

What Happens When We Die?

To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:8

Written by Bill Perkins

What happens the moment we die?

Scripture doesn't give a video tour.

But it gives
small windows.

Enough to see truth,
but not enough
to answer every question.

Jesus told of a beggar named Lazarus
who was laid at the gate of a rich man's house.

When they died,
Lazarus was carried by angels
to Abraham's side—the place of God's comfort.
The rich man found himself
in torment. Lk 16:19–23

The two looked up
and recognized each other.
The rich man remembered his life
with regret.

In that moment
he felt separation.

In heaven we will
recognize people.

Abraham spoke of a great chasm
fixed between destinies.

No crossing.

No second chance.

No movement from one destiny to another.

Jesus turned to a dying thief
who whispered, “Remember me.”
And He answered,
“Today you will be with Me in paradise.” Lk 23:43

Not someday.

Today.

With Me.

Heaven is immediate.

Heaven is presence.

Heaven is joy awaiting the new creation.

Paul wrote,

“To be absent from the body
is to be present with the Lord.”

Heaven is home. Heaven is “with the Lord.” 2 Cor. 5:8

Hebrews speaks of spirits made perfect. Heb. 12:23

John saw souls under the altar,

alive,

speaking,

waiting,

trusting.

Heaven is consciousness. Rev. 6:9–11

Memory. Rev. 6:10

Longing. Rev. 6:10–11

And hope. Rev. 6:11

John also saw a throne. Rev. 4:2–3

And One seated on it.

Around it, unending worship. Rev. 4:8–11

At its center,

the Lamb—Jesus. Rev. 5:6

leading His people

to living water,

while God wipes away

every tear. Rev. 7:17

Heaven is comfort,

tenderness,

worship.

And here's the mystery—
our view through a tiny window—

Jesus is now on earth
in believers
and in heaven
at the Father's right hand
with His people
who are alive there. Col. 3:1-2

And one day
all His people
will join Him there—
aware,
comforted,
and known.

Do I celebrate what Scripture shows about heaven now,
even when I can't see its fullness?

You may not know this about Jesus:
the first reality after death is being with Him.

Heaven feels closer
when I remember
being with Christ
is the first reality after death.

Father, thank You
for the windows You give us.
Let the hope of one day
being with Christ
shape how I live.
I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.