

Third Sunday after the Epiphany – 2025
Saturday, 1/25 at 4:00 | Sunday, 1/26 at 9:00



What If You Died Today?

Part
2

Text: New American Standard Bible

Introduction

Dear Friend: This sermon continues to focus on the important question: What If You Died Today?

- Death: We learned last week that ***death is certain for us*** – because “**...the wages of sin is death...**” (Rom. 6:23). As working earns a paycheck, *so sinning earns death!*
- Think About Yourself: When your soul and spirit leave your lifeless body, into what state will they enter?
 - A state of bliss!
 - A state of agony!
- Deception: We learned last week that most people are clinging to a way to heaven ***that seems right to them!*** However, there is a HUGE problem: *It does **not** agree with the Bible!*

5: What Is Your Situation?

This was our final section last week.

I asked:

1. Will you be welcomed into heaven? **Yes** **No**

Then I asked:

2. Why will you be welcomed into heaven? Circle all your answers:

- a. I did my best to keep the Ten Commandments.
- b. I faithfully attended church.
- c. I helped needy people.
- d. I gave 10% of my income.
- e. I respected all people.
- f. I trusted in Jesus alone for eternal life.
- g. I tried to follow the Bible and believed in Jesus.
- h. I showed love to family, friends, neighbors, and strangers.

This was your homework assignment: Identify Bible passages that support each of your second-question answers. Have you completed your assignment? If not, *please complete it now, it's very important.* We will return to your answers soon!

6: What Is Common?

- People set their own requirement for heaven: **Romans 10:2-3** “For I [Paul] bear them [my fellow Jews] witness that they have a zeal for God [wonderful], but not in accordance with knowledge [horrible]. **[HUGE Problem:]** For **not** knowing about God's righteousness [which I'm going to share with you soon], and seeking to establish their own, they did **not** subject themselves to [put themselves in agreement with] the righteousness of God.”
- In other words, they **THOUGHT** their best efforts would get them into heaven. Why? **BECAUSE** they did not know what God requires. **They were DECEIVED, and they didn't even know it!**

7: What Does God Require?

Earth and Heaven Are Different:

- On Earth: *Good is normally good enough.*
- In Heaven: *God requires righteousness, holiness, perfection.*

This Is God's IMPOSSIBLE Requirement:

- The LORD said: **1 Peter 1:15-16** “...be holy... in all your behavior; ...You shall be holy, for I am holy.”
- Jesus said: **Matthew 5:48** “...you are to be perfect, as **your heavenly Father is perfect.**”

Think About Your Life:

- Are you **holy in all your behavior?** Yes No
- Are you **as perfect as God?** Yes No

8: Compare Sections 5 & 7

- Looking at Your Answers in Section 5 to Question 2:
Which ones did you circle?
a b c d e f g h
- Let's examine each one:
 - a. I did my best to keep the Ten Commandments. – We should do our best, *but no one can keep them perfectly*: **Romans 3:20** “...by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in [God's] sight...”
 - b. I faithfully attended church. – We should, God is offering us many blessings, *but attending church cannot make us HOLY or PERFECT!*
 - c. I helped needy people. – We should, *but helping needy people cannot make us HOLY or PERFECT!*
 - d. I gave 10% of my income. – God calls us to do so AND promises to bless us, *but giving 10% cannot*

make us HOLY or PERFECT!

- e. I respected all people. – We should look upon others in God-pleasing ways, *but respecting all people cannot make us HOLY or PERFECT!*
- f. I trusted in Jesus alone for eternal life. – **It's ONLY THROUGH JESUS ALONE that we can be HOLY and PERFECT in God's sight** (*I will explain more in section 15 of the brochure*). But a word of caution here: "I trusted..." – Yes, **but ONLY by the power and work of the Holy Spirit** (1Co. 1:30a; 12:3).
- g. I tried to follow the Bible and believed in Jesus. – We should do both, **but adding both together CUTS US OFF FROM JESUS** (*see brochure, section 14*).
- h. I showed love to family, friends, neighbors, and strangers. – **1 John 4:19** "We love, because [God] first loved us" *but loving others cannot make us HOLY or PERFECT!*

Coming Up:

- Why are We All Helpless?
- Did God Lower the Bar?
- And More...

Let Us Pray: Father in heaven, even though ♣it's logical to believe in faith + works for eternal life AND ♣many have that belief, enable us to ➡rightly understand our helplessness and ➡always trust in JESUS ALONE for our entrance into heaven!

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