

# SALT & LIGHT (A CHRISTIAN JOURNAL)

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Page 1

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## A Christian Response to Death

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1	The Exhortation Conveyed by Death . . . . .	1
2	The Lie of the Serpent: “The Soul Does Not Die” . . . . .	1
2.1	Animation is Temporary . . . . .	2
2.2	Resurrection is the Great Confidence of the Justified . . . . .	2
2.3	Defrauding Confidence in the Resurrection . . . . .	2
2.4	The Soul is the Body . . . . .	3
2.5	Victory Through Confidence in the Resurrection . . . . .	3
3	A Fundamental Pair of Studies . . . . .	3
4	The False Security of Tradition . . . . .	3
5	Supplanted by Counterfeits . . . . .	4
6	The True Church Continues . . . . .	4

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## 1 The Exhortation Conveyed by Death

The death of a friend or a member of the family is a reminder that the present life is short and uncertain; thus, it is a call to everyone, to examine his own status with respect to the Christian Faith.<sup>1</sup> Of particular importance is one’s attitude regarding the Resurrection.

## 2 The Lie of the Serpent: “The Soul Does Not Die”

Protestants generally do not understand death, largely because they have been taught that the essence of Man is an “Immortal Soul.” But that notion, though a venerated Protestant tradition, is a lie which is not supported by the Scripture. Indeed, belief in the Immortal Soul is based upon the lie of the Serpent.<sup>2</sup> In order to embrace the lie that he is immortal,<sup>3</sup> a man must embrace a string of lies, beginning with the lie that death is not death.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>II Corinthians 13:5.

<sup>2</sup>Genesis 3:4–5.

<sup>3</sup>Consider I Timothy 6:13–16.

<sup>4</sup>Consider Genesis 2:16–17, Genesis 3:19, & Genesis 3:22–24.

## 2.1 Animation is Temporary

The truth is that man is a chemical organism<sup>5</sup> which is animated by a divinely-imparted animating spirit termed the “*Spirit of Life*.<sup>6</sup> The *Spirit of Life* is non-sentient; the thinking and consciousness of man is a function of the brain. The Spirit of Life does *not* correspond to the Protestant concept of “Immortal Soul.”

Man is animated at birth, upon the first inhale, following the pattern of Adam. Death terminates animation, including thought processes.<sup>7</sup> This is the case for the Justified as well as for the Unjustified. Upon death, the animating spirit returns to God the Father.<sup>8</sup>

## 2.2 Resurrection is the Great Confidence of the Justified

The greatest enemy of Man is death. Death is inevitable. The *Resurrection Out From the Dead*,<sup>9</sup> also termed the *Resurrection of Life*,<sup>10</sup> is the only means of escape from the hold of death. Accordingly, the Resurrection is the great confidence of the Justified.<sup>11</sup>

## 2.3 Defrauding Confidence in the Resurrection

The notion that Man is an “Immortal Soul” having temporary residence in a body of flesh is a deceitful stratagem. The idea that man has an internal immortal spirit is a pipe dream which has an allure for many. The concept of the “Immortal Soul” is propagated for the purpose of defrauding the Just of confidence in the Resurrection.

When a man is convinced that he is an “Immortal Soul” and therefore is immune to Death, he sees no real need for resurrection. Latching onto a passage taken out of context and misinterpreted,<sup>12</sup> he imagines that, at the moment of death, he is “*face to face with the Lord*.” Such a man turns a blind eye toward the passages of Scripture which reveal that, in death, the Justified lie asleep in the Grave, unconscious, unaware of the passage of time, awaiting awakening by the Resurrection. Therefore, such a man disregards the promises of resurrection.

The men who promote the concept of the *Immortal Soul* generally are rulers or others whose wealth, power, and pleasure are derived through oppression. Ultimately, the power to oppress proceeds from the fear of death. Those who have the power to kill are able to control and oppress by threatening death. Confidence in the Resurrection counters that threat.

<sup>5</sup>Genesis 2:7, Genesis 3:19.

<sup>6</sup>Genesis 2:7. Sometimes translated “*Breath of Life*.” The Greek term *pneuma* is used for spirit, breath, wind, air.

<sup>7</sup>Psalm 115:17, Psalm 146:1–4, Ecclesiastes 9:2–6.

<sup>8</sup>Ecclesiastes 12:7, Acts 7:59, Luke 23:46.

<sup>9</sup>Matthew 22:23–33, Luke 20:27–40, John 11:21–27, Acts 4:1–4, Acts 17:22–34, Acts 23:6–10, Acts 24:10–22, Romans 1:1–7, I Corinthians 15:12–58, Philippians 3:7–16, Hebrews 6:1–3, Hebrews 11:35, I Peter 1:3–5.

<sup>10</sup>John 5:28–29. Consider also Matthew 19:29, Luke 18:30, John 3:13, John 3:36, John 4:14, John 5:24, John 6:27, John 6:40, John 6:47, Romans 6:22, Galatians 6:8, I Timothy 1:16.

<sup>11</sup>Titus 1:1–4, Titus 3:3–7.

<sup>12</sup>II Corinthians 5:1–9. This passage does not negate the necessity of the Resurrection. Paul simply notes that, in the figurative “sleep” of death, there is no awareness of the passage of time. Paul, the Apostle, today lies in the Grave, unconscious and awaiting the Resurrection. Not until the moment of Resurrection shall Paul indeed be “*face to face with the Lord*.”

## 2.4 The Soul is the Body

In his belief that the “Soul” has existence independent of the body, a man mocks the teaching of the Scripture concerning the body of the Resurrection.<sup>13</sup> He fails to perceive the truth that the *soul* (which is to say, the *identity*) of a man is the very *body* of the man. Man does not *have* a soul; rather, man *is* a soul. Consider the case of Adam, who became a *living* soul only after receiving impartation of the *Spirit of Life*.<sup>14</sup> Apart from a body, a man has no existence.

## 2.5 Victory Through Confidence in the Resurrection

It is confidence in the Resurrection which enables the Just to stand against opposition, even when taking a stand can cost his life. It is reliance on the promise of resurrection to Life Everlasting which motivates the Just to endure testing, even to the point of death. The man who believes in the concept of the Immortal Soul cannot withstand testing, for his confidence, that he shall not die, is founded upon a lie.

It was confidence in the Resurrection that motivated Jesus to lay down his life for the sheep.<sup>15</sup> It was confidence in the promise of God the Father for resurrection, together with the joys which lay beyond the Resurrection, that gave Christ Jesus the determination to endure the torture stake.<sup>16</sup>

## 3 A Fundamental Pair of Studies

The reader of this article should find of interest two additional articles published in the journal *Salt & Light*:<sup>17</sup>

- *The Nature of Death* [ No. 050 ]
- *False Assurance :: John 11:25–26 Misconstrued* [ No. 110 ]

The articles examine what the Scripture reveals concerning Death and the Resurrection. Footnotes within the articles provide Scriptural citations for critical assertions.

Most of the men who today stand in the Protestant Pulpit would reject this pair of studies, if indeed they would take the trouble to read them. But few would read the articles, and fewer still would look up the passages cited in the footnotes. Protestants generally are ignorant of the command, “*Prove all things*.<sup>18</sup>”

## 4 The False Security of Tradition

Regarding understanding of the Scripture, the typical Protestant Pastor has no interest beyond that which he was taught in Bible College or Seminary. He learned the theology of his particular denomination, and

<sup>13</sup>Consider I Corinthians Chapter 15, particularly verses 42 through 50.

<sup>14</sup>Genesis 2:7, Genesis 3:19.

<sup>15</sup>John 10:11–18, Psalm 16:8–11, Acts 2:22–36.

<sup>16</sup>Hebrews 12:1–3. Jesus died on a torture stake (Greek, *stauros*), not on a “cross.”

<sup>17</sup>All *Salt & Light* articles are freely available on the Internet web site of *The Gospel Broadcasting Association*, [www.gospelpublishing.org](http://www.gospelpublishing.org). All publications of *The Gospel Broadcasting Association* are posted in the printer-friendly *PDF* format, so that they may be printed and studied. Sadly, many have access to the Internet only via the “smartphone” with its tiny screen. This is diabolical. The digestion of documents of any reasonable complexity demands ink-on-paper. In the present day, a serious student of the Scripture needs a desktop computer and a laser printer.

<sup>18</sup>1 Thessalonians 5:21.

he becomes uneasy whenever he encounters a challenge to that theology, no matter how voluminous or compelling the Scriptural evidence presented in support of the challenge. Tradition is a formidable opponent.

## 5 Supplanted by Counterfeits

The trouble is that the Christianity of the Scripture has been supplanted by counterfeits which are founded upon tradition which runs contrary to the Word of God. Working in the days of the Apostles, the perennial enemy of Christ Jesus, the Talmudic Jew, designed and implemented the counterfeit which today is known as the Church of Rome.<sup>19</sup> As the counterfeit grew to a position of dominance, the true Church, the Body of Christ, was forced underground.

More or less a thousand years later, by means of the Protestant Reformation, the Church of Rome gave birth to multiple daughters. The daughters, known as "Protestant Denominations," inherited from their mother a legacy of lie and myth. In actuality, the Protestant Denominations differ little, one from another, and, indeed, from their mother. Whether Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, or even the misnamed "Church of Christ," all are cut from the same cloth. Indications, which are both obvious and numerous, reveal that the Protestant Reformation was a subversive plot of the Talmudic Jew.

## 6 The True Church Continues

But over the centuries, the true Church has continued; it is small in number<sup>20</sup> and largely unseen. The beliefs of the true Church are not dictated by the deliberations of men recorded in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* or some other "Statement of Belief." Rather, they are dictated by the Scripture, in the *Writings of the Prophets* and the *Writings of the Apostles*.<sup>21</sup> Ascertaining truth from the pages of Scripture is not done casually; extraction of truth is a labourious process.<sup>22</sup> The Lord Christ has provided for his Church men with the spiritual gifts necessary to seek out and teach the truths of the Faith.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>II Thessalonians 2:1–12.

<sup>20</sup>Isaiah 10:21–23, Romans 9:27–29, Luke 12:32, Luke 13:23–30.

<sup>21</sup>Ephesians 2:19–22, Ephesians 3:1–7.

<sup>22</sup>I Timothy 5:17–18.

<sup>23</sup>Ephesians 4:11–16.