

Scriptures are quoted from a modern language edition derived from the American Standard Version of 1901, which was prepared by 30 of the top American religious scholars. It is likely the most accurate Bible translation widely available.

The Bible is true. The Bible tells the truth. The teachings in the Bible are from God. The doctrines of the churches are often in error, and do not tell the truth. The doctrines of the churches are from men. *Let God be found true, even if every man be a liar.* (Romans 3:4)

One of the most cherished and loved doctrines of the churches is the belief that upon death people possess an immortal soul which is carried off to heaven to be reunited with loved ones. But you will find this nowhere in the Bible. Read the Bible from cover to cover and you will find no scripture that says we go to heaven immediately upon falling asleep in death. Even that expression *falling asleep in death* indicates a problem with the belief.

The Bible does speak of Christians as having fallen asleep in death. *But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.* The Bible says that the dead in union with Christ are asleep. It does not say they are angels in heaven. That is what men say, not God. But the Bible does tell us that the faithful who sleep will awake in Paradise. (1 Corinthians 15:20; Revelation 2:7)

The Bible book of John chapter eleven, tells us that Jesus had a friend named Lazarus who fell asleep in death. Jesus went to where he lived to resurrect him. As he neared the place where Lazarus lay dead he was met by his sister Martha. He told her, *Your brother will rise again.* But she did not realize that Jesus meant that he was going to raise Lazarus from the dead, and so she replied, *I know he will arise in the resurrection on the last day.*

So Martha, along with the other faithful servants of God, believed that the resurrection would take place on the last day at the end of the age. Jesus did not tell her she was wrong, because what she believed was true. She was not wrong. Neither Jesus nor the inspired word of God ever taught anything different from what Martha believed. The faithful in Christ, when they die will lie in what the Bible calls sleep until they are called forth *on the last day.*

But there were people back then who did believe that humans had a soul that would go to heaven or paradise after death. They included the Egyptians and the Greeks, both pagan religions. The people of

God, Christian and pre-Christian, did not believe and teach that humans had an immortal soul. *For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing.* (Ecclesiastes 9:5)

But some people claim that the Bible says we have an immortal soul. That, after all, is the doctrine taught by the churches. But that is not true. The Bible does not teach we have a mortal soul, in fact, it teaches the very opposite. The Bible teaches that our soul is mortal. *And 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.* (Genesis 2:7 Authorized King James Version)

Look carefully at that Bible quotation. That is what the Bible teaches. God did not breathe or implant or incarnate a soul into man. He breathed the breath of life into the man and the man BECAME a living soul. The Bible tells us that the soul can die. It is not immortal. *The soul that sins, it will die.* In the Old Testament, the word translated soul, *nephesh*, means *that which breathes*. So it is applied to both humans and animals. And in the New Testament, the word translated soul, *psyche*, also means *breath*. In neither does it refer to an immortal soul. (Ezekiel 18:4)

When Martha said what she did, there *was* something she did not know. But in no way did it make what she said wrong or incorrect. What Jesus did not tell her was that an opportunity was to be opened to faithful servants of God who would be in a covenant relationship with him and that was the heavenly calling. (Hebrews 3:1)

The Bible makes clear that no person had ascended to heaven prior the resurrection of Jesus. *And no one has ascended into heaven, but the one who descended from heaven, the Son of man.* (John 3:13; Acts 2:34; Matthew 5:5; 11:11)

There are those who claim that the faithful went to heaven prior to Jesus coming to this earth, but none of the scriptures they cite actually say that. Their claim is false and contrary to what God's word teaches.

On the night before he was put to death, Jesus introduced to his faithful disciples what had been unknown to God's people before that night. He introduced to them the heavenly calling. Jesus told them, *I make a covenant with you, as my Father made a covenant with me, for a kingdom.* They knew that he was to die and return to his Father in the heavens and he told them *In my Father's house are many dwelling places. If it were not so, I would have told you, for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come*

again, and will receive you to myself, that where I am, you also may be.
(Luke 22:29; John 14:2, 3)

You will note that he did not say they would go to be with him when they died. No, he said he would *come* at a future time, and take them to be with him in heaven. When would that be? 1 Thessalonians 14:16, 17 tells us *For the Lord himself will descend from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first, and then we the living, who are remaining, will together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.* So at the end of the age, what Martha called the last day, and not before, Christ will call his true followers, both those who are dead and those who are alive at that time, to be with him in heaven. (John 11:24; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52; Philippians 3:20, 21; Revelation 20:6)

What the Bible tells us is that only those who are truly in a covenant relationship with Jesus and who fully and faithfully follow all his commands and teachings will partake in the heavenly calling and go to be with the Lord in heaven, and all others will be resurrected to life on a paradise earth, and that this will occur not when they die but *on the last day.* (Isaiah 65:17 & 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-7)

If you are disappointed that you will not go to heaven immediately upon dying, consider this. You will not be in heaven knowing that your family is suffering on earth. Instead, it will be as if you fall asleep and awake in Paradise with all your loved ones, knowing that neither you nor they will ever suffer again. This is the loving arrangement of God, and our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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IS THERE LIFE After Death?

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The Doctrines of Men are False!

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