

LESSON 1

The Importance of Your Soul

Many people worry about their body more than their soul. The body may live for several decades, but the soul lives on forever in either heaven or hell. The soul appears 473 times in the Bible! ('body' only 154). You receive your soul at the moment of your conception (along with the sin nature Ps 51:5). Your soul is invisible and lives inside of your body.

Illustration:

The Roman Emperor Hadrian lived around 200 AD. He is still regarded as one of the greatest Caesars of all time. He was incredibly busy & industrious and perhaps no man in history built so many architectural structures and left such a mark upon the world as Hadrian. He was still building a 750-acre tract at Tivoli when he learned that he was dying. He was quoted as having said, "O fleeing little soul, where do you go now?"

YOUR SOUL INSIDE YOUR BODY IS THE REAL YOU

Your personality, thinking, affections, desires and feelings all make up your soul. Genesis 2:7, *The LORD God formed man ...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* 1 Corinthians 15:45, *The first man Adam was made a living soul.* You have a body, but you are a soul.

A. The soul is the real you

The soul is invisible and lives inside of the body. Our bodies are just a 'motel' the soul is temporarily living within. One day at death our soul will 'check out' permanently.

1. It is your soul that loves

Matthew 22:37, *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

2. It is the soul that feels sadness

Matthew 26:38, *Then saith (Jesus) unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful. Your soul is the center of your feelings & emotions.*

3. Your soul leaves your body at death

Genesis 35:18, *And it came to pass, as (Rachel's) soul was in departing, for she died ...Acts 7:59, And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit (soul).* When the soul leaves the body, the body is lifeless and no longer feels or thinks. James 2:26, *The body without the spirit (soul) is dead.* There's a soul inside of you just waiting to get out!

4. Your soul cannot die

Matthew 10:28, *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.*

Illustration:

A Swedish doctor in a new book says he discovered the human soul weighs around 21 grams. He placed terminal patients on sensitive scales and saw the needle drop as soon as the patients died.

5. Your soul is more valuable than anything the world can offer

Matthew 16:26, (Jesus said) *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

6. Many people neglect their soul for temporal things of the world

Luke 12:20, *God said unto him (unsaved man), Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? (we're going to leave it all behind).*

7. Your soul will live on forever in either heaven or hell

Four hundred years before the birth of Christ, Socrates, the renowned Greek Philosopher, drank the poison hemlock and lay down to die. "Shall we live again?" his friends asked. The dying philosopher could only reply, "I hope so, but no man can know."
ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD, WE CAN KNOW FOR SURE!

8. Your soul needs to be 'converted' sometime during your life

Psalms 19:7, *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul.* (more about this later).

9. You will go to hell if your soul is not converted

Luke 16:22-23, *The rich man also died, and (his body) was buried; And in hell he (his soul) lift up his eyes, being in torments.*

10. Your soul immediately goes to heaven at death if converted

II Corinthians 5:6, 8, (Paul the apostle said) *...whilst we (the soul) are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord...and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord (in heaven).* Luke 16:22, *And it came to pass, that the beggar (Lazarus) died, and (his soul) was carried by the angels into paradise (or heaven).* In Luke 12, Jesus speaks with Moses & Elijah who reappear on earth hundreds of years after they had lived and died (their soul is still alive). In I Samuel 28, the prophet Samuel's soul is alive and speaking from paradise (heaven) years after his body had died.

YOU CAN KNOW FOR SURE YOUR SOUL IS GOING TO HEAVEN

1 John 5:13, *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.*

IF YOUR SOUL IS SAVED (converted), IT GOES TO HEAVEN IMMEDIATELY UPON DEATH.

A. Please note the following examples of Christians who died and went to heaven immediately.

1. Revelation 6:9-10, (John the apostle gets a vision of heaven and says) *I saw the souls of them that were slain (martyred) for the Word of God (they were alive & well and even speaking up in heaven). They knew what was taking place back on the earth.*

2. Jesus told the thief on the cross who got saved just before his death, *Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou (the soul) be with me in paradise* (Luke 23:43).
3. Hebrews 12:1, *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about (surrounded) with so great a cloud of witnesses (the many deceased Christians named in the previous chapter)...let us (survivors on earth) run with patience the race (life) that is set before us* (there is a 'great grandstand' in the sky and our saved deceased loved ones are in it!)
4. John 5:24, (Jesus said) *...He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (hell); but is passed from death unto life* (i.e.- at death, the soul of a Christian goes straight to heaven).
5. Philippians 1:23, (Paul the Apostle said) *For I am...having a desire to depart (from this world), and **to be with Christ**; which is far better.* Also, note Acts 7:59, *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit' (soul).* Like all born again Christians, Stephen went straight to heaven!
6. Jesus was confronted by clergymen who didn't believe in an afterlife. They believed, 'when you're dead, that's it'. Speaking of His heavenly Father, Jesus said in Mark 12:27, *He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.* (Jesus had earlier told the clergy that his heavenly Father is the God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob who had died hundreds of years earlier, but their souls were still alive in heaven).

CONCLUSION

God makes it clear in the Bible. If someone has been saved the Bible way, they go straight to heaven as soon as their heart stops. That is determined before they die. There is no changing our destiny after death. The Bible says; *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still* (Revelation 22:11). Every person must carefully consider the future of their soul. Eternity is forever! This life is simply a 'dressing room' for eternity. The Bible says in Hebrews 9:27, *It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment* (heaven or hell). Also note from this verse that there is no such thing as reincarnation. Where we will spend eternity is determined before we die based on whether our soul has been converted or not. Revelation 21:24 tells us that, *the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of (heaven).* How to be saved will be explained in an upcoming lesson.

(Once again)...

You can know for sure your soul is going to heaven...

1 John 5:13, *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.* Remember, you're one heartbeat away from eternity.