 12:20, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*
3. As putting off this earthly house. 2 Cor. 5:1, *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved...* 2 Pet. 1:14, *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle...*
4. As going to a place of no return. Job 16:22, *When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.* See also Luke 16:31.
5. As going down into silence. Psa. 115:17, *The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence.*
6. As yielding up the ghost. Acts 5:10, "Sapphira", and in Luke 23:46, of the Savior.

Eternal death is known as banishment from God. 2 Thess. 1:9, *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord...* That is, eternal death. Eternal death is also called alienation from God. Eph. 4:18, *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God...*

IV. THE REMEDY

Modern science and doctors can do a great deal to prolong life. The life span is lengthening, but that is merely postponing the day of death. We are "Appointed to die", Heb. 9:27. We are born with an appointment to meet death. We must keep that appointment. The one true remedy is found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual death is cured by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. John 5:24, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath*

everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. When we believe on Christ, the Holy Spirit works the miracle of regeneration in our lives, transforming us into children of God. John 1:12.

Physical death can be avoided by the rapture of the church. But Christ has promised to walk with us (Christians) through the experience of death. Psa. 23:4, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me...* (Those that can truthfully say, "The Lord is MY Shepherd," can also claim this promise.)

V. THE DEATH OF CHRIST

Why did Jesus die on the cross? Was it an accident? Certainly not. God's Word said that someone must die for sin. Jesus volunteered to be the One to die. He died the death that YOU AND I ought to have died. Heb. 2:9, *...that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.* Jesus tasted the bitter dregs of death for you. Oh, reject Him no longer. Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for you and me. Eph. 5:2, *...and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God.* The death of the Savior was necessary for the redemption of mankind. Luke 24:46, *... Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.*

What is the Gospel? 1 Cor. 15:1-4 defines it as that Christ suffered for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried and that He rose the third day. That is, the Gospel includes death, the death of the Savior for sin.

CONCLUSION

The death of the righteous is precious to the Father. Psa. 116:15, *Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.*

The death of the wicked is unpleasant to God. Ezek. 33:11, *As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* I implore you today to turn from your sins, to repent and turn to the Lord. Rev. 3:20, Jesus is knocking at the door of your life seeking entrance. OPEN NOW.

Story of George Wyatt, married man with six children, was drafted in the Civil War. Richard Pratt, a bachelor, volunteered to take his place. He was accepted, went to war, and was killed. Wyatt said, "He died for me." Jesus died for you on the cross. Receive Him as your King, Lord and Savior TODAY.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Define death.
2. What happens to man at death?
3. What are the two kinds of death and where did they originate?

4. What is the basic cause of death?
5. List 6 Scriptural descriptions of death.
6. What is the cure for spiritual death?
7. Why is Psa. 23:4, so precious to the seriously sick?
8. Do you think that Jesus died as a martyr? Why?
9. What is the Gospel?
10. What is the contrast between Psa. 116:15, and Ezekiel 33:11?