

PASSING THE BATON 4
28th April 2007

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” Genesis 1:27

Introduction - Triune Nature of Man:

This week I want to talk about man being made in the image of God. We are body, soul and spirit - triune beings.

God created a triune man in the likeness of a triune God. When God incarnated, He took on Himself flesh and it was appropriate that He was incarnated in the form of a man, not an ox or a beetle. **1 Corinthians 11:7** made in the image and glory of God. Furthermore, He became male, not female.

We have a body which houses our soul and spirit, and somewhere in there is our heart. Simplistically we can divide ourselves into three parts. We are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Our bodies are not an accident, and we didn't evolve.

God created our bodies and when He did, he made a perfect job of it.

With our bodies we experience the world, touch, taste, see, smell and hear. Our physical body houses the soul and our human spirit.

Whatever goes on in your **soul** determines what you do with your **body**. The body reacts to the thoughts of the **mind** and it expresses the emotions and responds to the decisions of the **will**. With our soul, we relate to others and ourselves, with our **spirit** we relate to God.

Genesis 2:7 *‘And God breathed into the clay and man became a living soul’* - in Hebrew: nephesh chayah - a living soul.

The action by God of breathing into the clay formed a living soul.

This is the first use of the word soul.

When God comes to man, He stoops, he stooped in creation and stooped even lower at incarnation when He actually entered the body that He himself had once moulded.

Picture the Son of God, stooping over the lifeless body of clay, placing His lips against those cold lips and the Divine breath, the Spirit of God entering in.

Think of what happened to the clay alone without considering the inner - it became a living body.

Eyes, nerves, cells, glands, formed by the breath of God into the clay.

So now we have very clearly set before us the three elements of total human personality. From above, the Spirit, the life breath of Almighty God, from beneath, the clay, the dust, moistened and moulded and union of the Spirit from above and the clay from beneath brought into being a living soul.

In a certain sense the soul is the point of contact, the relationship, between the spirit and the body. There is, in a strange way, something in man that reaches up and something that pulls down. Plato said that there were two horses pulling the chariot of man, the black that pulled down and the white that reached up. That is really the root cause of all inner conflict and turmoil inside humanity. There's something that comes from God and wants God and there's something that comes from beneath and tends all the time to pull us and drag us down. When God created man, this potential for tension was there and when the fall came and man severed himself from God, the tension became very, very real.

Genesis 3:15 God tells Adam, that in dying spiritually, he will literally die physically. Subsequently every person born was born with their spirit cut off from God. When we look at what happens when a person dies this afternoon, we will see the dual function of our human spirit, both to give physical life and to be a spiritual link with Almighty God.

As we all know, until we are born again from above, by the Spirit of God, we are spiritually dead though physically alive and breathing!

So, God took of the dust of the earth, literally 'adamah', from which He formed Adam, which means red, and breathed into this lifeless form, the breath of life, and man became a living soul. The created order is:

BODY
SPIRIT
SOUL

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Body:

Genesis 1:26 *'And God said, let Us make man in our image'*- this is the Trinity discussing our body before we were created.

I want to quote Roger Price at this juncture because he really encapsulated it for me. He said that when he was praying about his talks on the body, he asked the Lord to show him a picture and what he saw was London Zoo. He saw that there was a house for the lions, a house for the penguins, a house for the elephants and that every single house has been designed with the occupant in mind.

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Roger saw that the lions were caged, but the elephants had a moat around them - no good putting the lion in an enclosure like the elephant, one good jump and it would have been Price for tea, as he put it.

When God designed our bodies, He did it with both us and Him in mind. Specifically, that our bodies might be suitable to contain the Lord Jesus. God Himself wanted to live in your body. **1 Corinthians 6:19**

. Body + spirit = soul. Roger Price used the example of yellow for the body, blue for the human spirit, put these two colours together and you have green. Once blue and yellow are mixed it is impossible to separate them, green it is. Once the soul has been conceived, it is eternal. The body as we will see this afternoon goes back to the dust, the spirit goes back to God who gave it, and the soul goes on to eternity saved or unsaved.

So with your body you experience the world around you - it is 'world conscious', with your soul you experience yourself - it is 'self-conscious' and with your spirit you experience God - it is 'God conscious'.

There are three Hebrew words for form or create:

Bara - which means to create out of nothing

Asah - which means to take things which already exist and make something out of them

Yatsar - which is a word which describes what a potter does. Moulds the clay. This word in Genesis is the word to mould with great care.

God takes the clay and moulds it with the greatest of care into a human body. As I have already said, the phrase the dust of the ground is another Hebrew word Adamah and it means red dust or red earth. So, you can see where Adam got his name.

You also have a scientific statement here that means a body is made from the dust of the earth and we can prove that. 94% of our body is made up of water and fat. The remaining 6% of our body is chemicals - calcium, carbon, chloride, fluoride, hydrogen, iodine, iron, magnesium, manganese, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphate, potassium, sodium, sulphur and silicon. A junk yard would pay about £4 for most of us!

But it is **who** you are that makes you valuable.

Don't downgrade your body, God has a special purpose for it - it houses, remember, your spirit and your soul. They need a house to live in and your body is going to be redeemed, you are going to spend eternity in it. Without your body, you would be a nobody - but don't be ruled by it, we need to get the balance right. It has a high calling, it is for the Lord. **1 Corinthians 6:13 to the end.** Don't hate your body, you will misuse it if you do. Smoking and overeating are connected with

soul problems, not the poor old body. The body isn't the troublemaker - it's the will.

When God created us, He did not create us to take stress.

Our body, soul and spirit are wounded and traumatized by stress of any kind. A foundation of the healing ministry is to realise we can be damaged in all three areas. Our body, our soul or our spirit. It is important we realise which area we are dealing with and pray accordingly.

In sexual abuse, the spirit takes the wound, the soul receives the torment and the body can retain the memory. So we can receive pain and trauma in all three areas. As we move on you will see I am beginning to introduce the link between the need to understand ourselves and knowing the scriptures, in order to fulfil the healing ministry Jesus has given us. It is pointless getting people healed then leaving a vacuum. That space must be filled with the knowledge of God, otherwise something else will fill it. The enemy comes but to kill steal and destroy that which has been won.

Remember, we are in a battle.

So, we have a body, which should be used for God, and presented to Him for His service. **Romans 12:1,2**. We must look after our body and understand how glorious it is. **Psalms 139**. So we should glorify God with our bodies. That means you are permitted to look good ladies! Dress to the glory of the Lord without getting into worldliness. Don't misunderstand scripture **1 Peter 3: 1 - 4** the women wore their money in their hair, they carried it all around with them - hence the warning about ostentation. Don't go the way of the world. If you are married, please your husband, don't be sexually provocative. Be modest in dress, not too short, and not too low - necklines or trousers, no-one wants to see your pubic hair and the crease in your bottom even if it is the fashion!

We can be glamorous without showing all of our anatomy girls! I seriously urge you to seek the Lord about what is customarily called fashion these days. Find out what suits your figure type and wear clothes which flatter you. Ask Telsa, she is a fashion expert and she'll help you. If you ask her nicely she'll do your colours as well! Dress as well as you can for the glory of God. Do not do what the world does, which is to dress to draw attention to themselves. At the end of the day the world's fashion is the seduction industry.

The human spirit:

Zechariah 12:1

'The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:'

Shows us that our human spirit comes from God. So, we are both earthly and heavenly.

Our bodies formed from the dust of the earth and our spirit from above causes tension. Both an upward pull and a downward pull. So when does God give the human spirit to the body? There is a view that the human spirit comes into the child at its first breath, after it has been born. This used to be a widely held view in America, I am not sure if it still is, where they held that the baby in the womb was not a living soul before birth. They believed that it was a body and could move, but they did not believe it was a living soul until the baby took its first breath. These people would say that abortion was not necessarily wrong because we are not dealing with a living soul. They would say it may be morally wrong, but not necessarily wrong.

The second view, and the one I hold, is that God places the human spirit into the human body at the moment of conception, therefore the child in the womb is a living soul. It follows that to take away that life is to commit murder.

In ministry, if I see a woman and it transpires that she has aborted a baby or babies, I will bring her gently to see, that this was a premeditated act which ended the life of the child. This usually results in the person concerned asking forgiveness from God, we then ask the Lord if He would let us know the sex of the unborn infant, we then name the infant, commit him/her into Jesus' care, and take communion. Thus closure is made.

It is so important to bring closure on traumatic events if we do not, our past becomes our future. As an aside, this also applies if you have lost a loved one and were not with them to say goodbye or tell them the things you wanted to say - closure needs to be made. It is not disregarding what has happened, any more than forgiveness is saying the event didn't take place. The purpose of doing this is the healing and wholeness which results. Having gone through this procedure, it usually results in great peace for the person concerned, because there is always an element of guilt attached to having an abortion, not to mention the trauma the woman herself went through.

God is so, kind so lovely, so thorough, He leaves nothing undone, no stone unturned. He wants you whole. If this has spoken to anyone here today, and you want prayer, please do not leave without asking me or one of the team to pray with you. There is nothing to fear or be ashamed of, Jesus has done a complete work and it is ours to come into.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us that there is a difference between the soul and the spirit and likens it to dividing between joint and marrow - joints are the hinges between the bones, inside the bones, is the marrow, in the marrow is the life. The bone is alive, if you have living marrow inside it. So the human spirit gives the body life and that life is seen in the soul.

Jesus said **John 10: 10** *'I have come that they might have life and more abundantly'*. The spirit is said to be life giving and the soul is said to be living - ***the soul contains the life the spirit has given it***. This is why we are described as being dead in trespasses and sins before we are born again.

Our soul must receive life from the spirit or we are walking around dead.

One huge problem we encounter shortly after we are born again is the fight for supremacy that the soul will put up the moment the spirit is enlivened. Before man fell, his spirit was in the ascendant position, his soul served his spirit and his body served his soul. All came from above, from man's union with God. Alignment.

When man fell and his human spirit lost its contact with God, the soul became the head, the decision maker, a position it was never designed to take. Because the soul houses the emotions, it is largely led by what it feels. When we are born again and the spirit comes in and wants to take over control, the soul does not give in without a huge struggle. How many of you (I don't want a show of hands!) have experienced God asking you to do something and have battled hard and long before you have capitulated and done it?

That is the earthly and the heavenly pull. It is like a tug of war - Jesus on one leg and Satan on the other! The soul must be made to bow to the inner man of the spirit. Salvation and sanctification are processes, we are saved, we are being saved and we will be saved - there remains much ground to be taken, that is the process of sanctification.

Before we leave the issue of the human spirit, let's look for some scriptural proof that babies are aware spiritually in the womb. In **Luke 1:39-44** we find Mary, the mother of Jesus, visiting with Elizabeth who is about 6 months into her pregnancy with John the Baptist. As she sees Mary, and before Mary has disclosed her news, Elizabeth says the babe leapt in her womb - her words are '*Who am I that the mother of my Lord should visit me*' - she knows who Mary is carrying. Mary at this time was under a month pregnant but Jesus was apparent to the spirit of John the Baptist. I don't think there is any more need to prove that the human spirit is put in at the point of conception.

The location of the spirit and soul within the human personality:

The spirit is located in an area deep within man. Somewhere medically below the diaphragm and above the pelvis, there is a hollow area. **John 7:38** 'Out of his belly' speaking of the spirit. The Greek word is 'koilia' - that which is hollow. The same word is used to describe the concave arch of heaven. There is something 'heaven shaped' within man. Belly. Almost everything that really matters starts here - butterflies - when we are nervous, 'gut feeling' about things. It is the area that we need to guard most carefully of all the areas of our personality.

Job 32:8 '*There is a spirit in man*' something you need to know, and the Spirit of God operates **in** man **on** the spirit of man and through the contact between God's Spirit and man's spirit, comes understanding.

In scripture, understanding is almost always spiritual, it is not soulish. It is not mental ability. So here we are told there is a spirit in man, on the spirit of man the Spirit of God acts, and through the interaction of God's Spirit on man's spirit comes something called understanding.

Understanding is not education, lots of highly educated people have no understanding at all. Educated fools, Derek Prince says, are creating the most trouble in the world. Educated, unregenerate man is more dangerous than uneducated unregenerate man, so the bible is not talking about education.

Understanding is in the realm of the spirit. Man's spirit is illuminated by God's Spirit **Job 32:18,19** literally '*full of words and the spirit of my belly is pressing me*'. The spirit of my belly must have expression. Matthew 12:34 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks'. When you read the word 'heart' in scripture, think of the area we're talking about, the belly. Your innermost being. Can't put your finger on it, but you know it's there.

The soul:

We are looking at the anatomy of man that God has put within us. We have a human body, spirit, and are a living soul.

Humans are always called souls **Genesis 35:18** of Rachel in childbirth it is said '*her soul was departing, for she died*'. When the crisp little telegraphic message clicks went out over the icy waters of the North Atlantic that fateful night of April 14, 1912, for the first time in history the newly agreed upon international distress signal was used: "SOS - save our souls". The Titanic was on her way to disaster.

We have seen that the Hebrew for 'soul' is nephesh. The Greek word for soul is psuche (Strong's reference 5590).

The soul is the seat of the affections, will, desire, emotions, mind, reason and understanding. The inner self, or the essence of life. Soul is not dissolved by death. Body and spirit are separated, but spirit and soul are distinguished from one another. When the radio operator sent his first SOS he did not mean 'Save our immortal souls from perdition' but 'Save our whole persons, or lives'. This is how unbelievers would see it - save us from drowning. The human soul is the real you. Your personality, your self-consciousness (remember the body is world conscious, the spirit is God conscious and the soul is self conscious). Personality is resident, thinking, decision making, the will is contained in the soul.

Your human free will resides in your soul. Your soul is immortal. It will go on to eternity, when it departs, it doesn't go into space and disappear. It goes somewhere. We get to see where this afternoon! cliff-hanger.. Your soul is like a glass bowl. You all have a particular shape which is unique to you. So girls, when you are choosing a husband, don't think you will change him because there is a basic shape, and you can't change it - marry the man you love. God does miracles, but He won't change the basic shape. I have some examples here. I am this large, heat-proof, no nonsense Pyrex oven dish. Do your roast in that, take it all. You can see what you have, no frills, large capacity, and it will take the heat. What about this one? Small, compact, neat, nothing angular, don't expect too much from this one. I would probably say '*Why can't I be like that because I admire them, they don't stick out in any way, never upset anyone, why can't I be*

like that? Some are more flowery, distinct shape, can be slightly unstable. This one, delusions of grandeur, this one reasonable capacity, stable, air of class, real breeding, but not a good travelling companion. Carrot bowl, everyone looks at the carrots, you notice the carrots not the bowl. If you put carrots in the ornamental bowl everyone would be saying what are you doing putting carrots in that beautiful bowl? This one is designed for carrots, heat proof, always be there, heat proof, stable. You can trust this one, very functional. Every one of us has a particular shape of soul and perhaps you recognise yourself in one of these. That was just a bit of fun.

The soul draws from the desires of both the body and the spirit. Let's take a new Christian. He may be kind, gentle and loving, he gets these from the spiritual part of himself. The same chap might be gluttonous and lustful - where did he get these from? From his **body**. Here he is, body + **spirit = soul** and his body has affected his **soul**.

Any characteristics that come from the senses are to do with the body, sight, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. Once you are born again, your spirit is reinvigorated and you get new life, that's the **spirit** affecting the soul. The spirit can't get enough of the Lord, the soul boasts in the Lord, **Luke 1:46-47** "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit has rejoiced in God my saviour" Mary is saying because my **spirit** has rejoiced, my **soul** magnifies the Lord. Spirit first, followed by its effect on the soul.

So, the born again believer is joyful, satisfied, enjoys the Word, fellowship, and worship. This lasts but a short time usually, before the soul is crying to do what it used to do. It doesn't like the constraints placed upon it by the new life. The battle begins. The soul can be filled from both directions and has been accustomed to filling itself via the appetites and desires of the body. Now, temptation comes, to indulge the flesh (literally sarx), to tune into pornography, as he did before he was a Christian, so what decides which direction his soul is going to be filled from? It's decided by his **will**. The will is the pivot, the central part, the will decides what goes into your body and your soul. **The soul can be filled from either direction**. It is all dependent on your will.

You can continue to put rubbish in and you will get rubbish out, but if you decide to live a life sold out for Jesus you will be strong in spirit, doing the exploits spoken of in **Daniel 11:32**. The will is pivotal in the Christian walk.

Conscience:

Just before we end on this subject, earlier we spoke about the tension between the spirit, soul and body which flowed together before the fall, without tension. Once the spirit lost contact with God and we fell, tension was the result.

As we have seen, the soul is the centre of the tension. In it there is a little thing called conscience - our remaining little bit of God-consciousness, God awareness, in our fallen nature. Every human being has this. Con=with science=knowledge. Conscience. We have inbuilt knowledge of right and wrong. **John 8:1-9** we see conscience in action. The conscience of the unbelievers couldn't stand the truth of God. Both believers and unbelievers have a conscience **Romans 1:18-20**.

Unbelievers *know* that God has standards. The upward pull and the downward pull. Prior to my conversion, I lived entirely for myself. My soul totally dictated what I did and how I acted, and my body followed. I drank, smoked and was adulterous. *I knew what I was doing was wrong, but I chose to follow the dictates of my bodily appetites.*

What about the believer? The Holy Spirit strengthens the conscience of the believer **Romans 9:1**. The Holy Spirit and the conscience work together so our conscience is strengthened. However, the bible tells us that it is possible to have a seared conscience and a weak conscience. **1 Timothy 4:1-3** is talking about believers and mainly about teachers - they started out teaching the bible and went wrong somewhere.

Obviously, they weren't open to correction either, as Paul describes them as having their consciences seared as with a hot iron. A searing with a hot iron will result in there being no feeling in that part of your body. They have become insensitive to the Holy Spirit. A weak conscience - the church at Corinth would be a good example of this. **1 Corinthians 8:1-9**. Corinth was a centre of idolatry with numerous pagan temples dedicated to the worship of the Greek and Roman gods.

With the Corinthian church made up of people from these backgrounds, learning to live together in harmony was most difficult. Paul's letters therefore are instructions to the young church on living in a pagan environment. As a result of having lots of temples and sacrifices, there was a great deal of meat available which had been presented to idols. It could be said that the priests had the best meat in town. But Paul warns be gentle with those whose faith isn't as strong as yours. You may be able to eat the meat which has been sacrificed to these idols, but not all of you are strong enough to do that without stumbling, in other words they were weak because their conscience was functioning in the old not the new.

,So whatever is the case don't cause the weaker brother or sister to stumble. The whole issue revolved around the degree of faith of the believers involved. Weak conscience, not yet fully armed and dangerous with the Holy Spirit.

I know that as I go on with the Lord my 'conscience' becomes more and more sensitive to the things of the Lord. I trust you can all say the same.

That's it, thank you for listening.

Afternoon session follows – What happens when a person dies?

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERSON DIES?

Passing the Baton 4, Session 2

28th April 2007

(Revised February 2017)

I was careful not to say what happens when a *Christian* dies because I am going to look at what happens when both a Christian and a non-Christian die.

This is a question that many people don't want to face, Christians or non-Christians. From the moment you are born the only way out of this life is by death. Most people do not want to face the fact that one day death will happen to them.

For the non-Christian, death is the only certainty of life - it is certain all non-Christians are going to die. It is fairly certain that most Christians are also going to die. I say fairly certain because the day is coming when the church will be raptured and those of us who are alive at that time will not see death but we will be changed, when Jesus comes for us.

What does the Bible say about death? As Christians, we are the only people who can speak with any certainty about death. We can speak about it as a matter of **fact**. Christianity is unique. Jesus said He had conquered death. He announced He was going to die, and He said after three days I will come back. After three days, He came back and said, "*Here I am*". Jesus embraced death, and having embraced it, He showed he had the mastery over it, so we are talking from a position of certainty.

Hebrews 9:27 says: *'It is given to men once to die and then the judgement'*. That's pretty straight. Annihilation? No. Reincarnation? No. A very clear statement. We are appointed **once**, not several times, to die, and there is no second chance that stops reincarnation dead in its tracks, if I may use the pun! Cats may have 9 lives but human beings really don't. After death what comes? Darkness? No.

Judgement.

Judgement proves there is *life* after death.

Hebrews 9:28 *'So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him, He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.'*

This verse is the Good News of Jesus Christ. As you can see from verse 27, you can count on this as a certainty because one day you really will die. So, is death the great equaliser? No, it is not because there is a difference between a person who believes and those who do not.

John 5:25, 28 *'The dead will hear the voice of the Son of God'* and *'Those who are in the graves'* will hear Jesus voice. That verse proves there is life after death. **John 5:29** differentiates between the resurrection of life and the resurrection of judgement –

29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation – or judgement.’

Another scripture **Daniel 12:2** again speaks of those who ‘sleep’ awakening, some to everlasting life and the others to ‘shame and contempt.’

*‘And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame and everlasting contempt.’*

So, whether you are a believer or not, there *is* a resurrection.

The people who hold the view that it is annihilation at the point of death are the ones that are in for the biggest shock. The day is coming when they will rise from the dead. So, at the point of **resurrection**, there is everlasting life, and those who reject Jesus will be confined to the Lake of Fire which was made for the devil and his angels - it was *not* created for mankind, man chooses to go there by his refusal to believe in the risen Christ and His sacrifice.

The Bible says that anyone who has trusted in Jesus will **not** now face judgement as far as their lives are concerned only their works will be judged with a view to reward, but you as an individual **will not be judged**.

You were judged, as was all mankind, on the cross at Calvary - you accepted Jesus High Priestly atonement for your sin, and you go free. It is only your works that will be judged. You will **never** stand before the Great White Throne - you will only stand before the Bema seat, which is where the rewards are handed out.

Let’s see the scripture for this **Romans 8:1**

‘So now the case is closed. There remains no accusing voice of condemnation against those who are joined in life-union with Jesus, the Anointed One’.

The word condemnation is the word judgement. There is no judgement that comes to us. Those who have rejected Jesus will find it is a different scenario altogether.

God is absolute righteousness. Absolute righteousness means that for us to be able to approach Him we must have absolute righteousness.

Some people think it is enough just to have our sins forgiven - it is not. That is why when Jesus forgave our sins, He gave us a robe of righteousness to put on; we now stand clothed in the righteousness of God.

Not so the unbeliever, who will rise with no righteousness at all.

What happens to the unbeliever is this.

God will examine everything he has done in this life, and the unbeliever, in relation to God stands in a place of total condemnation. **Daniel 12:2** is the verse that shows us this so clearly -

*'And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame and everlasting contempt.'*

There is a difference between believer and unbeliever. Incidentally, that is Old Testament teaching. So, we see it both in the Old, in Daniel, and in the New in **John 5:25,28-29**.

What happened when a person died - up to and including, when Jesus was on earth:

Luke 16:19-31 this is the passage about Lazarus and the rich man.

Keep in mind these are Old Testament people - that is **before** Jesus died on the cross. The man in verse 19, the rich man, was not a believer. In verses 22 and 23 we see both men had died and both are still conscious. The bible usually speaks of death as sleep, but sleep refers to your physical body. Your **soul** is still conscious, still awake and experiencing things. These two men have died physically, but they are both still conscious after death and a conversation is taking place.

"And being in torments, in Hades". Or hell, or Sheol, various versions, various names. Let's just deal with this little word before we go on. It is probably one of the most misunderstood words in the Bible. Most people think of it as a place where all unbelievers go and if asked they would say it is a fiery place. The word hell does not mean that. The word Hell, or Hades, or Sheol actually means *'the unseen state'*.

It is a realm into which every person goes when they die. They go to a place where they are still conscious, but we do not see them any more. We can see from this passage that the unbeliever and the believer are both in the unseen state - not seen by those who are still alive and living on this planet - but they are in **two different places**.

Let's look first at where believers in the Old Testament went to in the unseen state, when they died. **Luke 16:22** *'and so it happened that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.'* Or as it was also called Paradise. Paradise is a Persian word meaning the *'garden of the King'*. Persian kings had the most beautiful gardens that anyone had ever seen and that is the name that is given to one of the compartments in the unseen state. God provides for us in grace even at the moment of death.

There is also another compartment in the unseen state in which the rich man finds himself. This is not quite so comfortable. The second compartment of the unseen state is called torments.

These two compartments are fixed, but before we look at how fixed they are, let us deal with the third compartment of the unseen state called *'Tartarus'*. Tartarus is not mentioned here, but we look at it to complete the picture:

2 Peter 2:4 talking here about the angels who rebelled against Him *‘...God did not spare the angels who sinned but cast them down to hell (Tartarus) and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved for judgement.’*

The word ‘hell’ here is not the same Greek word, this is the word ‘Tartarus’. In **this** compartment, the fallen angels who rebelled against God during the time of Noah are held – these are the ones who fathered giants, of whom Goliath was a descendant. Tartarus is where they are held chained.

Not all the fallen angels are held there, but some are.

So, as we can see there are three compartments in hell, or the unseen state – Paradise; torments and Tartarus.

Please remember we are still dealing with what happened when a person died **before** Jesus died on the cross. We will look at what happened **after** Jesus died on the cross in a moment. **Luke 16:23-26** we see there is a gulf between Paradise and torments, and no one can move from one to the other.

This must prove to you that if you ever hear anyone saying you can get a second chance after death, they are absolutely wrong.

Wherever you land up after death will determine where you are going for eternity.

Verse 29 is an amazing verse, because it is saying that by reading Moses and the prophets you would have found salvation through the Messiah, Jesus, who was coming. When Jesus came there were already believers in Israel who had come to salvation through reading Moses and the prophets. As we have said before, everything in the Old Testament pointed to the Messiah and His sacrificial death, everything in the New Testament looks backwards towards His atonement for mankind’s sin.

Verses 27 and 28 show us that an unbeliever is still capable of good thoughts even though they themselves have no way out of their situation. But Jesus says, (verse 31) *‘even though someone were to rise from the dead they would not believe’*. This is still the case today as we will see when we look more closely at the millennium and the end of the age. Jesus is reigning in Jerusalem, the devil is locked up, but still they do not believe...**Romans 1:20 NKJV**

²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

God’s verdict.

Let us look now at Jesus on the cross. **Luke 23:39** - this is a very common situation amongst unbelievers who are about to die, hurling insults at God. There is a story of a man who escaped from a burning aircraft - the aircraft had crashed, and he survived. He told that he was shocked at the way people were cursing God at the moment of their death. The criminal crucified next to Jesus was doing the same thing.

Luke 23:40-43 and we see a different spirit in this one. *'Lord, remember me when you come into your Kingdom'*. What is Jesus response? *'Today, you will be with Me in Paradise'*. Notice, Jesus went to Paradise when He died.

The same place where all the believers went when they died.

No purgatory.

Jesus did not say to the thief, *'I will see you when you've done your time'* - straightway, the man was with Him in Paradise.

So we see clearly that Jesus went to Paradise or Abraham's bosom, when He died. What did He do there? What happened to him? When He became man, He was fully human. Remember we are made up of three parts reflecting the Trinity:

- Spirit
- Soul
- Body

1. **Jesus soul.** *Luke 23:43 "Verily I say to thee, today thou shalt be with me in Paradise"* KJV. Jesus soul went to the compartment in the unseen state called Paradise where all believers went. Some people believe that Jesus went down into hell because He had more work to do and because they do not understand what the word 'hell' means. We can see from the foregoing that that is not true. Hell is a word for the unseen state. Certainly there was nothing more to complete so far as Jesus' work on the cross was concerned, when He died, he said *"It is finished"* - He did **not** say, it is almost finished.

The term he used was one which meant 'Paid in full' *Teleos*, and it was written across a bill when you had paid the full amount, many have been found by archaeologists saying just this. The word literally means 'accomplished', 'filled up', 'finished', 'fulfilled', 'paid in full', 'performed'. In other words DONE! Some people will say, what about **1 Peter 3:18,19**. *'by which he went and preached to the spirits in prison'*. They believe that Jesus then went to preach to unbelievers and they say we do not know how many of them got saved! Now, if they are right, then all that we have been studying in Luke 16 must be wrong regarding the great gulf which is fixed. The question is, are they right or not? **1 Peter 3:20**, Peter is talking here about **the time of Noah**, so we can see from these two verses in Peter that he is talking about fallen angels or demons, *in the days of Noah*. Incidentally the word preached here is not the word **evangeliso** which is the word for preaching the gospel in the Greek. It is a different word altogether and it means to proclaim a victory. When Jesus went to Paradise, He took one trip out of Paradise, down to Tartarus and said to the fallen angels or demons *'I have just called to tell you that you lost!'* The word is **Kerusso** - to proclaim or publish a victory. **So Jesus went to proclaim His complete victory over the realm of darkness.**

3. Jesus body: *Luke 23:53* “He took the body down and wrapped it and laid it in a tomb”. Jesus body went into the grave. Everyone who dies, their body goes to the grave.

One of the things the demons had done during the days of Noah was to try to stop Jesus coming to the earth. So, Jesus made one trip from Paradise to Tartarus to proclaim His Victory. Why did He go to Paradise? He simply told the believers there ‘*Start packing, we are moving out*’. Paradise was about to move house. Jesus did not have any more work to do. The good news we learn from the Bible is that when Jesus rose, every Old Testament believer was taken up to *heaven* with him together with Paradise.

Paradise moved house to heaven!

Ephesians 4:7: “*When He ascended up on high He led captivity captive.*” What does this mean? To understand this, you need to know something about the Roman Empire. What the Romans did when they had sent an army out to defeat another country was after the victory, to bring home to Rome prisoners of war, or captives. They would parade these down the streets and there would be a celebration of the victory they had won, and they would all be showered with flower petals.

When Jesus, had won the victory, He paraded all the Old Testament saints – not chained together like the captives taken by the Romans – but this is what Paul is saying, there was a celebration the like of which you can’t imagine in heaven that day. Paradise was completely emptied and that means when we die we go to heaven, not Paradise; and the unbeliever goes to torments, because that has not moved.

The rich man is still in torments even as we speak, awaiting the Great White Throne judgement. If any of you have heard the testimony of the jelly fish man, he describes this place as terrifying. He had obviously given his life to Jesus years before and gone away because Jesus came to him and asked if he wanted to stay with Him or go back to earth, he chose to come back because his mum wouldn’t have known he was safely in!

Let’s just confirm that Paradise has been moved up to heaven. **2 Corinthians 12:1-4** - Paul speaks here of when he was stoned and died and of his visit to the heavenly places. Verse 2 ‘*I knew a man in Christ above 14 years ago, whether in the body or out of the body (beside himself!), such a man was caught up into the third heaven (proof of the three heavens) caught up into **paradise**...*’

Paul is speaking in a way that he does not speak in any other book. From verse 2 onwards, he speaks as a man who has experienced such tremendous things that he dares not speak about it. So, he is talking of a time when he visited heaven. When did he do that? **Acts 14:19**.

Remember, stoning was capital punishment in the ancient world and such was the state of Paul, they dragged him out of the city, thinking he was dead. Incidentally if he had been alive, they would have carried on until he was dead – so he really did die and, went straight to heaven which he describes there in **2 Corinthians 12**.

He was instantly raised and the next day he went on his way. There is no record of his having suffered too much discomfort. In **2 Corinthians 12:2** the NIV has Paradise, the King James has '*the third heaven*'. To recap the first heaven is the atmosphere, the second heaven is the *universe* and beyond that is the third heaven, the *Throne room* of God.

So here we have the proof that paradise has moved and it is now in the third heaven.

When we die – if we aren't raptured – our spirit goes to God the Father, our body goes to the grave – or is burned, if that is your choice - and our soul goes to the heavenly paradise. When we are in paradise we are still conscious. **Philippians 1:21-23** "*For me to live (Paul says) is Christ, to die is gain*" – I'm in a strait twixt the two he says! He has absolutely no fear of death and as Christians, neither should we. If we don't know that it is far better to be with Jesus, the devil has got us fooled. To hear some Christians talk about death you would think it was the worst thing that could happen, but the truth is that it is the best thing, it is the beginning not the end.

Finally, **Psalms 23:4** "*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death*". We are separated from death. We only experience the *shadow* a shadow cannot harm you. Our body will die or be raptured.

A non-Christian as we have seen, has no such hope because if at death they have rejected God's offer of salvation, there is **no** second chance.

As Christians we have life now, with the promise of **life** the day we go to be with Jesus – that is when our **real** life begins.

Finally then: **Colossians 3:2** '*Set your affections on things above, for your life is hid with Christ in God and when Christ who is our life appears, we shall be like Him*'. In glory!

I trust now if you had any fear of death as a believer, you do not now. God bless you. Amen.