

Christ in Prophecy

Special 5: “New Book on Eternity”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: The Bible says that Jesus died in order to deliver people from their life-long bondage to the fear of death. What is your attitude about death? And do you know what will happen when you die? For the biblical answers to the most frequently asked questions about death, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Blessed Hope, and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. I'm Dave Reagan, Founder of Lamb & Lion Ministries, and this is my colleague, Nathan Jones, who serves as our Web Minister and Evangelist. Thank you for joining us.

Nathan Jones: Great to be here Dr. Reagan.

Dr. Reagan: Well folks in this program we are going to discuss my newest book which is entitled “Eternity: Heaven or Hell?” I wrote this book because I could not conceive of a topic more important than that of eternity. Every person who has ever lived or who is alive today has an eternal destiny of either Heaven or Hell. Now Atheists deny this. Their greatest hope is that there is nothing after death. What a hope! But their denial of both Heaven and Hell is futile, and it violates our basic nature, for one of the instincts that we are born with is the sense that there is something beyond this life. The Bible says in Ecclesiastes 3:11 that God has “placed eternity in our hearts,” just as He has given us an instinctive knowledge that He exists, according to Romans chapters 1 & 2. Accordingly, the Bible exhorts us to live with an eternal perspective. Colossians 3:2 says we are to “set our minds on things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth.” And in 1 John 2:15 we are warned not to fall in love with the world, nor

the things of the world, because we are told that if we love the world, the love of God is not in us. And yet, the Church today is filled with professing Christians who are clinging to this world as if it were the only hope they had. Why is that? Well I believe the bottom line cause is an ignorance of what God's Word has to say about the future. And that problem, in turn, is due to the fact that most pastors avoid teaching and preaching Bible prophecy. Bible prophecy is full of glorious promises about the believer's future, so glorious, in fact, that the Apostle Paul was moved to write these words: "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that is yet to be revealed to us". Now folks that is a mouthful! I know people who are suffering mightily in this life from emotional problems, and physical handicaps, and various diseases. Yet Paul declares that no matter what we may suffer, it cannot be compared to the blessings that are lying in front of us if we have put our trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

Paul repeats this incredible thought in 1 Corinthians 2:9 where he states: "No eye has seen, No ear has heard, nor has the mind of man conceived, What God has prepared, for those who love Him." I can guarantee you one thing for sure: If you ever spend the time to search out the promises of God's Word for believers after they die, you will fall out of love with this wretched world and start yearning with all your heart for Heaven. Instead of feeling comfortable with this world, you will sense that you are a pilgrim passing through an alien land en route to your true home, an eternal one in Heaven. And that's what my new book is all about. It reveals the glorious promises that God has made about life after death, and it challenges you to live with an eternal perspective.

Part 2

Nathan Jones: Welcome back to our discussion of Dr. Reagan's newest book, "Eternity: Heaven or Hell?" Dr. Reagan we get all sorts of questions in by people all the time asking us about the after life and death. And so I have compiled a list of frequently asked questions. I was wondering if I could ask you some of those questions.

Dr. Reagan: Okay, Nathan, fire away!

Nathan Jones: Okay first one, soul sleep, there are a number of people out there that believe and I was taught this growing up, that when we die we are unconscious in the grave until we are resurrected. What is, is that biblical?

Dr. Reagan: Well you know Nathan I think this is one of the most popular misconceptions about what happens after you die. I grew up in a church that also taught soul sleep, and soul sleep is the teaching that when you die you lose all consciousness, you lie in a grave comatose for eons of time, until the Lord comes back. And then you are resurrected and you regain consciousness. There is a biblical basis for believing in soul sleep and that is the fact that the Bible often refers to death as sleep.

Nathan Jones: Okay.

Dr. Reagan: But it is doing so, figuratively and we can prove that beyond a shadow of a doubt. The reason that it uses that figurative term is because when you die your body does go into a grave, but your soul, your spirit goes to be with the Lord. So the body figuratively sleeps in the sense that the body goes into the grave, the body is lying there in the grave and one day that body is going to be reanimated, because when the Lord comes back and the Resurrection occurs that body whether it has been eaten by the worms, whether it has dissolved in the ocean or whatever the Lord is going to speak, there is going to be a great miracle of recreation in which that body will come back together and He will put your spirit back in your body and you will receive a glorified body at that point.

Nathan Jones: Okay.

Dr. Reagan: So there is just no such thing as soul sleep. You do not lose consciousness; your spirit goes to be with the Lord. And Paul emphasized that in his writings. In 2 Corinthians 5:8 he made the comment that, he says, "I would rather be absent from the body and be at home with the Lord." He had no idea of lying comatose in a grave. Not to be here was to be with the Lord. And over in Philippians chapter 1 he says, "To live is Christ," to serve the Lord, "but to die is gain." Well certainly it is not gain to lie in a grave comatose. It is gain because that is to be with the Lord. And then he also says in verse 23, he says, I am kind of hard pressed in both directions. I have the desire to depart and be with Christ, but I also want to serve him. So I will

serve Him as long as He wants to, but I really would prefer to go on and die and be with Him. So it was no concept of lying comatose in a grave. Not to be here was to be with the Lord.

Nathan Jones: Okay. That makes sense, so the body in the grave.

Dr. Reagan: Yes.

Nathan Jones: The soul...

Dr. Reagan: ...with the Lord.

Nathan Jones: You said that as soon as we die we go to Heaven or Hell?

Dr. Reagan: Well, now that is a good question. In fact, most people believe that, that the moment you die you either go to Heaven or Hell. Most people would be surprised to find out that there is nobody in Hell right now.

Nathan Jones: Really?

Dr. Reagan: People are going to be consigned to Hell in the future. Let me put it to you this way, before the cross things worked differently than the way they do today. Before the cross, and we know this very definitely from the Bible, and from the story that Jesus told about Lazarus and the rich man over in Luke 16. Before the cross when a person died regardless if they were saved or lost, their spirits went to the same place. Their spirits went to a place called Hades. Now Hades is not the same place as Hell. Hades is a temporary holding place for the spirits of the dead. And both went there, there were two compartments in Hades, one was called Paradise, or Abraham's bosom, the other was called Torments. And there was a gulf between them that could not be crossed. So that when Lazarus the rich man died, Lazarus went to Paradise, the rich man went to Torments, they could see each other, they could talk to each other, they could not cross this place. So that's where all the spirits of the dead went. And that's the way it was until the time of the cross. And people immediately ask, "Well, why is it that people who died at that time didn't go directly to Heaven?" The reason is that their sins were covered by their faith, but their sins were not forgiven by their faith, because there is no forgiveness of sins apart from the shedding of blood. The Bible teaches that over and over. And the blood of bulls and goats is not sufficient. There had to be a perfect man, who did not

deserve to die, who would die for your sins and my sins. So they had to wait there until their sins were not only covered, but their sins were forgiven. Now when Jesus died on the cross, we are told that He descended into Hades. Some of the ancient confessions of the church say, He descended into Hell, but no it was Hades. He descended into Hades and it says, "He made a proclamation." We are told that over in 1 Peter 3, but it doesn't tell us what the proclamation was.

Nathan Jones: Oh, man.

Dr. Reagan: But I can pretty well guess.

Nathan Jones: Okay.

Dr. Reagan: "The blood has been shed." And I would imagine there was tremendous, "Hallelujah," on the part of those that were in that compartment called Paradise. And then we're told in Ephesians 4 that when Jesus ascended into Heaven, He took with Him, He took with Him those who had been in bondage. He took, it said, He took with Him captives. Well the very idea of that is He emptied Paradise and took Paradise to Heaven with Him. And we're told over in 2 Corinthians 12 that is what happened, because Paul says there that He was taken up to the third heaven; the first heaven being the atmosphere of this planet, second heaven being space, third heaven being where God resides. He says he was taken up to the third heaven, which is Paradise. So Paradise was moved at the Ascension from Hades to Heaven. And so therefore today when a believer dies his spirit goes immediately to Heaven to be with the Lord. And the spirit of the unbeliever still goes to that place called Torments which is in Hades.

Nathan Jones: That is huge, because a lot of people they think Heaven or Hell.

Dr. Reagan: Need to rethink about that, probably listen to this more than once, or get the book and read it.

Nathan Jones: Well, what about all the teachings of Purgatory then? Don't people have to earn there way into Heaven?

Dr. Reagan: No. Purgatory, the concept of Purgatory is an absolute total myth. There is no such thing as Purgatory. This place called Torments where the unbelievers go is not Purgatory. Purgatory is the idea that believers have to go to a place of torment and believers have to be tormented to be purged of all of their sins before they can be taken into the presence of a Holy God. To me, Purgatory is a blasphemy of the Lord Jesus Christ, because the Bible teaches that Jesus did everything necessary for us to go to Heaven on the cross. That we don't have to do anything except reach out and receive that gift in faith by putting our faith in Him as Lord and Savior. We are told in 1 John 1:7 that the blood of Jesus is sufficient to cleanse us of all sin. I mean we don't need to be purged, we don't need to be tormented, Jesus delivered us from all of that. The blood of Jesus is sufficient. Even those who believe in Purgatory, even those who defend it realize and will admit there is not one verse in the Bible, not one, that substantiates Purgatory. The only place they will point to is the book of Maccabees where there is a statement about going back to Jerusalem and praying for the souls of the dead people who had died on the battlefield. But that is one of the many reasons that Maccabees was never accepted by the Jewish people as a canonical book, as a book that was part of the Bible. It was added later on by the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, partially to substantiate the concept of Purgatory. But there is no Biblical basis for Purgatory, and the very idea is a blasphemy of Jesus.

Nathan Jones: Well I am thankful that I don't have to have relatives light candles to make sure that I get out of Purgatory.

Dr. Reagan: Oh, amen, amen. Yes.

Nathan Jones: Well that brings a lot of people, second chances, all those people in Torments right now, are they going to get a second chance to give their lives to Christ? No, there is no second chance. The Bible makes that very clear. If you turn over to the book of Hebrews, and you look at Hebrews 9:27, it says, "It is appointed for men to die once and after that comes the judgment." We are going to be judged on whether or not we accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Those who have not are going to be confined to Hell, those who have are going to be able to go to Heaven and spend eternity with God. It is not a matter of works, it is not a matter anything to do with that, it is a matter of faith, of accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and it depends on this life. Do you do it in this life there is no second chance after death. And people who think that are in for a terrible surprise. But let me tell you something that

is interesting about that, the Bible says over and over that at the Judgment Seat of Jesus Christ every person who ever lived is going to bend their knee and going to confess that Jesus is Lord and Savior. But it will be too late at that point for a person to be saved, but every person is going to do it. That is going to be quite a scene, Nathan, because that means Hitler is going to bend his knee before the Throne of Jesus Christ and confess Jesus as Lord. Stalin will confess that, Pol Pot will confess that. All the nefarious people who have ever lived including what's here name, the atheist here in the United States that got prayer...

Nathan Jones: Madalyn Murray O'Hair.

Dr. Reagan: Madalyn Murray O'Hair is going to bend here knee and she is going to confess that Jesus is Lord, but it will be too late, unfortunately, too late. This is something that needs to be done in this life; there is no second chance after death.

Nathan Jones: This life is it, this is our only chance. Now you said we have to confess Christ to be saved. But what about... I got a haircut the other day and the woman was telling me that she is going to show God her good works and she is sure she can make it in. She doesn't need to accept Jesus, is that possible?

Dr. Reagan: Nathan that is the greatest lie of Satan. And it is all over the world, the idea that you can earn your way to Heaven. You ask most people, "Do you think you will go to Heaven when you die?" And they will say, "Well, you know I've got a lot of sins and I have done a lot of bad things, but I am a lot better than a fellow I know down the street from me." We always start comparing ourselves to somebody we know who is worse. God does not grade on the curve, He grades on the cross. I interviewed Robert Jeffress, the pastor of First Baptist Church about a year or 2 ago, and in that interview he made a comment that I will never forget. He said, "You know what separates, one of the things that separates Christianity from every other religion in the world. Every other religion of the world is spelled, D-O, do, you must do this, you must do this, you must do this, and if you do all those things maybe you can get to Heaven. But Christianity of all the religions of the world is spelled, D-O-N-E, done, Jesus did everything that was necessary on the cross. It is for us to reach out and receive that gift." And the Bible is very specific about this, in Ephesians 2:8 it says, "By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not as a result of works so that no one should boast." Because if you think you can do it on your own, then you are earning it. But Jesus Christ

earned it for us and it is a matter of us reaching out to Him and receiving Him as Lord and Savior.

Nathan Jones: Praise the Lord! Thank you for answering our questions.

Part 3

Dr. Reagan: Welcome back to our discussion of life after death. Nathan I think there was one more question you wanted to ask me.

Nathan Jones: Yeah, I want to know if I am going to be floating around forever as a disembodied spirit.

Dr. Reagan: No, no, that is a very common misconception. We are never going to be disembodied spirits. We have a natural body now. We are going to have an intermediate spirit body after death and then at the time of the Resurrection we are going to have this body reconstituted and glorified and made permanent. And the Bible is full of evidence of this. Take the story of Lazarus and the rich man, both of them had some sort of body after they died. They talked to each other, they recognized each other and in Revelation 7 we are told that when the Tribulation martyrs come out of the Tribulation after their death, they stand before the Throne of God in white robes waving palm branches and worshipping the Lord.

Nathan Jones: Well praise the Lord! That is good news.

Dr. Reagan: No disembodied spirits.

Nathan Jones: That is good news. Okay.

Dr. Reagan: Well folks as I pointed out at the beginning of this program, the Bible says in Hebrews 2: 15 that most people live their lives in life-long bondage to the fear of death. The same passage says that Jesus died on the cross to deliver us from that fear. In 2009 the husband of one of our staff members died. He was Lee Bien, the husband of Kay Bien. Lee was a man's man. He was big and he was husky, and he was an outdoorsman. He was a person

who worked hard all his life as a pipe fitter. Lee was a devout Christian who had a great zeal for lost souls and who was gifted in personal evangelism as a fisher of men. Shortly before his death, and when he knew that he was at death's door, we interviewed Lee. I want to share that remarkable interview with you right now to show you what kind of peace a true believer in Jesus can have in the face of death. Here now is Lee Bien.

Lee Bien Interview:

Lee Bien: I pray daily that I would be a man after God's own heart.

It started out I tried to drink myself to death in taking cocaine, and speed and you know staying up as long as I could. And I would go almost two weeks without any sleep just drinking and doing drugs. And after about two years of that I was so burned out and everything that I thought about biting a bullet. And when I actually had the barrel in my mouth and was fixing to pull the trigger the Lord touched me. He quietly said, "No, Bien I love you and I have a plan for you." I took the gun out and put it aside. I threw out all the drugs and all the drink and I rededicated my life when I was 37 years old. And from then He put like a sponge inside of me and read everything that I could about Him learning about Jesus. I love Scripture and I love to read it all. And then some of the old pastors and preachers, evangelists in the world like Andrew Murray is one of my favorites. And they taught me a tremendous amount and Tory and a bunch of these others.

The Lord started using me to have Bible studies at work, and touching hearts by my walk I guess for those who didn't participate and usually we invited them everyday.

I love to fish. I have met people on the bank and when I would talk with them you know, we would talk about the different fish and what we were trying to catch, or different baits to use. And I would sort of kind of bait them in a little bit, I said, "Do you the greatest fisherman that ever was in the world?" And then they would come up, "Well Van Dam is the best bass fisherman, or Kevin what's-his-name was the other one." "Or Mr. Croffey, Further Croffy and then a few others for the cat fish." I said, "Yeah, there all pretty good but they don't even compare to this guy, that I am thinking of." "Well who could be a better fisherman then them?" I said, "Jesus Christ." I said, "Jesus was the best fisherman in the world. He told Peter by golly to come down the lake and throw a line in and the first fish that he caught to take the coin out of his mouth and pay the taxes." And I said, "Who in the world could ever do that?" After I retired and the kids were living

down in Ingleside down on the coast, and I would go down and visit with them. Of course loving to fish and stuff, the salt water fishing, I would go after the red or the speckled trout, the sea trout. My grandkids I would take them fishing and stuff, you know and we would share and we would see things when we catch a fish we would look at it and I would show them, look at all the different colors in this fish, and the different kinds. And then open their mouths, some of them would have teeth and some of them wouldn't, just depending on what they ate. And but my grandchildren, I said, "I want you to imagine something. We are going to go to Genesis in the Bible at Creation. Imagine all the different kinds of fish that there is: the shell-fish, the animals, the trees, the grass and everything and you know, if you read it and you look at it, it's all in a sequence and it all leads up to man. And I say, "Can you imagine the wisdom of God creating every little piece. Everything, the ones seen and the one unseen, the microscopic animal and this being a food-chain all the way up and it comes to us. I say, "Isn't God amazing?" I say, "Who could imagine that in your bed there are little, bitty, tiny things that you can't even see, that's eating up the dead skin on you and on your bed. Can you imagine that?" And they went, "Aaahhhh." Yet, your bed's full of them. The whole world is full of things that we cannot see. That is for a purpose. If it wasn't, this world couldn't hold together. And this is part of the wisdom of God.

I went up to my son's, he called me here, a couple of years ago. He asked me, he said, "Dad, I need your help." And I said, "OK, what would you need?" And he said, "I need you to come up and take care of my children while I go on maneuvers." So, I went down and bought them both children's study Bible. And I got them a little six-inch ruler and pens. And we started going through the Scriptures and give them the Plan of Salvation. And the Lord used me as an instrument to bring them to Him. And it was such a thrill of my life right then. Jesus loves me. He died on cross for each and every one of us, personally. He shed his life-giving blood. And the horrific pains that He went through before He even went on the cross. And then on the cross: the Romans back there in His time were vicious people. I'm not worthy. Why He would do something like that for me, sometimes I'm amazed, but I feel His love and that's good enough for me. He bought me with a price. I was a deep sinner. Nobody liked, I didn't even like me. But, he took me out, he put a joy in my heart, he put a step in my step. I can't do anything else but talk to Him and live for Him. That's the truth of the matter. I can't imagine anyone outside of His Children not wanting to know Him, not wanting to be with Him. He is my best friend. He is my Lord, my master, and my God.

Dr. Reagan: How's that for a powerful testimony of faith and the power of Jesus to give one victory over death? Only Christians can look death in the eye and say mockingly, "O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?" Well, that's our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you. Until next week at the same time, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb & Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our Redemption is drawing near."

End of Program