



*"The words that I speak unto you,  
they are spirit, and they are life."*  
(John 6:63)



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*"the churches of Christ salute you" (Romans 16:16)*

# "Spirit and Life"

## **Reserved unto Fire – Part 4**

(A Series on 2 Peter 3)

*By Scott Kluft*

The previous installments of this series have been dealing with the wide-sweeping implications of the first two verses of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter chapter 3 in which the apostle states he is reminding his readers of things they had already heard from him as well as what the prophets of Old Covenant scriptures taught. In Peter's recorded words in the narrative of the book of Acts – as well as in Peter's own words in his first letter – he addresses the same subject matters as are found in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3. Believing in the Divine origin of scripture demands that our interpretation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3 must harmonize with all of it. It sets the context for what Peter teaches in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3; and, any interpretation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3 that does not consider the same subjects addressed elsewhere will surely be flawed at best.

There was one passage in 1<sup>st</sup> Peter for which there was no space in the previous article. We will address that here before continuing to the more immediate context of Peter's second letter.

**1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:12-17** (Please read the passage first, then continue here.)

### ***IN THIS ISSUE...***

*Reserved unto Fire*      Pg. 1  
Scott Kluft

*Just Like the  
NT Church*      Pg. 4  
John Watson

*The Denham-Neubauer  
Debate*      Pg. 9  
Steve Baisden

*What is Death?*      Pg. 13  
Daniel Rogers

Peter admonishes his contemporary Christians not to be moved from faithfulness by those present persecutions that he calls, “fiery trials.” Instead, they should consider their sufferings as participation with the Lord that they should be partakers in His glory. In the previous installment (*Spirit & Life*, Vol. 2, #5), we included a discussion of the “last days” in which Jesus would be revealed (the true, biblical, *apocalypse*). The first generation of Christians would finally receive the inheritance and hope for which they waited. Peter brings that back to mind in 4:13. The revealing of Jesus’ glory and the “end of all things” was “at hand” (1Pet. 4:7) at the time Peter wrote. The anticipation of it helped the first generation of Christians endure the persecutions of their “present distress” (cf. 1Cor. 7:26).

Reproaches for the name of Christ, Peter says, are the precursor to the glory and joy they would enjoy at the then-near revelation of Christ; and thus, the reproaches were to be viewed by them as an “evident token” of salvation (cf. Philippians 1:28) and a reason for rejoicing (cf. Acts 5:41).

(One should rightly wonder, therefore, at the views that are still looking for a future revelation of Christ, whether such statements made by the apostles were of any comfort at all to those Christians to whom their writings were originally sent. If the Lord has not come yet for 2000-years-and-still-counting to give the suffering saints rest from their persecutions (cf. 2Thes. 1:4-9), they were deceived, tricked, and brainwashed into thinking their wounds both emotional and physical were valuable tokens of a joy they would as-yet never realize. The implication of holding to future-looking views of the coming of Christ in the present day is that God did not keep His promises, which undermines the very foundation of Christianity.)

Peter insists to his contemporary Christians that suffering for well-doing glorifies God in view of the imminence (to them) of the Lord’s return. He says, by way of explanation, “For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1Pet. 4:7). We have, therefore, a direct link of the “revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:13); the revealing of His glory (4:13); the “end of all things” (4:7); the reward to the saints (4:13); and, the “judgment” that is about to “begin” at “the house of God” (4:17). It is the same “house of God” with which Peter identifies himself among the same “us” as he had used in the introduction of the epistle (1:1-3). All of it – every subject under consideration – is spoken of as imminent in the first generation of Christians.

How does that effect the interpretation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3? They are the same subjects found in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3; of which, he plainly states, he is merely writing about them to *remind* (cf. 2Pet. 3:1, 2) his contemporary Christians of those previously taught subjects. His previous words in the first epistle, and the imminence with which he spoke, *must* be applied as qualifying details that apply to what he has to say in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3. There is not a shred of evidence to indicate Peter has *different judgments*; *different comings*; *different revelations*, or a *different revealing of the Lord’s glory*;

*different hopes; different comforts; and different promises*, under consideration in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3 – or in any other text for that matter.

Whatever else may be learned from 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3 must fit in harmony with everything else he has said, everything else all the other apostles have said, and everything the Old Covenant prophets have said about those subjects. This leaves *no room* for any yet-future-to-us fulfillment of those things.

## **The Immediate Context – The Second Epistle of the Apostle Peter**

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1:11**

It is unfortunate that so many people disassociate what Peter has to say in the first two chapters of his second epistle. How many times is it read without considering that Peter is not leaping from the subject of Christian-virtues and then to miraculous inspiration in chapter 1; and then, oddly, to false teachers in chapter 2; and then, a judgment in chapter 3. Rather, Peter uses a natural progression of thought. That progression of thought involves the reason the “Christian virtues” need to be developing in the Christian: In view of the possibility of falling from God’s favor (cf. 1:10).

The adverb of manner, “so,” is incredibly important to the meaning of v. 11. “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” It speaks of the manner in which this everlasting kingdom may be entered. That is theologically interesting, but notice the tense: “shall be.” He puts entering the kingdom off into his future. This is the same apostle who preached the message in Acts 2, inviting people to “repent and be baptized... in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin...” (Acts 2:38). The same apostle who, after people had done so, had about 3000 souls added to the church (Acts 2:41, 47). But he is now speaking of a kingdom not yet populated with those whom he has taught and baptized. That kingdom had not yet come at the time he wrote 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter.

(Note: this is a function of the “Already, but not yet” of scripture. Ask any legal immigrant how it works. Having the promise of a future citizenship on paper is not the same as having that paper fulfilled and being established in a community of other citizens. In the first generation, when the apostles wrote, the first Christians were given the Holy Spirit by miraculous means as the earnest of that citizenship, looking forward, in their own lifetimes, to the day of redemption. cf. Ephesians 1:13, 14; 4:30; Lk. 21:20, 28.)

While we are here, lingering and thinking about the implications of what Peter said in v. 11, please notice the descriptive characteristic Peter uses in reference to that kingdom. He says it is “everlasting.” Some future-looking paradigms have the Christian age ending a great conflagration, obliterating the material universe at the cellular level. They will turn specifically to Peter’s words in chapter 3 of this letter. Do we not see the conflict and contradiction forced upon Peter’s words? Peter knew

there was not to be an end (cf. Isa. 9:7; Lk 1:33). Therefore, whatever else he has to say in the third chapter, it has to harmonize with what he says very plainly in 1:11.

But coming back to the passage... v.12 is drawing a conclusion from what was previously said. The entrance of his contemporary Christians into that then-hoped-for kingdom was what Peter dearly desired. To remind them of things they had already known was not a burden he would neglect as long as he lived. Indeed, he wanted them to have those things always in remembrance (cf. 1:12-15). Here we find more evidence to attest to our proposition thus far in this series: Everything Peter has to say in this letter, including chapter 3, is a reminder of things already taught.

There are no new subjects in this epistle. Some try make an argument about 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3, that Peter is giving a completely new prophecy, uniquely found in the New Testament, about a burning of the material universe is just manifestly wrong. It is stubborn and willfully resisting what the Holy Spirit has guided Peter to write. That stubbornness, too, is addressed in this epistle, but it is not recommended that we fall under the same delusional category.

In the next installment of this series, we will take a close look at the rest of this chapter and discover that the subject matter under consideration is not strictly about the method of miraculous inspiration, but rather the testimonial facts that contribute evidentiary credibility to the message of Christ's coming in power. The power of Christ's coming discussed in chapter 3 is not standing alone. The subject started in chapter 1. – [SK]

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## **Just Like the New Testament Church**

*By John Watson*

For the last 70 years or so the modern Church of Christ has believed, what I call a “Hybrid Doctrine” of eschatology. It did not exist until modern times. Unfortunately, most have become blind to the glaring truth of the scriptures, even to the point of rejecting the words of Jesus. How can such a thing happen? Just as with the lost book of the Law and Josiah (2 Kings 22-24, 2 Chron 34-35), we, too, have strayed from a critical teaching in the scriptures. For 300 years, they did not celebrate the Passover rightly (2 Chron 35:18). Weren't they the “chosen” ones of God? Aren't we the only “right” ones today? They grievously erred from the truth because they lost the book of the Law. We, too, have erred, not because we lost the

book, but because we have lost our interest in the book. Today's children (us) of those biblically indifferent generations are paying a hefty price (Hosea 4:6).

Josiah had the right idea. He carefully and prayerfully considered the word of the Lord. Then he looked to the past to see where they went wrong. Finally, he determined to do what was right even though the clear majority of his brethren rejected the truth. Ultimately, he benefited but the others paid the eternal penalty (2 Kings 23:26-27).

**We must do as Josiah if we, too, wish to please the Lord. We're not right because we're the Church of Christ, we're the Church of Christ because of what is right!**

Let's start at today and travel backwards in time, through the pages of our history. We then get a clear picture of how we arrived at our current eschatological beliefs. Consider, as mentioned, from now back to about the 1940's. This period marks what most members of the Body of Christ currently believe, the "Hybrid Doctrine". This is the familiar A-, Pre- and Post-millennial conglomeration of today. This is largely due to the efforts of Foy E. Wallace Jr. He spent his best years teaching and preaching the truth of "realized eschatology", that Jesus returned in 70AD at the destruction of Jerusalem to pronounce judgement on Israel and Jerusalem and see to its demise, etc. The Church of Christ at that time did not like the idea of change and Brother Wallace was met with much resistance. His determination led the church in America to switch from one belief to another, now referred to as "Partial Preterism". This is a belief that all the prophecies of the bible were fulfilled by 70AD except for the future return of Christ. Wallace brought us about 80% of the way back to the complete truth. Sadly, since the 40's we have begun to bring in worldly and popular beliefs again.

Brother Wallace was fighting the eschatological errors embraced and accepted by the Church of Christ from about 1800 to the 1940's, Premillennialism. Yes, the Lord's people were wholly taken with the concept. Alexander Campbell was a Postmillennialist and Barton W. Stone was a Premillennialist, both of which played a great part in the "Restoration Movement" of that time. Their beliefs on reconstructing New Testament Christianity were correct. However, they carried their previous eschatological views with them into their conversion.

It is well documented that even today the Premillennial belief is alive and well in the modern Church of Christ. Steve Wolfgang wrote a good article on the subject and said, "Several generations of Christians, unschooled in the teaching and implications of this doctrine, now compose probably a majority of the membership of many congregations of the Lord's people."

At roughly the same time, Preterism in academia was becoming widely accepted. Kurt Simmons wrote "In the mid- to latter eighteen hundreds, scholars began to realize the Preterist context of Revelation and related eschatological events. Some of the Preterist titles of this period include: Moses Stuart, *Commentary on the Apocalypse* (1845); J. Stuart Russell, *The Parousia* (1887); F.W. Farrar, *The Late Canon of Westminster, The Early Days of Christianity* (1891); Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics* (1890) and *Biblical Apocalypics* (1898)". He also stated, "The Preterist movement today originated largely in the Churches of Christ". (*The Road Back to Preterism*)

It is my belief that the Premillennial position won the hearts of the people due to the atrocities of our civil war. The populace was primed for the Messiah to come and bring an end to things and deliver them from their daily horrors. John Darby is largely responsible for the propagation of that error beginning in 1839.

The men of the American Restoration Movement were being converted out of denominations formed from the Reformation Movement back to the 1500's. Martin Luther, John Calvin, William Tyndale and many others saw the need to reform the error of the Catholic Church. They were correct in that but their eschatological efforts needed some reform as well. Luther and the others equated papal Rome with the beast and Babylon the harlot. They saw the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope as fulfillment of biblical prophecy. Many today still hold to these five hundred-year-old beliefs thus contributing to the current beloved "Hybrid Doctrine" among our brethren today.

To ignore the power of the Catholic Church on the historical stage would be to leave out a huge chunk of legitimate history. There is no question that the Catholic Church had a death grip on the publication of religious material for more than a thousand years. Bibles were chained to the pulpit. Personal Study was forbidden. Only the Pope could infallibly interpret the scriptures when he spoke "Ex Cathedra". Per the Catholics, the Pope has infallibly interpreted only two passages, both about Mary's immaculate conception and bodily assumption into heaven. They don't really care a whole lot about eschatology. Monsignor Charles Pope said, "The Catholic approach to the end times (aka Eschatology) is perhaps less thrilling and provocative. It does not generate "Left Behind" movie series or cause people to sell their houses and gather on hillsides waiting for the announced end. It is more methodical and seeks to balance a lot of notions that often hold certain truths in tension." Just because they are apathetic to eschatology doesn't mean they haven't influenced the masses.

Going back to 1200, they largely held the “Apocalyptic Interpretation”. During these Medieval times, they abandoned Historical Exegesis and embraced “new revelations” of Bible events pertaining to the Church.

Going further back to 400AD we see the Catholic Church using the Allegorical Method of interpretation. Kurt Simmons put it well, “According to this method, the historical narratives of scripture are abstracted from real life and turned into allegories of morals and doctrine. Thus, Joseph’s brethren stripping him of his coat, casting him into a pit, and selling him into Egypt becomes a free-ranging allegory about knowledge verses ignorance.”

Now, going even further back we see Chiliasm took the prophets words literally and believed in a coming time when the earth would be revamped and Christ would physically reign for a thousand years.

As we bring our trek through time to a halt we find ourselves in the midst of the 1<sup>st</sup> century church. We have their writings in our possession today, the Bible. We can read for ourselves and see exactly what the 1<sup>st</sup> century church believed. For example, Jesus said to these very people, *“Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”* (Matt 16:28). Why would we not believe the very words of Christ, in their first century context? The Scriptures were not written to us in a 21<sup>st</sup> century context, though many read it as such. It was written to an audience of thousands of years ago.

We can understand and apply the Bible to us today. However, keeping it in the proper first century context is not popular. Many today fall into the category of John 5:44, *“How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?”* If we only seek to please the circle of our brethren, then we miss the mark completely! Paul said, *“For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.”* (Gal 1:10).

We use many “mottos” in the Lord’s Church. “We will speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent.” “Give me book, chapter and verse.” “You’d be my friend to show me my error.” “We’re trying to be just like the church you read of in the Bible.” Are these just things we say or do we truly mean them? It’s high time we put our money where our mouth is. No more lip service (Matt 15:8-9)! Standing for the word of the Lord does not mean preaching to please men. Believe it or not, our mottos do actually apply to us.

If we are going to be “just like the NT church” we cannot pick the things we like and ignore or twist the things we don’t. Below are a few verses that address the time

when Jesus would return and fulfill all things (Matt 5:17-18). I hope you will take the time to study these verses. Ask the important questions while doing so. To whom was it written? How would they have understood at the time?

Matt 5:17; 16:27-28; 24:27,30,34,36-41;26:64, Luke 17:22-37; 21:20;  
John 21:20-23; 14:1-4; Acts 17:31-32; Rom 13:12; 1 Thess 5:1-4; Heb  
10:7; James 5:7-9; 1 Pet 4:7; Rev 1:1-7; 22:10-21

For example, Hebrews 10:37 is a clear passage that has been twisted to fit the “Hybrid Doctrine”. How can it get any clearer than, “for yet a very, very little (time, JW), He who is coming will come, and will not tarry (YLT)”? Jesus said, “Yes, I am coming quickly.” (Rev 22:20). How do you think my wife would react if I said I was coming home quickly and didn’t show up for 2,000 years? The answer is in the Bible. Proverbs 21:9.

**Our well-meaning brethren expect us to believe that “quickly” means more than 2,000 years. That is not good Biblical interpretation by anyone’s standard.**

The fact remains, our 1<sup>st</sup> century brethren believed, taught and practiced the return of The Savior in their lifetimes, the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Do you choose to ignore the plain and clear teaching of the scriptures? Are you willing to twist the words of Jesus and the apostles to fit a “modern” belief? If so, are we guilty of the same offences committed by the Jews to whom Peter preached on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2? Will we have the same heart as they when confronted with the truth (V 37)?

The bottom line? If Jesus did not do what He said He was going to do, then He is a false prophet. We should not listen to Him (Deut 13:1-5, 18:20-22). But, if He did come to fulfill all things contained in the Law (Mt 5:17-18) about Him then we should listen to Him. Rev 19:10 proclaims, “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

If we are going to be just like the New Testament Church, then we must believe everything the way they believed it. Our determination is to be just like them, revering the truth and following the word of God wherever it may lead. (Gal 1:10, Re 22:18-19) – [JW]

#### **When would all things written be fulfilled?**

*“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled” (Luke 21:20-22).*



**Another Denham-Neubauer DEBATE on April 20-23  
in Pensacola, FL at the Bellview church of Christ!**

*For more information, contact Holger Neubauer or Steve Baisden*

**The Denham-Neubauer Debate**

(review of Gary Summers review)

*By Steve Baisden*

Time and space does not permit a detailed response to Gary Summers review, but it is important that we illustrate how easy it is to refute his (futurist) reasoning and show the arguments employed by brother Neubauer are logical, reasonable, and true. The very fact that there were people in attendance at the debate that changed their futurist perspective illustrates more than words can convey. Also, I need to mention that I called brother Summers after receiving his reviews and challenged him to debate. He declined “at this time” claiming he is “too busy.” He promised to discuss the possibility of him debating me at the next Denham-Neubauer debate scheduled April 20-23 2017 in Pensacola, FL.

It is a rare debate when one side does not chide the other for not following the arguments. This time Denham came out saying that Neubauer was not following his affirmations. Summers, following suite in his review agrees with Denham that indeed Neubauer did not follow and answer the affirmative arguments. I think it is a sad day when arguments are answered and men that are supposed to be skilled and learned cannot comprehend the answers given. This review will show that ineptness.

Brother Summers states the proposition: “The scriptures teach that the general resurrection of the dead is yet future and is a bodily resurrection.” Then Summers cites (Jn 5:28-29) “...all in the graves shall come forth...” Then Summers comments on this passage by adding to what is actually said in the text; Summers said; “On that day, all shall be raised bodily from the dead.” Inquiring (honest) minds want to know where this passage says that “ALL” men everywhere both dead and alive will be raised bodily, and by “bodily” Summers means with flesh and blood in physical bodies like Hollywood’s Night of the Living Dead! In other words, he made that up! Then brother Summers starts calling us names, all the while we are the ones speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where the Bible is silent. Also, worthy of note, Gary plays upon the emotions of people by reminding them of the songs in our song books which teach of a future coming of the Lord. Sorry Gary, I will stay with what is actually written by inspiration, not by adding words to the scripture and not by our song books influenced by a futurist denominational dogma.

Summers, as Denham, attempt to make some sort of point by telling how Jesus had many comings in the Bible. Holger replied; “they have more comings than Old MacDonald had animals on his farm, with, here a coming, and there a coming, and everywhere a coming coming.” These brethren seem to forget that we were not there to debate every coming of the Lord. We were there to debate the second coming in judgment and resurrection. And to this Gary agrees with us, he said; “however” there is only ONE second coming in judgment on the whole world.” HELLO Gary... that is the one we are here to debate! That was Holger’s point! Holger’s point, which Gary and Denham agree with, like many other things Holger said went right over their heads.

As Summers continues his review, he, just as Denham, continue to misrepresent our view, they do the exact thing with us that they do with scripture, adding to what has actually been said. They falsely claim that we believe the Lords coming in judgment on Jerusalem is the second coming for the judgment and the resurrection. However, we know that the coming of the Lord in judgment on Jerusalem was a “sign” (Mt 24:3) of the second coming. These events (Destruction of Jerusalem and the second coming) happened simultaneously, but make no mistake, these events are distinct one from another. At the TIME of one, the other would take place (Dan 12, Lk 21:20-32).

Brother Summers gloats in the argument that Denham made from (Acts 1:9-11). Denham argued that the ascension of Jesus in a physical body into heaven was the exact way He would return. Holger pointed out, that is NOT what Acts 1:9-11 says. Then Holger cross-referenced Acts 1:9-11 with Mt 24:30-34 where Jesus said every eye would see Him coming and that generation, 2000 years ago. Just as Acts 1 explains, Jesus was taken out of their sight in the clouds and that is how He would return. It is sad that these men disregard the advice that Jesus gave to His disciples Jn 6:62-63 “*What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.” Jesus plainly told them the flesh would profit them nothing when He ascended, yet Denham, Summers, and company say Jesus was wrong!

Speaking of the return of Jesus, Gary Summers asks; “How are people to recognize Him if He does not have the appearance of his physical body?” If not so serious this would be laughable! REALLY Gary? I guess in Gary’s mind we would have to compare what Jesus looked like to all the pictures we have of Him in the Vatican... Or maybe, He supposed to look like Hollywood’s depiction of Him, you know, 6’2’ tall with blond hair and blue eyes... Ridiculous!

Summers accuses Holger of saying “all the comings are the same,” even Summers could have understood this IF he could grasp context. Holger, in context, was referring to the “manner” in which the Lord comes in judgment. NOT that all the comings are the same.

Following Denham’s reference to (1Ths 4:13-17) Holger superbly argued that when the timing of an event is given, then the manner (nature) can be determined.

Again, is it not sad that Summers or Denham, consider what is really stated in 1Th 4:13-17 along with the timing of that event? Paul clearly says that he was giving Jesus own words about His coming; 1Th 4:15 "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord," Where did Jesus say He was coming in the clouds, with the angels, with the trump of God, in judgment? Yep you guessed it (Mt 24:30-34) where Jesus was talking about the destruction of Jerusalem, and that being a sign of His coming. And Jesus gave the timing of all those things, just as Paul did! Jesus said "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled" (Mt 24:34). Paul speaking to the church at Thessalonica promised THEM; "WE" which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep." If you were at Thessalonica 2000 years ago, and received this letter, you would have known that Paul was promising you, then, that some of you would be alive and remaining at the Lords coming!

Summers chiding Holger for holding an early date for the book of Revelation. Yet Summers was on the Belleview Lectureship where those who he agrees with also take the early date for Revelation. Oh consistency, where art thou? Then Summers explains how he could not understand what Zec 14:1-9 had to do with Revelation and the early date. Even though Holger gave 18 more verses explaining it (admitted by Summers) yet he could not follow the correlations made by Neubauer.

Summers and Denham both want to hang their hats on 2Thessalonians. Summers argues that the persecution and deaths of 2Thessalonians does not correlate with the book of Revelation because of the thousands mentioned in Rev 6 under that Altar of God that were martyred. Summers says 2Thessalonians was not an intense persecution, and that they only had a few that were put to death. I have read these passages many times and I never saw those thousands that Summers sees in Rev 6, nor do I see just a few in 2 Thessalonians. Summers cites Acts 17:1-11 where Paul was with the Thessalonians for three days and what had happened during those three days. Summers then goes on to say how there were no deaths recorded by the Jews to the Thessalonians in Acts 17. Well perhaps brother Summers is not aware of 1Th 2:14-15 "For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they *have* of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:" Sorry Brother Summers, but don't you think reading 1Thessalonians before 2 Thessalonians may have been a good idea? The truth of the matter is, the Bible is correct and it was the Jews which were persecuting those Thessalonians. And it would the Jews who would be burned with fire just as God promised (Isa 1:1-7, Deut 32:22-24, Mt 24).

Perhaps the most troubling statement that Summers made follows: Denham makes the argument that the fire to come in chapter 1 of 2Thessalonians could not be for the Jews because Paul said "they should not think that what he had previously taught them was "at hand" (KJV). Neubauer took exception to that translation in the KJV, and gave many other translations that rendered that phrase "as though the day

of Christ had come.” Summers then makes a serious troubling error when he said this; “Greek technicalities aside, frankly, what is the difference? How is ‘the day had come’ different from ‘the days is at hand?’” WOW! Really, and this guy is doing a review of the timing of an event and he cannot see the difference between something being close and something having already taken place! Brother Summers (Denham), if it had already taken place like some were teaching (2Tim 2:17-18), is that not a major difference than it is in the near future (at hand)? Surly you can see the difference between something being past tense and something being future tense. But allow me to help you some more in this area; Peter said the end was at hand (1Pet 4:7), James said the end was at hand (James 5:8). So, unless Paul was saying Peter and James were both wrong, then he could not have been saying what the KJV says, not to let anyone tell them it was at hand! Because Peter James John, Jesus and even Paul himself all taught it was at hand! The problem here, is that people were teaching that it was already past, and Paul was warning them that it was NOT past but it WAS “at hand” (1Thes 4-5)!

Neubauer argued during the debate that the man of sin in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 who sat in the temple taking the place of God was the High Priest. Denham and Summers believe the Pope is the man of sin. Summers said, “the Pope fits quite well.” The problem is that there was no Pope for another six hundred years. The Thessalonians were suffering from Jewish aggression when Paul wrote to them. It was the Jewish leadership that brought persecution against the believers at Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-6, 1 Thes 2:14-16). Paul promised tribulation to those who were afflicting them with tribulation (2 Thes 1:6). Babylon the Great was promised reward as “she rewarded you” (Revelation 18:6). The High priest authorized the persecution against the early Jewish believers (Acts 9:1,2). The High Priest was the ruler of the Jewish people (Acts 23:14,5). Jesus told the High Priest along with the Sanhedrin, “Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matthew 26:64). The ruling Jews of that generation were guilty of the righteous blood from Abel to Zacharias (Matthew 23:35-37), and it would be required in that generation. The Thessalonians were suffering and they were the ones that were told to “rest with us” (2 Thes 1:7). Since when did the Pope cause the Thessalonians hardship? His position is borrowed from Luther, and is denominational to the core.

When Jesus returned all the Jewish leaders were in Jerusalem for the Passover. Josephus records that Titus let the pilgrims in, but did not let them out. This is how Jesus kept his word. He came through the Roman armies and punished them the way they had punished the church. Summers and Denham make the Pope an actual part of God’s people which of course is ludicrous.

Although Denham complained that Neubauer failed to answer his arguments it is interesting that Denham never even mentioned many of Neubauer’s arguments. Neubauer argued the process of salvation called a “prolepsis” from Ephesians 1:7,13,14 and Ephesians 4:30, showing that although the Ephesians were redeemed,

they were still looking for redemption of the “purchased possession.” The Ephesians were promised the miraculous operation of the Spirit until the day of redemption. If this has not taken place, Denham has the miraculous operation of the spirit in the church today. Denham never even mentioned it. Neubauer argued in his last affirmative that took over ten minutes that the Corinthians did not deny the resurrection of everyone because Paul would not have baptized anyone denying the resurrection of Christ which Denham did not even bother to mention. That is because I believe Denham prepared his last speech before he even heard Neubauer’s last speech. Denham is not used to the pressure of debate and it showed many times.

Friends, many other things are worthy of mention but we just do not have the time and space with this format to present everything Summers said in his review(s). It is obvious though, how easy it is to answer these men and prove them to be in error. I think it is blatantly clear as to why Gary Summers would not agree to debate me... don’t you? – [SB]

**Questions? Comments? Want more material?** *We want to hear from you!*  
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## **What is Death?**

*By Daniel Rogers*

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### **Defining Death**

In scripture, there are two basic categories of death: physical and spiritual. If we do not understand death, then we will not be able to understand life. Death is a noun and is the state that one is in when they die.

Dying can be summed up in a few words: “life to death.” Contrary to that, resurrection can be summed up using the same words: “death to life.” Since there is physical and spiritual death, it can be understood that there is also physical and spiritual resurrection. As we will see, a synonym for dying is “separation.” In like manner, a synonym for resurrection is “reconciliation.”

### **Physical Death**

*“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”*  
(James 2:26).

As you can see, physical death is the separation of the body and the spirit. It is the time when the body returns to the dust and the spirit returns to the Father (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Here are some questions we should consider:

1. Was physical death created by God?
2. Does physical death alter man’s relationship with God?
3. Is physical death the result of sin?

#### 4. Is physical death the enemy of God or of mankind?

Let's notice these questions one by one so that we can properly understand physical death.

#### **Was physical death created by God?**

The answer to this question may shock you because it goes against what is generally accepted in tradition. However, any tradition that is not supported by scripture should be rejected by any student of the Bible.

*"And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good"* (Genesis 1:12).

In order for a seed to yield its produce, what needs to happen to the seed?

*"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die"* (1 Corinthians 15:36).

What does this passage teach us? It shows that physical death was a natural process created by God! And God called it good!

Why do we view death as a bad thing, then? It is sin that gives sting to death! (1 Corinthians 15:56). If we live life in service to God, then death should be seen as nothing but a graduation into Heaven. The only reason death should ever be feared is if one has sin in their lives.

#### **Does physical death alter man's relationship with God?**

The answer to this is obviously no! Paul said, *"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable"* (1 Corinthians 15:19).

Paul also said that, for a Christian, physical death is the path to the "far better" (Philippians 1:21-23).

*"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Romans 8:38-39).

#### **Is physical death the result of sin?**

Physical death can be a result of sin in certain situations (Genesis 6-9; Luke 13:1-5). However, physical death is not always the result of the sins of an individual. Faithful children of God, such as Stephen in Acts 7, die. Infants also lose their lives and they have never known sin!

#### **Is physical death the enemy of God or of mankind?**

Obviously not! Everyone can escape the sting of death (sin) by obeying the gospel. At that point, the death of a Christian can be a joyous occasion (Philippians 1:21-23). Physical death isn't the enemy of God because God created it as part of the natural process, and everything He created is good.

#### **Spiritual Death**

*"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Ezekiel 18:4).

If physical death is the separation of the body and the soul, what is spiritual death? As you can see from Ezekiel, spiritual death is the result of sin, and sin separates from God (Isaiah 59:1-2).

Let's think about the same questions we asked about physical death in terms of spiritual death.

1. Was spiritual death created by God?
2. Does spiritual death alter man's relationship with God?
3. Is spiritual death the result of sin?
4. Is spiritual death the enemy of God or of mankind?

### **Was spiritual death created by God?**

Absolutely not! Spiritual separation from God came about when Adam sinned.

*"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"* (Genesis 2:17).

*"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"* (Romans 5:12).

### **Does spiritual death alter man's relationship with God?**

When we survey scripture, it is evident that separation from God is the direct result of sin. In the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve ate of the fruit, they were sent out of the garden that very day because of spiritual death.

### **Is spiritual death the result of sin?**

Again, we must answer yes!

*"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"* (James 1:15).

### **Is spiritual death the enemy of God or of mankind?**

I believe the answer to this question is quite easy: yes, and yes!

Spiritual death is the enemy of God because sin separates us from Him and He wants us to spend an eternity with Him because He loves us (II Peter 3:9).

Spiritual death is the enemy of mankind because those who are spiritually dead are without God.

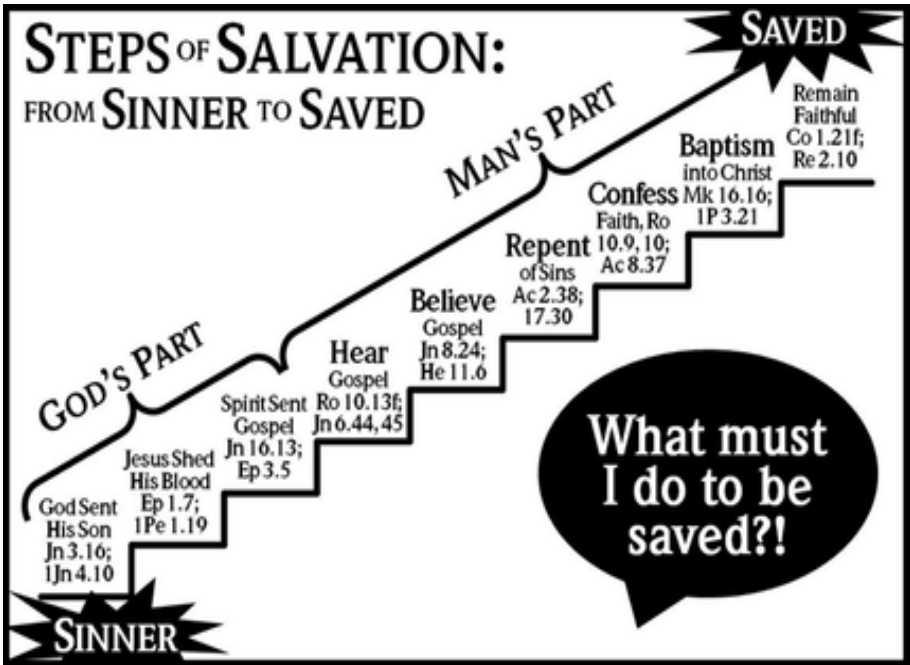
### **Conclusion**

*"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 15:21-22).

What death came by man? Was it not spiritual death? How does one escape spiritual death? Is it not through being reconciled to Him by being baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3-4)?

*"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"* (Ephesians 2:5-6).

We see then that the true enemy of man is sin that produces spiritual death. The only way to overcome death and to have life and immortality is through the gospel (II Timothy 1:10). – [DR]



*There is*

- ONE BODY (*Church*)
- ONE SPIRIT (*Holy Spirit*)
- ONE HOPE (*Eternal Life*)
- ONE LORD (*Jesus*)
- ONE FAITH (*Law of Faith*)
- ONE BAPTISM (*Water*)
- ONE GOD (*Father*)

*(Eph 4:4-6)*

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