

# Heaven, the Rapture and the Resurrections

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We finished the Book of Acts last week, so that always gives me a unique opportunity to talk about some things that are on my heart, and I want to do that this morning. You can see what's up on the screen.

What I'm going to share with you here has been born out of many questions that have come over the years from people. And we're going to focus essentially this morning, on 3 questions. I'll put those up for you there so you can see them.

## Questions:

- Where did believers go after they died during the Old Testament?
- Most Christians believe that when a believer dies they go to heaven, but the Bible teaches that there is coming a day when we will be raised from the dead. How can both of those things be true?
- When will the Resurrection take place?

First of all, **Where did Believers go after they died during the Old Testament?** This is a really popular question. I get it a lot.

Secondly, **Most Christians believe that when a believer dies they go to heaven, but the Bible teaches there's coming a day when we will be raised from the dead. How can both of those things be true?**

That's another big one. People, have a hard time... It's like if I'm with the Lord, when I, if I, when I die before the Lord comes let's say, and then the Bible says we're going to be raised from the dead. How can I be raised from the dead and with the Lord at the same time.

And then thirdly, **When will the Resurrection take place?** You ready? Buckle up.

## Question #1:

Where did Believers go after they died during the Old Testament?:

Here's question number 1. Where did Believers go after they died during the Old Testament?

Interestingly enough, this is never really revealed anywhere in the Old Testament. It wasn't really until Jesus came to earth that this question got answered. And of course, Jesus has a unique perspective on these things as the Son of God. And He talks about it in the Book of Luke. I'm going to have you turn there. Luke chapter 16, open your Bible to that chapter.

Luke chapter 16. Luke chapter 16 and then skip all the way down to verse 19. Are you there? It says, *"There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. (I love that word, sumptuously)"*<sup>20</sup> *And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,*<sup>21</sup> *who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores.*<sup>22</sup> *The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried,*<sup>23</sup> *and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.*

<sup>24</sup> *And he called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.'*<sup>25</sup> *But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.'*<sup>26</sup> *And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'*

<sup>27</sup> *And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house—'*<sup>28</sup> *for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'*<sup>29</sup> *But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.'*<sup>30</sup> *And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'*<sup>31</sup> *He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"* (ESV) Stop there.

There are 2 things that I want to make sure that, before we really talk more about this particular passage. But the first thing you need to know is this is not a parable.

A parable is a fiction, essentially, that tells a true story or makes a point. This is a true story and the reason we know that is because it has proper names: Abraham and Lazarus. In other parables, proper names are never used. Okay. So

this really happened. This is an event that really happened, right? And Jesus is relating this from His perspective.

The second thing you need to know is that Jesus is not using this story to show how a person is saved. Don't look to this story to get a salvation message because if you do, you're going to come up with the idea that anybody who has suffered here on earth, is going to go to heaven or be comforted. And anybody who has a lot on earth is going to go the other direction. And that's not what, that's not the point. There were other points that Jesus was attempting to make with this passage.

But as He shares this story, He introduces us to these 2 men who lived very different lives. One of great opulent wealth, the other with an extreme poverty, but the 2 men had one thing in common, and that is their mortality. They both died.

And the first thing that we learned from this passage is that physical death does not produce some form of sleep or slumber of the soul, whereby a person becomes unconscious and unaware. You see that in this story, all the characters who previously experienced physical death are awake, and they're even conversing. Okay. It's very important that you see that.

The second thing that we learn from this passage is that the two men who died had very different destinies. Here's what we read and I'll just take a little section out, put it on the screen. This is what we see here in Luke 16, is

**Luke 16:22-23 (ESV)**

*The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment...*

*The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment...*

We have 2 places named in this passage, and the first is, "Abraham's side," which is a good name in light of the fact that we read this in the Book of Genesis. Let me show you this.

**Genesis 15:6 (ESV)**

*And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.*

*And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.*

You'll remember that was a statement made about Abraham. Abraham is considered to be the father of those who have faith. And so it's apt that this place is referred to as, "*Abraham's side*." The old King James says, "*Abraham's bosom*." I like side better.

It's essentially means that this is named after the man from whom faith was the key element of his life, and we know that's how people got there. Even in the Old Testament, it was by faith. All right. Those who put their faith in God are taken upon death to this place called, Abraham's side. Is it heaven? No, it's paradise, but it's not heaven. Right?

You'll notice in verse 25 again Abraham himself referred to Lazarus as being comforted there. He says, "*he is comforted here,...*" So we see that this is a place of comfort, right? Is it heaven? No, no it's not heaven. And the reason we know that it's not heaven is because of something Jesus said. Let me put John chapter 3 up on the screen.

**John 3:13 (ESV)**

*"No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man."*

*"No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man."*

Jesus came to earth and said, no one has ever been to heaven yet. He made that very clear, that in the Old Testament, people didn't go to heaven. They went to "*Abraham's side*." They went to a place of comfort called, paradise. Now paradise is going to shift addresses here after the death of Jesus. But for right now, and we're talking pre cross, this is where people go. And that leads us to question number two up on the screen.

**Question #2:**

Most Christians believe that when a believer dies they go to heaven, but the Bible teaches there's coming a day when we will be raised from the dead. How can both of those things be true?

Most Christians believe that when a believer dies they go to heaven, but the Bible teaches that there's coming a day when we will be raised from the dead. How can both these things be true?

Actually, this is a good, this is a good question. This is a question that is asked by people who are paying attention, right? You can see that this question deals essentially with 2 issues. And the first issue is, do believers go to heaven when they die? And the second is, how can believers be in heaven when the Bible says that in the future there they will be raised from the dead?

Well, when it comes to what happens after physical death, you need to know something. Everything changed with Jesus. Everything changed with Jesus and what He did on the cross when He paid the penalty for our sins. And not just ours. Jesus paid the outstanding balance for the sins of those who lived before Him. Right. Because those people were forgiven of their sins. But the Bible tells us their penalty had not been paid. It says it in Romans chapter 3 up on the screen. We've looked at this recently.

**Romans 3:25 (NIV84)**

*God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—*

*God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, (I like this best out of the NIV. He says) through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—*

Right? Yes people were forgiven, but their sins were not punished. People think that, well what about those animals that got sacrificed? God wasn't punishing animals. You can't punish an animal for a man's sin. That was just a picture of sacrifice and substitution. And the sins were left unpunished, right?

The death and the resurrection of Jesus changed the entire landscape of how people, where people go in terms of what happens after physical death. And the apostle Paul, while quoting in the Psalms wrote this in Ephesians chapter 4. He said,

**Ephesians 4:8 (ESV)**

*Therefore, it says, “When he ascended on high he led a host of captives...”*

*Therefore, it says, “When he (Jesus) ascended on high (when He ascended after His death, burial and resurrection, what did He do? he led a host of captives...”*

And it is generally believed that this verse refers to, captives in the place of comfort. Those are the people who were in paradise, “*Abraham's side*,” and Jesus led them triumphantly into heaven, and where all believers now go. That the price of sin has been paid. See, now the price of sin has been paid now we can go to heaven and we do upon a physical death. That's why Paul wrote what he did in 2 Corinthians up on the screen.

### **2 Corinthians 5:6-8 (ESV)**

*So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.*

*So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, (are you at home in your body right now? I sure hope you would say yes. He says) for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and (where?) at home with the Lord.*

Paul is telling us right there the no more, “*Abraham's side*.” When someone dies, a physical death and has faith in Jesus Christ, they are then, with the Lord. One of the most blessed things I get to do during doing a funeral of a believer is to tell the family, their loved one is with the Lord. That they're alive, conscious, talking, rejoicing, probably doing a happy dance. And it's just, it really is, it's a privilege.

But let's address the secondary question. How can believers be with the Lord when the Bible tells us that the dead are going to be raised at some point? And the reason people get this mixed up is because it's really just a simple misunderstanding of what gets raised.

Guys, your spirit and your when you die, your spirit and your soul leave your body and they go to be with the Lord. But your spirit and your soul can't die. They just, they can't. God created them in such a way they can't die so only the body can die. And guys, only the body is raised.

When the Bible says that you're going to be raised, that's your body it's talking about. The spirit and soul are not raised. They're there with the Lord upon death. Your body is raised. So the resurrection always refers to the physical body.

And so what that means is that when believers are raised, their spirit and soul, which has been with the Lord, is going to be joined with their new incorruptible

body at the time of the rapture. It's going to be a coming together. You flew apart at death, you're going to come back together again when your new body is raised.

And so that brings us to the last of the 3 questions on the screen.

**Question #3:**

When will the Resurrection take place?

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And we hear a lot about the resurrection, but the fact is the Bible reveals that there will be a rapture of the church. We'll talk about that. And then there will be 2 other resurrections. Okay. So there's going to be a rapture, and then there's going to be 2 other resurrections of the dead. And it appears in John 5 that Jesus describes these 2 resurrections up on the screen. He says,

**John 5:28-29 (ESV)**

*“Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”*

*“Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.”*

Notice He refers to those as 2 different resurrections. There is a resurrection unto life and there's a resurrection unto judgment. Those are the 2 resurrections that will follow the rapture.

Now, the rapture, and I've told you this before, I've taught this as we've gone through Revelation. And I believe this, you may disagree with me, that's fine. I believe the rapture takes place just before the 7 year tribulation period. And that is when God will raise the church saints. And I don't know why the Bible doesn't refer to this as a, resurrection. It's the rapture. We call it the rapture and we do it for good reason.

But the Bible does not refer to the rapture as the first resurrection, there's going to be another resurrection at the end of the tribulation. That's the one that's called the first resurrection. But first you have the rapture. And Paul talks about

this in a couple of different places. First is, 1 Corinthians, chapter 15. Check this out.

### **1 Corinthians 15:51-52 (ESV)**

*Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

*Behold!* (he writes) *I tell you a mystery.* (and by the way, when the Bible says *mystery*, it means something that was previously unrevealed, but is now revealed. *I tell you a mystery.* And that means this wasn't revealed in the Old Testament) *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

This passage is talking about the rapture but let me begin by emphasizing the fact that one of the first things you see here in this passage is the statement, “*We shall not all sleep.*” Did you catch that? There we are. We've highlighted it for you there.

Sleep is Paul's favorite word for Christian death, but he does not mean it literally, because he already told you that when we are absent from the body, we are present with the Lord. He refers to it as sleep because when you're dead, it looks, the body appears as if it is sleeping. Right? So that was just his favorite way of referring to Christian death.

And I think Paul had a hard time, using the word death as it relates to Christians, because death no longer has power over Christians because Jesus broke that power. And so I don't think Paul liked using, he didn't like to say, but the believers are going to die because they don't. The body, expires, but you're alive and well, you're in the presence of the Lord so it's hard to refer to that as death.

Paul referred to it as the body sleeping, right? And what we're seeing in this passage is that not every believer in Jesus is going to experience death. He says, look, I tell you a mystery, we're not going to all die. Some Christians who are, well, all the Christians who are true born again believers who are alive on the earth when Jesus comes for His church are not going to die.

Now that means if Jesus comes in your lifetime, you are not going to experience death. Whoopee, right? I mean, that's pretty cool. I don't know if it's going to be us or if it's going to be another generation, but those people are not going to



experience death. They're simply going to be transformed, Paul says, “*in the twinkling of an eye,*” right? And again, he calls this a mystery, but it's a pretty cool one.

Now, let me also emphasize something else that Paul says in this passage.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-52 (ESV)**

*Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

He says, “*the dead will be raised imperishable, ...*” Did you notice that? He says, “*the dead will be raised...*”

Now this is the rapture and we believe he's talking about believers; the believing dead, the bodies of believers who died will be raised. How do we know he's talking about believers? Cause he doesn't say it here specifically, although he does use the term, we, several times. Which is again, one of his favorite terms for Christians.

But the reason we know he's talking about believers when he says, “*the dead will be raised imperishable,*” is because he writes about the rapture also in 1 Thessalonians. Up on the screen, check this out. He says,

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 (ESV)**

*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.*

*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, (and again, that's that euphemism for Christian death) that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.*

He goes on to say,

### **1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 (ESV)**

*For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.*

*For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. (look at this) And the dead in Christ will rise first. (there's where he specifies who is going to be raised first at the rapture) Then we who are alive, (or were alive when Christ returned for us) who are left, will be caught up together with them (and by the way, those words, caught up are where we get our word rapture, right? It's basically taken off from a Latin word that sounds very much like rapture, to be caught up. And he says, we will be caught up together with them look at) in the clouds to meet the Lord (where?) in the air, (Is this when Jesus comes to earth? No, this is not the second coming. The rapture is not the second coming. The rapture is where the church meets the Lord in the air, in the clouds,) and so we will always (go to) be with the Lord.*

It is after the great tribulation that Jesus comes to earth after the great at the conclusion of the great tribulation. I say after, but it's really at the conclusion or the concluding time.

All right, so here we are looking, with, at the rapture of the church in a couple of different passages. And now that we've seen the rapture in the Word, we can look at what are called the 1st and the 2nd resurrections, right? And we know that this first resurrection involves those who suffered martyrdom during the great tribulation. That's how we know the timing of this, because this resurrection is primarily, but not exclusively for the tribulation saints. And we read about Revelation, chapter 20 up on the screen.

### **Revelation 20:4-6 (ESV)**

*Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. **Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power,** but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

*Then I saw thrones, (John writes) and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. (and I believe that this is the bride of Christ) Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded (and by the way, the ancient Greek term for, beheaded is a wide range of just execution. It doesn't necessarily mean they had their heads cut off. It's just execution *who had been beheaded*) for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. (he goes on to say) They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. (again, this is referred to as the first resurrection after the rapture, now look what it says here about this resurrection) **Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power,** but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

All right. Now, so we see that this first resurrection takes place at the end of the great tribulation. It has to because it involves the tribulation saints. Those who were executed for not taking the mark of the beast, right? That's who's being raised in this first resurrection. At least that's what this is telling us here.

Now, there are some words that I want you to notice and understand from what we have just read. And again, I'm going to highlight these. We emphasized them while we were reading them but I want you to see this again.

### **Revelation 20:4-6 (ESV)**

*Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. **Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power,** but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.*

***Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power,***

See, the first resurrection is all good. It's all good. It's not a resurrection of judgment, that's going to be the second resurrection. This first resurrection is a resurrection of life and that's why he says, blessed are those who get to take part in this first resurrection after the great tribulation. This is a good thing, right?

The tribulation saints are receiving the blessing of having put their faith in Jesus even though they paid for that faith with their life during the great tribulation. They were executed by the anti-Christ/beast so this is an important thing. This is, but this is not the second resurrection, we're going to talk about that in a minute. The second resurrection we call, The Great White Throne Judgment, and that is a resurrection of judgment. And we don't hear anything about life in the final resurrection.

Now, even though the Bible doesn't say it here, we have reason to believe that this first resurrection, which involves the tribulation martyrs also will include the Old Testament saints. And the reason we believe that even though the Bible doesn't say it is because, first of all, the bride of Christ is raised at the rapture, right? The first resurrection is all good and the second resurrection is all judgment. That would mean that the Old Testament saints have to be raised somewhere, and we believe that this is where they would also be raised.

Now, the Bible does say that the Old Testament saints will be raised. I could show you passages, but I won't bother to do that. It just doesn't say when but we believe that this is when it happens. So we believe that this is old Testament saints and tribulation martyrs who are raised in this first resurrection. All right.

And then that final resurrection is spoken of in Revelation 20. Once again, on the screen.

**Revelation 20:11-15 (ESV)**

*Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.*

*Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.*

He goes on to say,

**Revelation 20:11-15 (ESV)**

*And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

*And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Now, first of all, this is called, the second resurrection. It takes place after the 1000 year reign of Christ on the earth, which we call the Millennial Kingdom or the Messianic Kingdom. So you've got the great tribulation followed by the Millennial Kingdom, a 1000 year period of incredible peace. A final rebellion after that time by Satan; he's quickly put down. And then the Great White Throne Judgment, which are the remaining dead.

Now, although this passage speaks of “*the book of life*” being opened, there is no reference in this passage, or any word of a blessing, or a crowning of life given to anyone. There's no good news in this passage that we just read about

The Great White Throne Judgment at all. In fact, there are 3 rather ominous phrases that occur in this passage. Let me put them up on the screen.

### **Three ominous phrases...**

- the dead were judged...according to what they had done
- and they were judged
- This is the second death

The dead were judged, look at this, according to what they had done. People, that's... If somebody is judged according to what they've done, that's not a believer. You're not going to be judged according to what you have done. You're going to be rewarded according to what you have done, but your judgment, Jesus took, He bore that already. So you see, and it actually, this passage 2 times says, these people are going to be judged according to what they did. Right.

And then it's called, and then it goes on to say at the very end of this section, This is the second death. That's the way it ends. There's no mention of life. There's no mention of eternal life that is bestowed on anyone. So it appears that no one stands in this judgment and is found to have their name in the book of life. The book of life is opened merely to show that their names are missing. And that's the only purpose. So regardless, this is the second resurrection.

So we have the rapture of the church prior to the great tribulation. We have the first resurrection at the conclusion of the great tribulation, which includes the tribulation martyrs. And we believe the Old Testament saints. And then we have the second resurrection, also called The White Throne Judgment at the conclusion of the 1000 year reign of Jesus Christ.

You'll notice that I didn't add a fourth question to this whole thing, which, and I could have, because I get a lot of questions from people asking what heaven is going to be like. Do you know that God doesn't tell us in the Word what heaven is going to be like? Other than the fact that during the millennial period, we're going to reign with Him. We know that, but we don't know.

And I believe that God and His wisdom withheld that information. And first of all, we, we talk about heaven being in heaven. Well, after the Millennial Kingdom, heaven and earth are going to be remade. And so there's going to be a new earth that we're also going to be living on for eternity. There's going to be a new heaven and a new earth the Bible tells us. What we're going to do there? I don't know. I honestly don't know. And there's so much that we don't know that

people, it's a little wearisome sometimes, but people love to interject what they don't know. Have you ever noticed that? Particularly at funerals.

It's one of the reasons, I don't mind doing a funeral, I mean, performing a funeral because I get to be in charge and do the talking, I don't necessarily like to go to funerals because. People get up and say all kinds of really dumb things that they have no idea if they're true or not. Absolutely no idea.

One of the most popular things you'll hear people say at a funeral, well, I guess God needed another angel. What a dumb thing to say. No, God didn't need another angel. He has plenty of angels. He can make an angel out of a rock. It's not a big deal. And I know people are just trying to comfort themselves when they say things.

You go to a funeral for somebody who never gave Jesus a second thought. In fact, cursed Him every, probably every day of their life. And people, they finally die and the family says, well, he's in a better place. And I hear that a lot. And I'm like, what better place would that be? We do this. We humans, we do this. I think we do it because we just, there's so much we don't know.

We have so many questions about death and so forth, that we've, we just got to come up with our own thoughts. We've got to come up with our own belief system and we'd have to just say it to make ourselves, feel better.

And I want to just encourage you guys let's not do that. Okay. It's, we don't know what's going to happen in heaven. We don't know what we're going to be doing in heaven and let's not give people false hope about things.

The fact of the matter is heaven is a place that is promised to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ and that's not my Gospel, that's His good news. And that's the thing we have to maintain. The Bible says that we must be born again. And that new birth comes through faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. That's the only way it comes. I don't know if you heard, but recently the Pope said all religions lead to God. Did you see that in the news? Yeah.

No, they don't. Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."* And no man comes to the Father except by Me. (John 14:6) Yeah, you say, well, it sounds pretty exclusive to me. It's exactly right. It is exclusive. Jesus made it exclusive. That's one of the reasons people don't like Christianity. It's exclusive. Who doesn't want to have a belief that all religions lead to God. It's an extremely comforting belief, but it's about as dumb as God needs another angel. It's spoken in ignorance and it's spoken in foolishness, folly.

I'm going to go with what Jesus said. How about you? Yeah, *"I am the way."* I am not a way. *"I am the way, (I am) the truth, and (I am) the life."* No man comes to the Father except by Me. You got a problem with that? Take it up with Jesus, right? I didn't say it. He did. It's one of the reasons people picked up stones and they still pick up stones. That's okay. That's all right. It's between them and God. But I hope we've answered some questions here this morning And maybe cleared up a little bit of confusion about some of these things.

So where do believers go after they died during the Old Testament? Abraham's side, it was a place of comfort. It was a temporary place that Jesus cleared out. Wouldn't that have been a cool thing to see, when Jesus descended into the lower earthly regions and He cleared out the holding place. And triumphantly took those folks to the heaven of heavens.

And how is it that we can be with the Lord and still be raised? It's because your spirit and soul are with the Lord upon death and you await there with the Lord the raising of your physical body as an incorruptible thing. Why do you need an incorruptible body? Paul said, I tell you the truth, *"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."* (1 Corinthians 15:50) That's why you need a new body. Your body right now isn't meant to stand in the presence of God. Good grief my body is having a hard time standing in your presence, let alone the presence of God.

And then finally, when will the resurrection take place? We know that there is the rapture and the first and second resurrections. There we go. Let's stand together, we'll close in prayer. If you need prayer, come on up, and we'd be more than happy to pray with you.

Father, thank You so much that You have made things clear in Your Word. We just thank You, Father, God that we can see and understand how these things are going to work out. We understand Lord where people, now we know where they went. Had you not told us, had Luke not recorded Jesus telling that story, we wouldn't know. And yet, Lord, you saw fit to reveal it to us in Your Word. Thank you, Lord for showing us that.

Thank you for making us, making it clear to us about these various differences between the rapture and the resurrections. Thank You, Father, for opening our eyes and allowing us to see about our own future, that if you tarry, and our lives come to an end on this earth, we will instantly be in Your presence awaiting the beauty of that incorruptible body. We thank You. We praise You. We worship You for your plan and for who You are. In Jesus precious Name and all God's people said together, amen. Have a good rest of your day.