

SummerSalon14 - Eternity

We now come to the end of the story: *eternity*. Years ago I had a frustrating thought, resigning myself to the fact that *this* life certainly is —**approximate**. For those of us who value precision and order —this approximity poses difficulties. But that’s only the beginning of the problem.

Life *is* approximate —**until** one arrives in eternity.

The fewest number of resources in **Corrie’s Theological Library** cover the subject of eternity. Why? It’s pretty simple. There’s just heaven or hell, either /or, happy / sad; loss or gain of reward.

But as with every other doctrine of the Bible Lucifer influences those who are his and tries to trip up those who are not his —to believe everything *but* the simple truth in the explanation for the eternal disposition of souls. We know that the serpent asked a question in the Garden that was actually an **assertion** —in disguise —and a besmirching assertion at that. The snake’s question posed to Eve was not an honest question at all. And nothing has changed since then. Daily, people ask doubting questions that indicate their lack of confidence in Scripture’s clear teachings regarding heaven and hell.

So, we ask, are there multiple —not just two —dispositions of departed souls? What about us ceases to exist at death? What survives? Is the “afterlife” a negotiable existence where various scenarios are possible — Purgatory, Nirvana,

annihilation, etc.? What are the *non-biblical theories* that account for the range of beliefs held by many regarding the afterlife?

The belief I've discovered what runs most consistently through all systems, cults, world religions and even among some professing Christians. It is the deeply held idea that a man or woman's "goodness" —or lack of —is actually what accounts for *where* and *how* he or she spends eternity —despite the fact Christ Himself tells us *no one is good but God*. This delusion —combined with man's increasing desire to believe he can travel to heaven and come back in this life [!] —these together are *preparing the world* to follow the Antichrist. Those of us who are *in Christ* (not of the world) will not be affected by this since we will depart according to 1 Thess 4:13-18 and 2 Thess 2:3, enjoying 1 Cor 15:51.

But an even stronger influence on what people believe about heaven and hell is tied to the grave. Several years ago, after observing several examples of this, I realized that when families, couples, good friends lose a loved one —a person who clearly did not embrace saving faith —perhaps even admitting to that before death —the ones left to grieve often lost all desire to be saved —if they were not in fact saved at the time of their loved one's death. The thought of eternal separation from a departed soul is more than many can bear —even if it means rejecting Christ themselves and spending eternity in hell. The other side of this coin is the family member who convinces themselves that a departed loved one is with God despite there being no evidence of that relationship, this side of the grave.

It is the prayer of the presenters of **SummerSalon14** that listeners will seriously understand and respond to this ultimate reality: *This* life —is not about —*this* life.