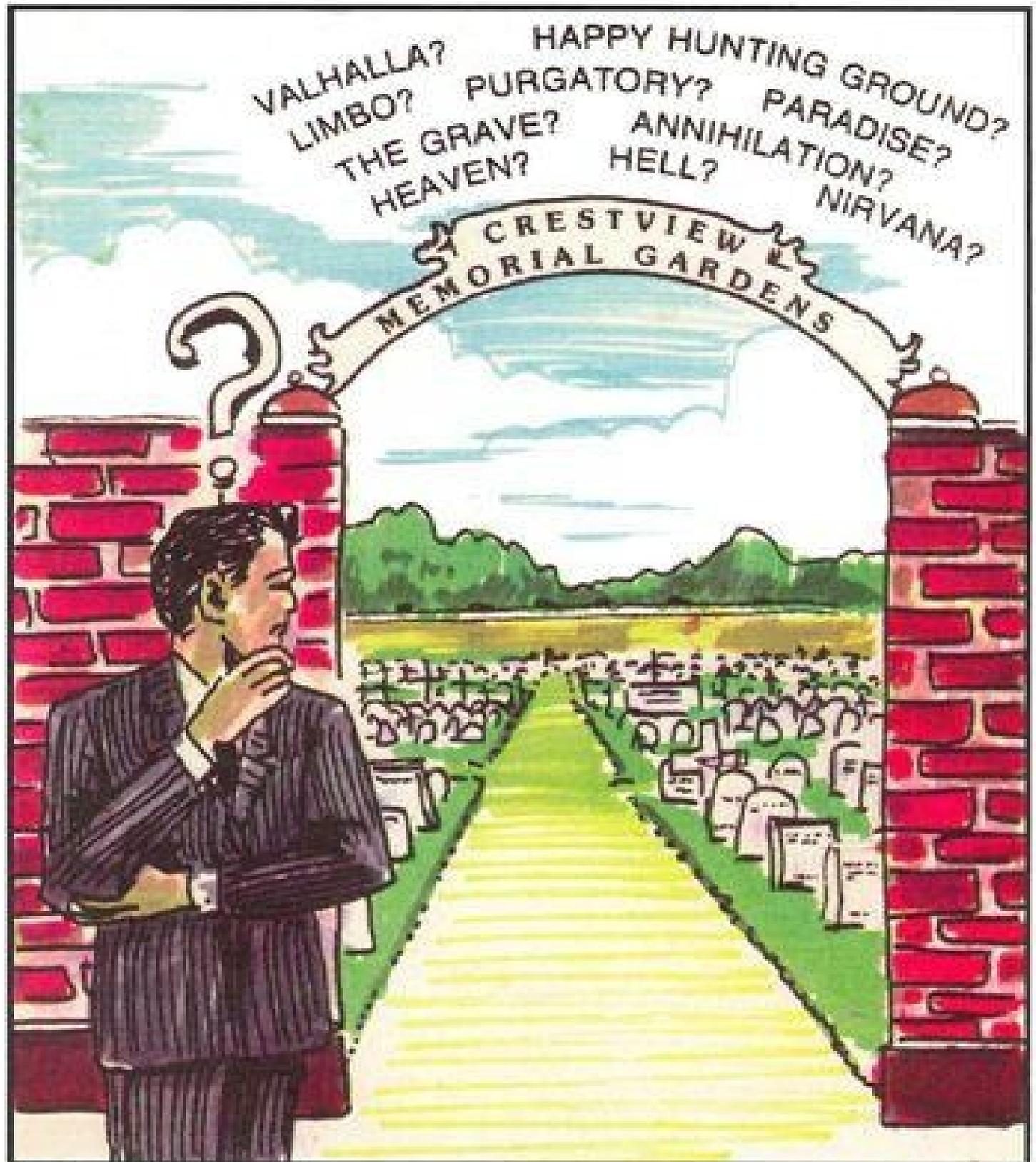
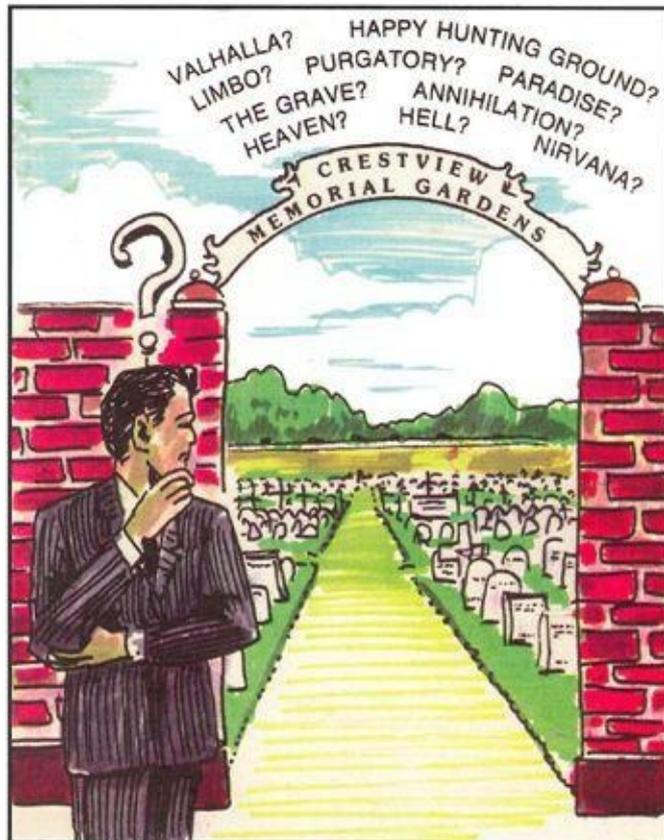


Where Do The Dead Go?



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Where Do The Dead Go?

When everything is settled and done, there is one thing that sets the Bible off as being a separate Book from all other books. These fellows try to make other religious literature sacred. They talk about the “*scriptures* of other religions,” but there are no “*scriptures*” in other religions. “**All scripture is given by inspiration of God,**” (2 Tim. 3:16). You say, “How can you prove there are no *scriptures* in other religions?” *They can’t prophesy anything.* It is just that simple. You have got a Book here that gives forty-eight details of a man’s life before He shows up, and all of them come to pass. That is a phenomenon not found in any other so-called “*sacred literature*” of any religion on the face of this earth. You can’t find *one* religious book of the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Brahmas, the Taoists, the Mohammedans, or the Confucians that gives forty-eight details of a man’s life before he shows up and they all come through “on the money.” There is no such thing. I have read them: the Sutras, Vedas, Shastas, Puranas, and the Analects; I’ve read them all. The Koran—it wouldn’t even hazard a prophecy. Whoever wrote the Bible is out in the future, and He is writing what He has already seen. That is not true of any so-called *sacred literature*. Folks say, “Well, that’s the most intolerant thing....” No, it’s the most *mathematical* thing you ever heard of. In a day and age of computers, you would think a fellow would appreciate that, wouldn’t you? I mean, here is a Book that prophesies five hundred details of a man’s life that haven’t happened yet, and they are all going to happen. Why didn’t Buddha try that? Do you know why? Because he didn’t know. Why didn’t Confucius try that? Ignorance. Why didn’t Mohammed try that? Stupidity. Why didn’t Lao Tze or Zoroaster try that? Because they didn’t have any sense, any more than any of us. Whoever wrote that Book knew the past, present, and future in one shot. The thing that sets the Book off from other books is the fact that it hazarded over five hundred “*opinions*” about the future that come to pass.

Now, for example, “Where will you go when you die?” Job said, “**But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?**” (Job 14:10). Well, *Eleanor Roosevelt* didn’t know. *Franklin Roosevelt* didn’t know. *Einstein* didn’t know. *Descartes* didn’t know. *Leibnitz* didn’t know. *Spinoza* didn’t know. *Hegel* didn’t know. If you had the United Nations Assembly here and asked them to stand up and tell you where they are going when they die and prove it in writing, you might get thirty out of five hundred, if you’re lucky. You might not even get that many. The thing that makes the Bible different from other books is that the Bible can let you know *where you are going when you die*.

Now, if you are a Catholic, do you know what you believe? You believe in “finding the church that Christ founded,” the one, true, “holy, apostolic church,” and taking the sacraments and dying in a state of grace. Otherwise, you go to purgatory or hell. But you don’t know anything until you’re dead. Now, don’t say, “Well, that’s so narrow-minded....” Go out and talk to the Catholics about their souls like I do. Don’t sit there and make a judgment based on the fact that you don’t know what you are talking about. Go out and talk to them. Do you have any Catholic friends? Ask them if they are saved. Ask

them how they *know* they are saved. And when they tell you, ask them to *show* it to you. Simple problem.

A woman working at a doctor's office had been dealing for about three months with a Charismatic who kept talking about people being "slain in the Spirit." This woman asked me, "How do I deal with this girl?" I said, "Very simple. Just ask her to bring the Bible and show you where anybody in the Bible was ever slain in the Spirit." So, the next day she said to the girl, "How about showing me in the Bible where it says, 'slain in the Spirit.'" The girl said, "Oh, it's in there." The woman said, "Well, just show it to me and I'll accept it." The girl couldn't show it. A week later, I said, "Ask her again." Two weeks later I said, "Ask her again." Three weeks later the girl said, "Well, get off my back!" Do you know why nobody has ever found in the Bible where anybody was ever "slain in the Spirit"? *Because nobody ever was.* If there is anything I can't stand it is somebody going around saying, "The Bible says this and the Bible says that and the Bible *teaches* this," and then when you haul out the Bible, they can't show it to you. If you can't show it, you had better change your opinion.

Now, are you a Protestant? Well, if you are just a Protestant, you believe in keeping the Golden Rule and the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. But, you don't know where you are going when you die, if a "Protestant" is all you are. Do you know something? A Bible-believing Christian is the only person who knows where he is going when he dies.

John knew where he was going when he died. He said, "**These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life**" (1 John 5:13). He knew where he was going. *Simon Peter* knew where he was going. *Simon Peter* said, "**Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me**" (2 Peter 1:14), and I have "**an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ...**" (1 Peter 1:4-5). *Paul* knew where he was going. He said, "**I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day**" (2 Tim. 1:12). Now, if *Paul* knew where he was going and *John* knew where he was going and *Peter* knew where he was going, how come you don't know where *you* are going? Aren't people strange? Some of you are forty, fifty, and sixty years old and don't know where you are going when you die. What kind of god do you have? Kick him off the throne. Trade him in. Do you mean to tell me a god would put you down here forty, fifty, or sixty years and never let you know what is going to happen to you when you die, when you are all headed that way? You take *Jesus Christ*. He said, "**The way ye know.**" Somebody said, "How can we know the way?" and He said to that fellow, "**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me**" (John 14:4-6).

Now, if you are going to find out where you are going to go when you die, the first thing you have to know is *what* you are. You say, "Well, that's a stupid kind of thing." No, it's not as dumb as it sounds. The average *person* doesn't even know what a person is. Suppose you had the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Congress here and asked them, "What is man?" You would get as many answers as there are people. Suppose

you had this room full of psychiatrists or people that belong to the National Association for the Advancement of Science. They wouldn't know what we were talking about. A man has a soul and a spirit and a body, according to that Book. Now, if that is so, then a man who doesn't believe that doesn't know what he is doing.

You take that word "soul." Do you know what that thing looks like in Greek? It looks like this: ψυχη (psuche). The "psyche" is the basis for psychology, psychiatrics, psychosomatics, etc. The word for "body" in Greek is σωμα (soma). A man has a *body*, a man has a *soul*, and a man has a *spirit*. Those words are not the same in Greek. They are not the same in Hebrew. They are not the same in English. You take the Greek word πνευμα (pneuma). You know what pneumonia is, don't you? Pneumonia is when you have *wind* trouble. You know what a pneumatic drill is, don't you? It is a *wind-driven* drill. If you have a spirit, it is like *wind*. Christ said, **"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit,"**

(John 3:8). You know the Spirit is wind because in Ezekiel 37:9 he said, **"Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain,"** and

Ezekiel prophesied to the four winds and breath came into them and they stood upon their feet. The spirit is wind, and the wind is spirit. You say, "How do you know that?" *That is what He said.*

You say, "Well, about the Greek and Hebrew?" You don't have to know any Greek and Hebrew. All you have to know is English. You say, "Well, what did you put down the Greek for?" *To show you that they are not the same.* They are not the same, because they are *spelled* differently. You see? "Soul," "body," "spirit." Do you know what Jesus Christ said? In the Book He said, **"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"** (Mark 8:36). Do you know what Paul said in the Book? Paul said, **"I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"** (1 Thess. 5:23-24).

The word for soul in Hebrew looks like this: נֶפֶשׁ (nephesh). The word for spirit looks like this: רוּחַ (ruach). The word for body is like the flesh and looks like this: בָּשָׂר (basar). Our word for the body is a word for *flesh*—carnal, carnivorous, do you know what a carnival is? It is a display of *flesh*. Do you know what chili con carne is? It is chili with the *meat*. Do you see that?

All right, they are not the same in English; they are not the same in Greek, they are not the same in Hebrew. Then why would you think they *are* the same? Here is the head of the National Association of Psychiatrists, and you ask him, "Do you work with men?" Yes. "Do you try to get people straightened out?" Yes. "What is a person?" *He does not know.*

Did you know that basically you are a *spiritual being*? The flesh is going to rot. It is going to fall away. You are *inside* the flesh. Do you know why some of you young people just mess around all your lives and can't get your feet on the ground? You don't have any spiritual aims. If you haven't got any spiritual aims, you can't ever be a success at anything. *You are a spiritual being.* You have got an outward shell, but the shell falls off.

Listen, you fool, if you haven't got a spiritual goal, you are never going to amount to anything because you are a spiritual being. Now, you take me. You look at me. What do you see? *Nothing*. You have never seen me. You have never seen *me* a day in your life. You say, "I'm looking at you right..." No you're not; you are looking at my *body*. You have never seen me. Do you know where I am? I am *inside* my body. You see, people get the thing all messed up.

Americans go out to the playground and they call it "recreation." Do you know what that means? Recreation. *Re-create*. New birth. Isn't that wonderful? "New birth" every day in school at ten o'clock. Recreation! No, man. You are not your *body*. You are *inside* your body. Look here. Christ said, "**He that hath seen me hath seen the Father**" (John 14:9). Amen? All right, "**No man hath seen God at any time**" (John 1: 18). Amen? There you go. Now, do you see how people get in trouble?

Here is a Jehovah's Witness, and he says, "Well, no man has seen God at any time, but you saw Jesus Christ, so He must not be the real God. *He's a lesser god; He's God Number Two.*" Blew it again, didn't you? Do you know what a Jesus Only, a Pentecostal Oneness, will say? He'll say, "Well, if you've seen Jesus Christ, you have seen the Father. So, there isn't any Father except Jesus Christ. The Father is Jesus, and the Son is Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is Jesus." *Wrong again*. God has a body, Jesus Christ. God has a soul, God the Father. God has a spirit, the Holy Spirit.

"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). You have got three parts. You have got a *body*. You have got a *soul*. You have got a *spirit*. That is a trinity. You are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. That is not a Catholic doctrine. That is not a Baptist doctrine. That is a *Bible* doctrine. You have got a body, you have got a soul, and you have got a spirit. There are three parts to you. Do you see the sun up there over your head? It has *light* rays; you can see them, but you can't *feel* them. It has *heat* rays; you can feel them, but you can't *see* them. It has *actinic* rays; you can't feel them, and you can't see them. You have a body, and you have a soul, and you have a spirit.

Now, here is my body, and inside that body I have the breath of life; that's the spirit. *The spirit is like wind*. My body is filled with something like air that permeates that entire body. That is a man's spirit. "**For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God,**" (1 Cor. 2:11). There are *four* spirits in the world according to that Book. You have God's Spirit, the devil's spirit, the human spirit, and animal spirit. "**Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?**" Do you know why you can't converse with a dog? Because he has a different spirit than you. Did you ever sit down with a dog and say, "What did you think about that last play on third? Wasn't that a good play?" The dog just says, "Arf, arf, arf, arf." You can't talk with an animal. You say, "Oh, we've got these monkeys that push the button and put cream in the coffee, and . . ." I know, I know all about it, man. I'm not talking about that. I mean give the dog an income tax form and tell him to figure it out. Buy a parakeet and a swallow and a whippoorwill and a bobwhite and put them in cages

and teach them how to sing four part harmony. You can't do it. Do you know why? The spirit that is in them is an animal spirit, and the spirit that is in you is a human spirit.

Now, God wants to talk to you, but you can't understand Him. **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God...neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”** (1 Cor. 2:14). The natural man cannot get that because he is on a different level. Do you know the main thing that makes you different from animals? It is the fact that you can't converse with animals, but you can converse with each other with *words*. If God wanted to converse with man, do you know what He would use? He would use *words*. Have you got a Book on you? Has it got some words in it? That is the medium of communication. Listen, **“In the beginning was the Word”** (John 1:1). That's it. That is how you know Darwin was wrong, because that word wouldn't do the animals any good at all. There is no communication. I mean, an animal will obey God, but he obeys God by instinct. The Lord says, “Bite him,” and he goes up and bites you. The animals obey God. The Lord says to that swallow, “Fly south. It's getting cold.” That swallow will take off. He'll fly fifteen hundred miles. He tells those Alaskan birds “Fly back to Hawaii and build a nest.” The mother and daddy go down one year, and the kids come down the next year and find the same nest in Hawaii. Let's see you figure *that* out. That thing is imparted wisdom that God put in those animals, but God doesn't sit down and talk to them and say, “What do you think about Jonah? Did he taste very good? How did you feel when you spit him up? Are you going to write a book about it?” No, God deals with men with *words*, and the point of contact is right here in this Bible. There is a spirit in this Book.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (John 3:6-7). All right, inside my body I have got a spirit. What is it like? Well, a football has a leather outside cover. It has air inside; that's the spirit. But it has something else. It has an *inner tube* in there, and it is shaped just like the football. (The best way to overcome a seminary education is to get a King James Bible. The best way to correct a Hebrew or Greek professor is with 1611, archaic, Elizabethan English, which says that a soul has a bodily shape.) You say, “Where?”

It says in Luke 16:19-24, **“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue....”** Do you see that? Your soul is not like a peanut or an apple or a banana stuck away in your body someplace. Your soul has a *tongue*. Your soul has feet. Your soul has *hands*. Your soul has *eyes, ears, nose, throat, mouth, lips, teeth, and jaws*¹. The Bible says that at the last judgment there is going to be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. One old

woman said, "I ain't going to worry about that 'cause I ain't got no teeth." The preacher said, "Madam, teeth will be provided."

Inside your body you have a body shaped just like this body. How do you know that? Because in Revelation 6:9-11 He said, "**I saw under the altar the souls...And white robes were given unto every one of them.**" A soul can wear a white robe. Why, if a soul came to that door right now it would have a white linen sheet over it, and if you took it off, there would be nothing underneath it. Casper the friendly ghost. So, when you see those pictures of ghosts, they are always drawn with a white sheet because fine linen robes are given to them. See that business? it must have been about ten years ago that I saw some photographs in *Life* magazine of bodies with an electronic aura and color around them. (Big new discovery.) I thought to myself, "Boy, you finally caught up with the King James Bible, didn't you?" You would think they could do better than that after three hundred years. I read someplace that the average person wants a distance of eighteen inches between him and a stranger when he is seated in a certain place. Why is that? There is some kind of aura. There is some kind of *shape* right there. A fellow loses his hand, and about two years later he says to his wife, "My fingers itch." She says, "Honey, you haven't got any fingers on that hand." He says, "Well, they itch," and he goes to the doctor, and the doctor says, "It is the nerve endings." Doctors have their problems, too. Nerve endings are not the problem. The problem is that after you get that finger cut off, *it's still right there*. You just don't see it. Listen, when you get to hell, some of you folks, and when you get to burning in the lake of fire, you will realize that you have a body that is not physical. That is why it can't burn up. A fellow keeps thinking he can go to hell and burn up. How can you burn up when there is nothing *physical* there to burn, when the fire is physical. The body is spiritual. All right, you have got a body, a soul, and a spirit.

Now, let's take Jesus Christ for an example. "**Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ... he was buried, and ... he rose again the third day according to the scriptures**" (1 Cor. 15:34). "**Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them**" (Heb. 7:25). When Jesus Christ died on Calvary's cross, He said "**Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit**" (Luke 23:46). Okay, the spirit went up. Where did the spirit go? It went up to heaven. The word in Greek looks like this: οὐρανοῦς (ouranos). In Hebrew it looks like this: שָׁמַיִם (shamayim). All right, the spirit went *up*.

Now, where did Christ's body go? Well, you know where His body went. His body went to the grave. His body went to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea for three days and three nights. That word for grave in Greek looks like this: μνημειον (mnemeion). In Hebrew it looks like this: קֶבֶר (qeber). That is not the word for *sheol*. That is the word for *grave*, and many times it occurs in the *plural*, "graves." Listen, there are no *sheols*. Every time *sheol* occurs in your Bible it occurs in the *singular* and looks like this: שְׁאוֹל (sheol). That's a singular word. That's not like literal graves. Now, when He talks about the grave as a collective place where all the dead go, it might be that. But if he talks about a *grave where you bury somebody*, that is not even the same word. You say, "Well, if I just don't know the Greek and Hebrew...." Listen, man, the people who get rid of hell use the Greek and Hebrew to get rid of hell-the Jehovah's Witnesses. If they stuck by the English, they

would get it right. I mean, those words are not the same. *Sheol* is the place of departed spirits. They are not the same.

Now, where did Christ's soul go? Turn to Acts 2:27, 31. (Nothing like a King James Bible to clear up a college education. That Bible is still the most controversial, revolutionary Book on the face of this earth. There is nothing like it, now or later.) Acts 2:27 says **"Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell...."** His soul was not left where? Hell. Do you see that? His soul went down to hell.

You say, "Well, where is hell?" The Bible doesn't leave any doubt where hell is. Turn to Matthew 12 and Jonah 2, and let's compare scripture with scripture. The Bible is its own interpreter, scripture with scripture. The best commentary on the scripture is the scripture. Matthew 12:40, **"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."** Do you know what you read? You read that Jesus Christ was three days and three nights *in the heart of the earth*. Do you know what it means in the Greek? It means "the heart of the earth." Do you know what it means in the Hebrew? It means, "the heart of the earth."

Now listen, Jesus Christ's spirit was in *heaven*. Then what part of Him went down to the **"heart of the earth"**? Why, obviously, His soul. His body was in the *tomb*. Body, spirit, soul. You just read that His soul wasn't **"left in hell"** Turn to Jonah 2. Where was Jonah those three days and three nights?

Jonah 2:2, "out **of the** belly of hell—" That old

boy died. His body was in that whale, and his soul was down in the heart of the earth. He said, **"I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever."** When Jesus Christ died on Calvary's cross, His soul went right down through hell but was not *left* there. Now, that is what is known as an advanced revelation of a scientific nature that the editors of the *National Geographic* magazine know nothing about.

All right, take your Bible and turn to Luke 16—scripture with scripture. Begin at Luke 16:19, **"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."** This is an Old Testament story. When Jesus Christ tells this story, He hasn't even died on the cross yet. **"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died...."** All right, the unsaved fellow dies. Where does he go? The Bible says, **"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments...."** The rich man went to hell. He got down to hell and lift up his eyes, and what did he see? **"And seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."**

All right, why did he say, **"Father Abraham"**? Because the earth was given to Abraham (Rom. 4:13). You have got a picture here of Father Abraham. **"Our father"** (Matt. 3:9) is Abraham. Why is it called Abraham's bosom? Because it is the bosom of the earth.

There was a place back in the Old Testament where saved Jewish saints went; they went to *Abraham's bosom*. They didn't go to *heaven*. A professor at one of these Christian schools says, "Folks are saved the same way in the Old Testament as in the New Testament. In the Old Testament they are saved by looking forward to Christ.

In the New Testament they are saved by looking back to Christ." No way! *In the Old Testament they didn't even go to the same place*. You take a saved fellow in the Old Testament. When he died, he couldn't go to hell because he was saved, and he couldn't go to heaven because his sins hadn't been paid for. (He couldn't go to purgatory because there isn't any purgatory.) All right, you take a saved fellow in the Old Testament, when he died he went to Abraham's bosom. An unsaved fellow went to hell. You say, "How do you know they were that close?" Because it says he **"lift up his eyes...and seeth Abraham afar off"** (Luke 16:23). Now, what is that distance? I don't know. Twenty feet, forty feet, one hundred feet, fifty yards. I don't know. He says **"afar off."** It must have been a good ways. You couldn't cross it. He said, **"And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed...."** You couldn't get across— whatever the distance is. But I know he saw him. Do you know how I know he saw him? Because the Bible says he saw him. *He saw him*. All right, unsaved people in hell; saved people in Abraham's bosom.

Now, Christ died on the cross, and when He died He went *down*. Turn to Ephesians 4. (Nothing like a Bible to clear up a seminary education. Do you know why some of this is so new to some of you folks? You don't spend any time in the Book. If you spent one fifth of the time in that Book that you spend in front of the television, all this wouldn't be so strange to you.) Ephesians 4:8-10, **"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?...that he might fill all things.)"** Now,

look at that thing carefully. He descended first into the lower parts of the earth and then **"He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."** Christ went down through hell. How do I know He went down through there? I know He went down through there because the Bible says in Revelation 1:18 that He said, **"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."** There is some kind of a door down in the heart of the earth. There is some kind of a bar down there. Jonah said, **"The earth with her bars was about me for ever"** (Jonah 2:6). Matthew 16:18 says, **"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** Christ goes down through hell, and comes out through Abraham's bosom; and when He comes out, He takes somebody up to heaven with Him. You read in 1 Peter 4:6, **"For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead...."** You read in 1 Peter 3:18-19 that Christ went by the Spirit and **"preached unto the spirits in prison."** One place said He preached *the gospel*, and the other place just said He *preached*; no gospel.

Let's illustrate it this way. Here is a warden of a penitentiary, and on one side of the prison he has got a bunch of prisoners on death row waiting for execution. To these fellows he opens the door and says, "Your warrant is fixed. Your date is set for execution. You are going to get the hot seat on such and such a day," and blam! he slams the door.

Next he steps over and opens this other door and says, “You fellows waiting for a pardon?” Yes. “You have been pardoned by the governor. Here it is. You’re out,” and out you go. That is the difference. Christ went down in the old compartment of *sheol*, down there to *hades* or hell, opened that door and said, “Are you the people that didn’t believe the word of God preached in the Old Testament, you spirits back in the days of Noah and fallen spirits and fallen angels, reserved in chains of darkness? I am the promised Messiah. I am the one that Enoch spoke of when he said **‘The Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints’**” (Jude 14), and blam!, slams the door. Then He steps over here and opens the other door and says, “Are you the boys waiting for the blood of the Lamb to show up?” Yes. “I’m the Lamb.” Out they go. That’s it, that’s it! *It’s Jesus Christ.*

All right, **“He led captivity captive.”** He took them up to heaven. Why did He take them up? *Because their salvation was complete.* When Christ died on Calvary’s cross, He said, **“It is finished”** (John 19:30). All right, it is finished. They don’t have to stay down there any more! It’s *finished!* Boy, if some of you folks could just get *that!* You are working so hard to get to heaven. Some of your Catholic friends have taken the sacraments and go to confession and all that stuff, and you are just driving yourself crazy trying to make it, but all you are doing is messing up the finished work of Jesus Christ. Christ said, **“It is finished.”** Now, what do you add to it? For example, a fellow makes a piano and gives it to you, but a week after it gets there I come in and take a pair of pliers and bust out the strings, then I kick it a few times and take an axe and whack it, throw kerosene on it and set fire to it, scrape it with a knife, and you say, “What are you doing, you fool?” I say, “I’m just putting the finishing touches on it.” And you say, “Why, it was finished before you ever got to it.” I said: **“IT WAS FINISHED BEFORE YOU EVER GOT TO IT.”** Christ says, **“It is finished.”** Now, what are you going to add? Your little old baptism, little old sacraments, little old “Hail Mary,” little old “Our Father,” little old rosary, pray to Fatima, join the church, give to the United Fund or the Red Cross. Finished, boy! You aren’t going to add anything to it. You’re just going to make the biggest mess you ever saw.

Christ finishes, and when He finishes, do you know what you have? You have *redemption* for the transgressions under the first testament. You have redemption, not just *forgiveness*. (You take *forgiveness*, that’s another word: that’s like remission.) Why, listen, God remitted sins all through the Old Testament, but they were not *redeemed*. **“It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”** (Heb. 10:4). **“The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering...forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty”** (Exod. 34:6-7). Back in the Old Testament the fellow could be forgiven, his sins could be *remitted*, but he could not be *cleared*, and his sins couldn’t be “taken away.” When Jesus Christ showed up at Jordan, John the Baptist was preaching the **“baptism of repentance for the remission of sin”** (Mark 1:4). Is he telling them to get baptized *so they can get their sins forgiven*? Of course not. He is telling them to get baptized because *God had been forgiving them for four thousand years*. Christ, at the Lord’s Supper, said, **“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins”** (Matt. 26:28). Is He saying you have to have that blood shed *before* you get your sins remitted? Why, that is the most cockeyed thing you ever heard of in your life. *God forgave David before that*

blood was shed. God forgave Noah before that blood was shed. God forgave Joseph for lying about the cup before the blood was shed. God forgave Moses for committing murder before that blood was shed. Christ's blood was not shed to get anybody forgiveness of sins. Christ's blood was shed because God had been forgiving sins for four thousand years without a proper basis for doing it. That blood was shed because God had been forgiving people their sins. Acts 2:38, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...." Does that mean "get baptized so that you can get your sins forgiven"? No way under God's heaven. It didn't mean that one time. Do you know why Simon Peter wanted that bunch to get baptized? Because God forgave them. You say, "Where do you get that from, Ruckman?" Don't you remember Christ on the cross? What did He pray? "**Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do**" (Luke 23:34). Did God forgive them? *Yes, He did.* That is why He gave them a chance in Acts 2. If He hadn't forgiven them, they would not have had the chance. What does "**for the remission**" mean? It means get baptized because you have had your sins forgiven. Now they're *redeemed*.

Somebody is always trying to run you back into the Old Testament where they are all working to get to heaven and going to intermediate states before they get there. There is always somebody trying to run you back there where you will have a robed priest running around in a Halloween costume. There is always somebody trying to run you back into the Old Testament where you have holy water and holy clothes and a holy tabernacle and holy ground and holy cats and holy this and holy that. You had better look out for that stuff. Christ died on the cross and said, "**It is finished,**" and when a man crosses back over to return to the law, he has to trample on the blood of Jesus Christ to get back in there.

All right, here's a saved fellow on the New Testament side of Calvary. What happens to him when he dies? Well, the Bible says, "**absent from the body ... present with the Lord**" (2 Cor. 5:8). Paul said, "**For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better**" (Phil. 1:23). He said, "**For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain**" (Phil. 1:21). Now, can you say that honestly? Can you look whatever god you serve (maybe it is your own brain) in the face, and say, "For me to die is gain"? Could you say that and tell the truth? *A Jehovah's Witness couldn't say that.* He thinks that when you are dead you are in the grave. He thinks hell is the "grave"! What if I came to your house and said, "The only lampstand is the rug." You say, "What?" I say, "The only dog you've got is the light bulb." You say, "What?" I say, "The only telephone pole is the lampshade." You say, "Well, man, you are crazy." But somebody comes to your house with a bunch of records and the *Watchtower* and they say, "The only hell is the grave." Well, they might be good people, but they've got their pilot light blown out.

Let me ask you this. If hell is the *grave*, where is Lester Roloff? He's in hell. If hell is the grave, where are Dwight L. Moody and the apostles Paul and Peter and James and John? According to you, they're in hell. Who are you trying to kid'? They are "**absent from the body and...present with the Lord.**" Why, if I were to die right now, two gentlemen would show up here (they would be about thirty-three years old), and they would say, "Are you ready?" I would say, "Why, I've been ready for thirty-four years," and they'd say, "Let's go," and off we would go. "**Are they not all ministering spirits,**

sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Heb. 1:14). I would have the sensation of going up faster than the speed of light, and this world would vanish behind me. I would get a sensation like traveling on a rocket through space, and about that time I would see a light and it would get brighter and brighter and brighter. Then I would feel the presence of Jesus Christ like I have never felt it before in all my life. Then I would feel the presence of loved ones and I would be in a state of perfect happiness and perfect rest. Nirvana, boy! Samadhi, boy! What they are looking for down here, boy! I would be in that state until I came back for my new body. **“Absent from the body, and...present with the Lord.”** Now, good people, if all I offered was a million dollars or a summer and winter home and didn't tell you about that, I would sell you short.

Did you ever see anybody die? I mean without the drugs, without the dope. In Bay Minette, Alabama, *Ernest Duck* had a granddaddy who was a Methodist preacher—an old-time Methodist preacher. I'm not talking about one of these Glide Memorial freaks or one of these San Francisco queers; I am talking about an old-time Methodist preacher. You know, one of those that gets down on his hands and knees and yells, “Oh, God!” That old-time Methodist preacher died, and when he died he was out under one of those mimosa trees, and he said, “I'm going to leave you today, son. I'm going.” The son said, “Well, daddy, you've been saying that a couple of days now.” He said, “Yeah, but I'm really leaving you today,” and Ernest went and got a doctor, and the doctor came and gave him a shot of something, and they sat around there and drank some iced tea and talked awhile. Old man Duck sat in that wheelchair and looked out across that pea patch for a minute, and his eyes lit up like the sun coming over the Atlantic Ocean in the morning, and he said, “My, my, that sure is a beautiful room. I reckon that's about the most beautiful room I ever seen in all my life.” Then he turned to the doctor and his son and said, “What made me say that?” The boy said, “I don't know, daddy.” And the old man looked at both of them right in the face and said, “Bye bye,” and *he went*. Now, I'll tell you man, you can't beat that thing with a stick. Tell me something. What have you heard over CBS, NBC, ABC, or seen in any magazine or newspaper in a hundred years that could beat *that*?

You are going to die. Do you understand? The kids are going to fight over the money. They're all going to see who can be the best to you in your old age to get the most out of you when you finally kick the bucket. Then you are going to die, and the undertaker is going to get you, and the lawyers are going to fight over the estate. Amen? **“For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”** (Matt. 16:26). Listen, brother, sister, if you live your life for Christ and die a happy death in Christ, then you are a multimillionaire. You have got it made. The rest doesn't amount to anything.

There was an older fellow in this town named Chavers who was happily married to one woman for sixty-five years. One Sunday after she fixed dinner, he went in to lie down on the couch and take a nap, like he ordinarily did, and he told his wife before he went in, “You, know, I feel so funny.” She said, “What do you mean?” He said, “I don't know. I just feel so happy. I just feel like laughing. I don't know what is wrong with me. Just feel like laughing. Never have felt so good. I don't know what has got a hold on me.” He laid down on the couch, and in five minutes he was dead. Now, if you can go like *that*, you have “got it made.”

Did you know that there are tougher ways to go than that? Did you ever go to the cancer ward or the burn ward? Did you ever see them out there on the highway? Did you ever see them blown to pieces with shells? There are tougher ways to go. New Testament salvation is the greatest thing there is. The greatest thing is to be able to die happy, successful, and well. You're all going to make it anyway if the Lord carries. **“Absent from the body, and...present with the Lord ... To depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.”**

The unsaved fellow this side of Calvary dies, and where does he go? He can't go to *heaven* because he's not saved. He can't go to *Abraham's bosom* because it's empty. They have already left.

He can't go to *purgatory* because there isn't any purgatory. Do you know where he goes? Well, if that Bible is right, he goes straight to *hell*, that is where he goes. That is where some of you are going. You are going to make it, too. You say, “Well, I think you are a preacher of hate.” You don't know what you are talking about. You read that bunk somewhere, and you've been talking to somebody just as crooked as you. You have got all this stuff going because of the rotten company you keep. I have nothing against the human race at all. I wouldn't condemn anybody to burn in a lake of fire, not my worst enemy. You say, “Why not?” *Because I am not God*. I am not *holy*. I wouldn't kill a fellow for stealing a peach or fig out of my backyard. The Lord would. Do you know what He did to Adam and Eve for taking some fruit off a tree? *He killed them*.

I don't get any pleasure out of talking about hell. My mother and father are probably there. I say *probably*; the chances are 90 percent. My aunt and uncle are there. With them the chances are about 98 percent. They were chronic alcoholics, burned to death by fire lit by cigarettes. I get no pleasure in talking about hell, but I have got to face the fact that it is there, and if you are called to preach you have got to preach about it. Do you know where some of you are going? *You are going to hell*. I don't guess I have ever preached to a congregation of over two hundred people where there wasn't somebody in there who was going to hell when I came in there and who went to hell *after I left*; and if they are not in hell right *now*, they are still on the road. A lady said to me one time, “Well, Brother Ruckman, we are all working to get to the same place.” I said, “And you will make it, too, if you're not careful.” I mean, if you are *working* for something, “the wages” (that's what you work for) **“of sin is death.”** That's the business. **“But the gift of God is eternal life”** (Rom. 6:23). If you are working to get somewhere, you are working toward *death*. That's what you are working toward. I don't enjoy preaching about hell, but you've got to preach about it. I enjoy preaching about heaven, to be quite frank with you. There are two things I enjoy preaching about more than anything in the world. I like to preach about heaven, and I like to preach about the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those two things are the closest things to my heart. But, if I am ordered to declare the whole counsel, I have to declare the whole counsel (Acts 20:27).

An unsaved fellow dies and he goes to hell. Do you know what some of you are going to do? *You are going to go to hell*.

Nothing I say is going to influence you. You're smarter than I am. You have more experience. You've got more brains that to listen to a fellow like me. I mean, you're well

read. You know all kinds of things I don't know. I'll tell you something else. If I had Lester Roloff here you would still go to hell. If I had Bob Gray here you would still go to hell. There are some people in this country, I don't care *who* preaches what, that have got their mind made up and nobody is going to change them a bit. Southerners are that way. These old fellows from Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, and Tennessee will sit under fifty preachers, I mean five a year for ten years, and still go to hell. I don't know what secret knowledge they think they have.

I hope you *don't* go to hell. I hope I don't have to face you at the White Throne Judgment and see you go out there weeping and wailing and gnashing teeth, burning in the filthy rags of your own self-righteousness, fire and brimstone going off you, and God talking to you and saying, **"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"** (Matt. 25:41). My mamma. She gave birth to me, brought me into the world, took care of me when I couldn't take care of myself. Do you think I will enjoy *that*? Do you think you will? One of these days when eternity starts, it will all be over, and we will have the right slant on it, but for a while it is going to be rough.

All right, what does He say? He says, **"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God;"** (Here they come.) **"...the books were opened...and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works...and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them...This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire"** (Rev. 20: 11-15). Now, don't you see what God did? God has got this thing worked out to a fine point of perfection. God took saved sinners in the Old Testament and put them in a temporary state in the Old Testament until their salvation was *complete*, and then He put them into *heaven*. Now God will take unsaved people and put them in a temporary state until their *damnation* is complete, and then put them in a *lake of fire*. Did you ever hear a fellow say, "Go jump in the lake"? That's the lake. Did you ever hear a fellow say, "Out of the frying pan and into the fire"? Did you ever hear a fellow say, "Well, I think God will give me a second chance. I believe God is just too good to condemn me. I'll have another chance." You'll have a chance. Your chance will be at the White Throne Judgment. Do you want to take it? Excuse me, please I will be absent. I am not about to stand before God and try to justify my life or my actions or my thoughts. I am not about to try it. I wouldn't stand the chance of a snowball in hell. And I'll tell you something else. If you would think you would, I would advise you to go home tonight and look in the mirror and think a little bit differently while you are looking in the mirror. I mean, if God Almighty took out the record of everything you have thought and said and intended today, and if every secret motive of the heart was made manifest and everything you daydreamed about today was put across the screen where everyone could see it, wouldn't some of us get sick? Yes, I think so. Now, if you want to take the chance, it is yours to take. Like I said, */ am not going to take it*.

I'd take my chances right there *at the cross*. I went there and I said, "Look here, Lord, I can't get by that judgment." The Lord said, "Well, good, I've done something for you

right here.” You people talk about the love of God, don’t you understand your own language? **“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,”** John 3:16). You surely know what your favorite verse is about, don’t you? (You wonder sometimes.)

“*Second chance,*” and my, what a chance that is going to be! Let me describe it to you. Do you know what will happen? The first thing that is going to happen is that heaven and earth are going to melt with a fervent heat and they’re going to pass away. So, when this judgment takes place, *there is no earth to stand on.* People have funny ideas about the last judgment. Brethren, at the last judgment there is no ground to stand upon. *You are in outer space.* Can you imagine that? Standing there, you look up and face a light that you can’t look at. You will hear a voice like Niagara Falls. You will look down at your feet, and there will be nothing under your feet for three hundred million light years, just open space. I’ll tell you, a thought will grab you then like has never grabbed you before in all your life. The thought will grab you, “The only thing that is holding me up is *God!*” You will get the message then because there will be nothing under your feet to hold you up. Now, you take me; I’ve already got that lesson learned. *I know what is holding me up.* I know I am standing right here now because God is holding me up. That floor isn’t holding me up at all. Don’t kid me. I know Who is holding me up. *God Almighty* is holding me up. He touched my heart one time and I lived; the next time He touches my heart I’m a dead duck. But some of you haven’t got that thing yet. But you will get out there at the White Throne, and you will look down, and you will say, “It’s just *God,*” and then you will face the record. And that record will go by—I don’t know what you will do. I don’t know how tough you are. Maybe you will argue with Him. He will talk to you. He talked to those scribes and Pharisees. Maybe you will reason with Him. He will reason with you. **“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord”**

(Isa. 1:18). When they get through showing that record you will say “Amen” to your own damnation. The Lord will point His finger at you and say, **“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”** Do you know what you will say? You will say “Amen.” Maybe you are not in the habit of saying “Amen.” *You will learn how to say it.* And before you go off the rim of the universe into that lake of fire, do you know what you will do? You will bend that knee, and you will confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of the Father. That Book says that **“Every knee should bow... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord...”** (Phil. 2:10-11). Won’t that be something? Johnny Carson, down, boy! Dean Martin, hit the deck! Confucius, low, boy. Mohammed, down!

Those of you who have been called to preach, do you realize whose side you are on? I mean, it may be tough down here with people, but what does it amount to? You’re on the winning side. One of these days I’m going to look out and I’m going to see every person I ever preached to converted to *my faith.* (Boy, how will that be for narrow-mindedness?) Do you realize that someday every person I have ever talked to will believe what I believe? There won’t be any failures. It will be 1,000 percent. The thing is, it will be just a little *too late* for some of you. I’d rather see you convert now. Why don’t you bow the knee now? Why wait until then? I’ll bow to Jesus Christ anytime. It doesn’t bother me one

bit. I mean, you might as well get down. You are going face down into a

hole in the ground anyway. I'll bow the knee to Jesus Christ. You don't have to get me out there at the White Throne Judgment and make me kneel, */'// take it right now.*

Last one up—Satan—“Over here!” And the one that damned you and destroyed you will have to step up there, “front and center,” and the Lord will say, “Hey, do you remember that crown you offered me if I would get down and worship you?” (Luke 4). Yes. “Down, boy,” and down Satan will go, and say, “Jesus is Lord.” God help you.

The confession that “**Jesus is Lord**” is not a Christian confession at all. *It is the ultimate confession of Satan, fallen angels, and every ungodly sinner who ever lived.* The Charismatics have deceived you into thinking that it was a confession of the Holy Ghost, ignoring the wording of the correct text, “**JESUS IS THE LORD**” (1 Cor. 12:3). In an effort to make you think they are filled with the Holy Ghost, they took the confession of 1 Corinthians 12 and aborted it to Philipians 2. Fifteen million people never caught the change. They were deceived.

Every lost sinner who goes to hell with Satan was deceived (Rev. 12:9). Be not deceived. Your “second chance” will be a bloody and horrible tragedy. You should take your “chances” right now with the Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary. It was *there*, not at the White Throne Judgment, that He suffered, bled, and died, and paid for your sins, paid your ransom out of hell, and bought you a ticket to God's favor and glory, and enabled you to escape “**the wrath to come**” (Luke 3:7). God help you. God help you to bow the knee this night to Him and confess Him as your Lord and Saviour. Don't take chances with your soul. You don't have to. Come to the Lord Jesus this moment the best way you know how. He will not turn you down. He said, “**Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out**” (John 6:37). It's that simple: you take Him, and He will take you. Oh, what a blessing and privilege it is to be “**accepted**” in God's beloved Son (Eph. 1:6)! What a privilege it will be to have “**boldness in the day of judgment: because as HE IS, so are we in this world!**” (1 John 4:17).

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