

LIVING WATER

The Official Newsletter of Southside Church of Christ

WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY

by **Cale Brewster**

What if you died today?

On a recent road trip through the middle-of-nowhere Kansas, we passed a billboard that had the following question: If you died today, where would you spend eternity? There are no other words or identifying markings. My mind immediately starting thinking of responses like “who put up this billboard?”, “will there be another sign down the road that points the reader to the gospel of Christ?”, “how effective can this really be?”, and so on.

I think the billboard misses the mark a bit, but I also think the intended message is one we all need to take a moment to seriously consider. “If you die today...” conveys a sense of urgency to the reader. The phrase should cause you to reflect on your current spiritual state and I would encourage you to do that right now. I think about the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25 and how it illustrates being prepared for something that we don’t know when will occur. Have you been wise in preparing for the day of judgment, or have you been foolish in putting off the things you need to do? The day we die is not judgment day, but it is the day we will no longer have the option of preparing – repenting, confessing Jesus is the Christ, laboring for the Kingdom.

Now that you’ve completed your evaluation, let’s think about the rest of the question. “...where will you spend eternity?” says a few things to me. We all know what eternity means – permanent, forever, without time. The question implies that we have a choice in the matter...and we do. The Holy Spirit has revealed, through Scripture, what it takes to spend eternity in either heaven or hell. In Acts 2, Peter laid out the path to heaven for those who asked. After preaching Christ to them and being asked what they should do, he said (.v38) “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins...”. Contrasting the path to heaven is the path to eternal condemnation and separation from God. We read about this in many places, but let’s look at John 3:36 - “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on them”. We can clearly see from these and many other passages that we do have a choice in where we spend eternity.



The final takeaway I have from the question on the billboard is that we can answer it, one way or the other – and we can do so with confidence. Some people have said things like “there’s just no way to know”, or “I just hope...” regarding their eternal residence on judgment day. Others, who deep down believe they are going to heaven, might shy away from making such a claim out loud for others to hear. Why do we answer this way?

Have you believed in Christ, repented of your sins, and been baptized into His death, washing away your sins? During your evaluation, were you thinking of some lingering sin that you haven’t quite purged from your

life? Have you been thinking about baptism, but just haven’t taken the step for one reason or another? Are you currently in the right place spiritually, but lacking confidence to say so? God has given us instructions on how to reach one place or the other. We can honestly review our own lives and compare our spiritual state to the instructions, just as God will do one day. Let’s all strive to give a response at any given moment like Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7-8 “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that Day. And not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing”.

