



# THE LIFE BEYOND

*And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. – Revelation 14:13*

The Bible teaches that life does not end at the grave. The eternal spirit and image of God within us cannot be destroyed by the death of the body. John must have had this truth in mind when he wrote Revelation 14:13.

Obviously, this is a view of death from the other side. Viewed from our vantage point, death appears to be dreadful, defeating, and devastating. But from God's vantage point, it is altogether different. He calls the dead, "blessed." That word literally means "happy," "to be congratulated," "fortunate." Far from being pitied, God tells us that those who die with faith in the Lord are to be envied.

## 1. THE DOORWAY TO REST

*1) Death is the doorway to rest from our labors.* The word "labor" describes a wearing out from work, a wearisome toil. It suggests to us that life is often hard. It can be full of difficulties, disappointments, and disease. God promises us rest from all of that.

*2) Death is the doorway into that rest for God's people.* We need to thank God for death. There comes a time when we need to lay down our burden and to be at rest. The word "rest" that appears here is a beautiful word. It means to be at ease, to be refreshed. It suggests an end to the toils and tribulations of life.

This is what Jesus promised to us when He said:

*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. – Matthew 11:28-30*

In this world of trouble, we can know rest. But there is a greater and more complete rest for us when we go to be with the Lord. It is the rest of heaven and

the presence of God. And those who have laid their burden down and entered into it are to be congratulated – they are truly fortunate.

## **2. DOORWAY TO REWARD**

John says in Revelation 14, "their works do follow them." We are all making a record on earth. We carry the record of our life with us into eternity. By the lives that we live, by the words that we say, and the deeds that we do, we are laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven. Jesus said if we give a cup of cold water to a little child because we are His disciple, we will in no way lose our reward (Matt. 10:42). The Bible tells us that God will not forget our works and labor of love which we have done in His name as we minister to others (Heb. 6:10). Our works follow us. They accompany us to the very judgment of God.

The purpose of the judgment is not to determine our destiny but to determine our reward in that destiny. We are saved by grace, but we will be rewarded by our works. If we have lived faithfully and served our Lord lovingly then death becomes the doorway to our reward. And those who have gone to a good reward are fortunate. They are to be congratulated.

## **3. DOORWAY TO RESURRECTION**

While the resurrection is not mentioned in this verse, it is affirmed in 1 Corinthians 15:20-22:

*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. – 1 Corinthians 15:20-22*

The Bible teaches more than the immortality or the survival of the spirit of man. It also teaches the resurrection of the body. Those who die in Christ go immediately to be with the Lord. And when Christ returns the body that has died will come to life again. It will be a new and glorious resurrection body and will be like the resurrected body of Christ. As His body was recognizable, so our friend and loved one will be recognizable also. As His body transcended the limitations of time and space, so our body will not be subject to the limitations of this life. As His body was no longer subject to disease and decay, so our body will be an immortal body. It will live forever.