



Homes of H.O.P.E. Prayer and Study Guide #7
Based on sermon: “CSI: The Grave”
Preached Jan. 31, 2009

Introduction

1. Read Genesis 2:7; 16, 17; 3:19 and look for clues that validate the following statements:

“The doctrine that the human soul is immortal and will continue to exist after man’s death and the dissolution of the body is one of the cornerstones of Christian philosophy and theology.” (New Catholic Encyclopedia [1967], vol. 7, p. 464)

“The spirit or soul of man is a substance distinct from the body . . . the soul, after the death of the body, still survives, endued with sense and intellect. And it is a mistake to suppose that I am here affirming anything else than the immortality of the soul.” (John Calvin, *Tracts and Treatises in Defense of the Reformed Faith*, Vol. 3, p. 427)

2. Reconcile the doctrine of the immortal soul with Ezek. 18:20; John 3:16 and Romans 6:23.

[“Perish” = *apollumi* (*ap-ol’-loo-mee*): to *destroy* fully (reflexively to *perish*, or *lose*), literally or figuratively: - destroy, die, lose, mar, perish.]

3. Greek philosopher Socrates (470-399 B.C.) traveled to Egypt to consult the Egyptians on their teachings on the immortality of the soul. Upon his return to Greece, he passed this teaching to his pupil, Plato (428-348 B.C.). Socrates was condemned to die by drinking hemlock for teaching the youth of Athens “atheism,” or rejection of the gods. On the day of his death, Socrates talked about the immortal soul.

“The soul whose inseparable attribute is life, will never admit of life’s opposite, death. Thus the soul is shown to be immortal, and since immortal, indestructible. . . . Do we believe there is such a thing as death? To be sure. And is this anything but the separation of the soul and body? And being dead is the attainment of this separation, when the soul exists in herself and separate from the body, and the body is parted from the soul. This is death. . . . Death is merely the separation of soul and body.”

Compare Socrates’ definition above with Psalm 104:29.

4. How is death described in Scripture? See Job 14:10-12; Psalm 13:3; Dan. 12:2; Mark 5:39; and John 11:11-14.

5. Is there consciousness after death? See Psalm 146:3, 4; Eccl. 9:5, 6; Psalm 115:17.

6. Read Genesis 3:1-6. How do the four lies of Satan influence culture and thought today?

- 1) Question God; don’t trust what He says;
- 2) There are no consequences if you disobey God—you will not die;
- 3) God is irrelevant; you can get along without Him;
- 4) Only you can determine what is right and wrong for yourself.

7. Is it fair to say that “To believe that humans possess an immortal soul is to agree with Satan and call God a liar”?
8. How is Genesis 3:22 the “Achilles heel” of the Immortal Soul doctrine?
9. Read Romans 6:23 carefully. Are the wages of sin death or eternal life in hell?
10. To say that the soul is immortal is to declare that eternal life is obtained independently of Christ. Agree or disagree?
11. According to Jesus, where are the dead? (John 5:28, 29)
12. Read John 14:1-3. According to Jesus, how do His people get to be where He is?
13. According to Jesus, when does this happen? See John 6:39, 40, 44, 54.
14. Read 1 Cor. 15:51, 52, 54. If man possesses an immortal soul, why does Paul look forward to a time when “this mortal has put on immortality?” Why should we “put on” something we already have?
15. How does Hebrews 11:39, 40 show that the dead do not receive their reward before the living?
16. How does John 20:17 shed light on Luke 32:42?
17. How does Matthew 10:28 disprove the doctrine of an immortal soul?
18. What about the “souls under the altar”? (Rev. 6:9-11) Compare with Gen. 4:10 and 2 Peter 2:9.
19. In Jesus’ parable of Luke 16:19-31, didn’t Lazarus go immediately to heaven and the rich man to a place of torment upon their deaths?

This parable made two points: First, that how one lives now will affect one’s eternal fate. Second, that miracles—even a resurrection—can’t bring faith to those who won’t believe what the Bible says. See John 11:45-53; 12:9-11 to see how this second point was literally fulfilled.

20. Read 2 Corinthians 5:8. Is Paul here agreeing with Plato and contradicting Scripture? How do the following texts (some also from Paul) shed light on what he is saying? (1 Thess. 2:19; John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; Philippians 3:10, 11; 1 Cor. 15:23).
21. What’s the harm in believing you go immediately to heaven or hell upon death? If it comforts the grieving, why not let it be?

Pray together about what the Holy Spirit has revealed to your group. Remind members to pray for the Community Conversations Live meetings and encourage them to invite someone. God bless you!