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Holiness Writers

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

By

E. W. Black

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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Houghton, N. Y.

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INTRODUCTION

The question, "Where are the dead?" is one that has disturbed the mind of a great many serious minded people. It is one that we all ought to be interested in, and it is a question that needs to be answered correctly. There is so much error abroad in the land today, and so much false teaching on this subject, that it is high time that some capable and orthodox teacher set forth the real teaching of the Bible on this subject. It seems to me that my good friend Rev. E. W. Black has done this very thing in this most interesting book. I have had the privilege of reading the manuscript of this work and take pleasure in giving it my hearty endorsement.

I am firmly convinced in my own heart and mind that he has really given the truth of God on this subject, and I hope that this book may have a wide reading by the many people, who are really searching after the truth on this subject. He has dealt with the question in a clear-cut logical manner, and has really set forth the truth of the Word on the subject. This is a book that ought to have a wide reading, and you will be doing yourself a real favor by reading it and passing it on to your friends. The world needs this truth today, as it has possibly never needed it before. In this day, when there is so much error abroad in the land, we need some one that can really give us the truth on one of the most vital questions that confronts us.

If this book is read and studied it will save many people from a very subtle and insidious error, and will be the means of helping people to a greater faith in God. It will bring comfort to those who have departed loved ones, and will help all of us as we come down to that place where we must bid farewell to the scenes of this life, and take our journey into that land beyond the river.

It is a real pleasure to me to commend this book to the prayerful study of all those who desire to know the truth about, "Where are the dead?" It will give to you the truth in the most convincing manner and will settle many problems for you. The writer has really answered that question in the only way that it can be satisfactorily answered. It is my earnest prayer that this book may have a wide circulation and reading. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

Your brother in Christ,
John R. Church
Conference Evangelist of Western North Carolina Conference
M. E. Church, South, Winston-Salem, N. C.

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E. W. Black

FOREWORD

The truth concerning the state of the dead has been greatly neglected. It is a rare thing that you hear it preached from an orthodox pulpit. For the most part we have left it to those who teach soul-sleeping, and other forms of false dogma. As a result, tens of thousands have been led astray.

It is a momentous subject, and one that the people are very much interested in. Many times across the years, people have come to me with such questions as — "Where are the dead?" "What is their state?" "Are they conscious?" "Are the righteous in heaven, and the wicked in hell now?" As a minister of the Lord Jesus, I have felt it my duty to instruct the people concerning this important truth.

Some time ago after preaching on the subject, "Where are the Dead?" a number of friends requested me to have it put in print. With a conviction that it would please God for me to do so, I send it forth with a prayer that the Holy Spirit may bless it to the good of all who may read it — that it may be used of God to keep souls out of error, and that it will be the means of helping others who have been led astray to find their way back to the truth. If this is done God will be glorified, and the purpose of the author will have been accomplished.

E. W. Black
Houghton, N. Y.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

By

E. W. Black

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

Friends, as previously announced, we are here this evening to discuss an age-old question: "Where are the dead?" I am glad to see so many of you with your Bibles. You will find the text in Job 14:10. It reads: "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" These are the words of a much distressed and perplexed good man. Calamity after calamity had crowded in upon him. Among his losses was the death of his ten children, and this in a single day. They had gathered at the home of the elder brother for a time of good fellowship, and while they were there a cyclone swept down upon the house. It fell, and all were killed. A lone messenger escaped to bear the sad and tragic news to the already distressed father. Friends and loved ones forsook him, and it seemed that God Himself in that awful hour had forgotten him. Lonely and heartbroken, sick in body, and wishing to die, he lifted his faint voice and cried out in great anguish of soul, the words of the text: "Man dieth . . . and where is he?" This question has echoed and re-echoed down through the centuries. It is all undying question. Millions today are still asking "Where is he?" It is also a major question. Everything else dwindles into insignificance in comparison to it. It is a question that should concern every living person.

As an ambassador of Jesus Christ, I tell you upon the authority of God's Word that it is not an unanswered question. This book that I hold in my hand lights up the valley of death, and tells me where I may find my departed dead. In answering this question "Where are the dead?" the first thing we need to do is to get clearly fixed in our minds the meaning of death. "What is death?" Concerning death, there are many conflicting opinions. I shall name and discuss three generally accepted views.

First, there are those who hold to the annihilation theory. This class believes that death ends all; that when we die we cease to exist; that forever we are no more. To illustrate: I am walking down the street, I see a spider crawling along on the pavement; I crush it under my heel; that is the end of the spider. Such is the annihilation theory.

Second, there are those who hold to the theory of soul-sleeping. This class believes that both soul and body go to the grave, and that the soul remains in a state of unconsciousness until the morning of the resurrection. This theory is advocated by the Seventh Day Adventists.

Then, there is a third class who believe that the body and soul are two distinct principles; that the body may be killed, and the soul live on uninjured. Now which of these views are we to accept? Each side claims they are right. How are we to know? How are we to settle the question? There is one sure, certain and unmistakable way — "To the word and to the testimony." Let God answer. This book (the Bible) is the only reliable source of information, and I pledge you that I am going to stick to the Book. If you are not both willing and ready to accept what the Word of God has to say on it, I have no message for you. You may feel perfectly free to get up and slip out quietly.

First, we will take a look at the annihilation theory. According to the Word of God, death does not mean annihilation. In the New Testament death is spoken of in four different senses. First, it speaks of a spiritual death. Second, it speaks of a death to sin. Third, it speaks of a physical or temporal death. And fourth, it speaks of a "second death." In all of these, death is regarded as simply a SEPARATION from some form of life. In the language of science, "It is the cessation of a correspondence with some special environment." This definition is exactly in keeping with the Word of God. For example, take spiritual death. Here, God is the environment, and death means separation from His fellowship. God said to Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17.) Did he die as God said? He did. Was he annihilated? No! He lived on this earth nine hundred and thirty years after that, but he was driven from the Garden of Eden, from the presence of the tree of life, and he lost his fellowship with God. Paul said, "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I DIED." (Rom. 7:9.) Was he annihilated? Not when he wrote this epistle. He lost fellowship with God. Sin separated him from God, and the Bible calls that death. Not only did Adam and Paul die when they sinned, but all die when they sin. No sinner has life.

When the Prodigal Son returned home, the father said to the servant, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry; for this my son WAS DEAD, and is alive again." (Luke 15:22-24.) Later the father said to the elder son, "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother WAS DEAD, and is ALIVE again." When the prodigal was living a sinful life, separated from the fellowship of his father, "HE WAS DEAD;" but when he returned home, confessed, and repented, was restored and forgiven was he was "ALIVE AGAIN." In Eph. 2:1 we read: "And you hath He quickened, who WERE DEAD in trespasses and sins." Verse five says: "Even when we WERE DEAD IN SINS" — DEAD IN SINS. Take another passage, (1 John 3:14): "He that loveth not his brother ABIDETH IN DEATH." Many more such scriptures might be given, but this is sufficient to convince any fair-minded person that death in this sense does not mean annihilation, or cessation of being. As I said before, all sinners are dead. In the scriptural sense of the word, only Christians are alive. 1 John 5:36 says: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath NOT the Son of God HATH NOT LIFE." St. John 3:36 says: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life."

Although the sinner does not have life, he does have existence. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." (1 Tim. 5:6.) "Let the dead bury their dead," said Jesus. (Matt. 8:22.) To a certain class of religious professors He said: "Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." (Rev. 3:1.) Weymouth renders this text: "You are supposed to be alive, but in reality you are dead." According to these scriptures, multiplied thousands of dead people are all around us. They are walking our streets, driving automobiles, working in shops, building houses, trading in commerce, clerking in banks and stores, teaching, keeping house, cooking, and doing a hundred and one other things — dead — but at the same time they have existence.

Let us now take a look at another class of dead people; those who are dead to sin, dead to the world, dead to the devil and his works. Turn with me to Romans, chapter six, verse two, seven, and eleven. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? For he that is dead is freed from sin. Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Three

different times in these verses, the apostle speaks of a death to sin. Now turn to Colossians, chapter two, verse twenty. Here he speaks of being "dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world." Here are a people who are dead to the world. In chapter three, verse three, he says: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." One more reference on this point. (1 Peter 2:24.) Here Peter says: "That we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." This class is the exact converse, or opposite, from the first. The first is dead IN sin; these are dead TO sin. The first class is dead although they have existence. These are dead, but have life. In the first class, God is the environment, and they are out of a right relationship with God, separated from God — hence dead. In the second class, SIN is the environment, and they are separated from sin — hence dead to sin. Here are two classes of people who are dead, and they are not annihilated. In each case death is simply a separation from some special environment.

Now we come to a third class of dead people. Those who are dead physically. The question arises, When we die a temporal or physical death, do we cease to exist or do we go to the grave and remain in a state of unconsciousness until the morning of the resurrection? I answer emphatically, No! Our bodies may mould in the grave, but the soul or spirit lives on. We have already shown from the Holy Scripture that to be spiritually dead is to be separated from God, and that to be dead to sin is to be separated from sin. By the help of the Holy Spirit I purpose to show you, by the Word of God, that temporal death is simply a separation from the present outward world, the end of our correspondence with our physical environment. There are two things I want us to get clearly fixed in our minds. First, that man is a trinity, consisting of "spirit, soul, and body." (1 Thess. 5:23.) Second, that the spirit or soul is the principal part of man, and not the body. The body is only the "tabernacle" or "house" in which the soul lives. Job 4:19 says that we "dwell in houses of clay." Eliphaz, the speaker, is not talking about cave, or cliff dwellers, but about all mankind whose temporary dwelling place is a "house of clay, whose foundation is in the dust." This is exactly in keeping with St. Paul's view of the body. In Second Corinthians, chapter five, verses one to six, he calls the body a "house," a "home," a "tabernacle." Once he calls it "our earthly house;" twice he calls it a "tabernacle," and twice he calls it a "home."

Then he tells us that he is going to move out of his "earthly house" and move into "an house not made with hands." The apostle Peter considered his body as a mere house or "tabernacle" (dwelling place) in which he lived. Speaking of the nearness of death he said, "I think it meet, as long as I am in THIS tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that SHORTLY I must PUT OFF this MY tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." (2 Peter 1:13, 14.) Here, he speaks of death as being nothing more than a change of raiment, or change of dwelling place. He is going to "put off" his tabernacle (body) as one would "put off" his coat. In verse fifteen he speaks of death as a departure. "I will endeavor," says he, "that ye may be able after my decease." The word for decease here is the word which has been transferred into English as Exodus, which means "outgoing." As the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt is called an Exodus, so the apostle Peter speaks of his death as an outgoing, or Exodus, from the body. These scriptures clearly show that we are souls having bodies, and not bodies having souls, as some suppose. James tells us that "the BODY without the spirit is dead." (Jas. 2:26.) (Any one who has ever attended a funeral knows this.) But nowhere in the Book are we told that the spirit is dead without the body; just to the contrary. All of the apostles believed and taught that the soul was capable of existing and being fully conscious either in the body or out of the body. In 2nd Cor. 12:1-4, Paul tells us of a very wonderful

experience he had; how he was caught up into the third heaven, into very paradise itself, and heard things that it was not possible for him to tell. Two different times he tells us in plain unmistakable language that he was not able to tell whether he was in the body or out of the body.

These verses prove to any unbiased mind that Paul believed that the soul could live separately from the body, and at the same time be fully conscious. In the same book, chapter five, verse eight, he tells us that he would "rather be absent from the body." Rotherham renders this clause: "Rather be away from home out of the body." I hold in my hand a watch. A jeweler can take this watch out of this particular case and destroy the case by dissolving it in chemicals, and the watch itself be unharmed or uninjured. He can put the watch in another case and it will keep just as good time as it did in this one. The case is destroyed, but the watch lives on.

So it is with the soul; we live in a house made of clay. Time, disease, and death may destroy this house of clay, but the soul lives on.

Such was the faith of the apostle Paul. In Second Corinthians, chapter four, he gives us some more of his personal experience. He tells us that he is troubled, distressed, perplexed, and persecuted. In another chapter he tells us of the nature of these persecutions; how five different times he was beaten with stripes. Three different times he was beaten with rods; once he was stoned. He suffered hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, with many other hardships. He also tells us that these things were about to get the better of him. Under this strain of abuse he felt that his body was giving way. Death, he tells us, was already working in him. (verses 10-12.) "But," he shouts, "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." (verse 16.) His body was fast failing, but his soul was exuberant with life.

I am reminded of the words of the immortal Victor Hugo, who, when past eighty years of age, gave expression to his faith in the immortality of the soul in these sublime sentences: "I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest which has been more than once cut down. The new shoots are livelier than ever. I am rushing toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with its unknown worlds. You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers; why then is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart."

Now, back to Paul's experience: How can he be so happy when he is conscious of his fast failing strength — when he knows that death is just around the corner? Let him tell us in his own words: "For we know," says he, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." No marvel that he is exulting. He tells us when death forces him to move out of his present house, that God has prepared for him another house which is far better. Note the contrast in these two houses. One he calls a "tabernacle," the other he calls a "building." One is "earthly," the other is heavenly — "in heaven." One is subject to decay and death, for it is about to be "dissolved," the other is "eternal." Now he tells us that he is groaning, and "earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with (his) house which is from heaven." Do not confuse this "house from heaven" with the mansions our Lord tells us about in the fourteenth chapter of St. John. Paul, here, has no reference whatsoever to those mansions. He is talking about a body or house in which his spirit was to dwell, when he departed this life. He speaks

in plain unmistakable terms and tells us if "the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved," that he would "not be found naked;" that he "would not be unclothed, but clothed upon:" that God had provided for him another "house not made with hands." What if the "outward man" does perish it is only a raiment he wears, or a house in which he lives.

Christ Himself taught that the body may be destroyed and the soul go unharmed. Listen to what He says: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." (Matt. 10:28.) If language means anything, this verse plainly teaches that man may kill the body, but he cannot kill the soul. We have a Bible account of this very thing. The apostle John says, "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. 6:9-11.) There are at least four things in this passage that are without controversy. First, the bodies of these souls were killed, for we read: "They were slain for the word of God." Second, these souls survived their bodies. John said he "saw" them. Third, they were not in a state of unconsciousness. They were talking or praying —"they cried with loud voices." Fourth, they retained their personality. "White robes were given unto every one of them."

Here is another Bible example of where the body was dead, but the soul was very much alive. Christ was on the Mount of Transfiguration, and Moses and Elijah appeared. Now Moses had been dead about fifteen hundred years. His body was buried somewhere on the top of Mt. Nebo. Yet, here he is on the Mt. of Transfiguration talking with Christ. But some will say that he has been resurrected. Impossible! The word of God says that Christ was the "First begotten of the dead," (Rev. 1:5) and He had not yet been crucified. Three different times the Scripture plainly states that Christ was the "First fruits" from the dead. That is, He was the first to be resurrected. Others had been restored to life, lived and died again, but no one could possibly have been resurrected, for Christ must be the "First fruits." Therefore, we know that Moses had not been resurrected, yet he was there on the Mt. of Transfiguration.

Take Samuel as another example. King Saul goes to the witch of Endor, a spirit medium, and desires to talk with the dead. "Then said the woman, whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he (Saul) said, Bring me up Samuel." (1 Sam. 28:11.) Now, whatever that woman expected, one thing is certain; she got more than she was looking for. The Word of God says Samuel appeared on the scene, "And when the woman saw Samuel she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul." (verse 12.) The king asked her what she saw, "And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed himself." Now they hold a conversation and here is what was said: "And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me; for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out

of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." (1 Sam. 28:15-19.)

Because of this solemn and shocking message, the Bible says that "Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day nor all the night." (v.20.) The soul-sleepers tell us that this was not Samuel who talked with Saul, because this with many other passages spoil their theory of soul-sleeping. Hence, they try to persuade us to believe that this was some other spirit and not Samuel. I submit to you four scriptural proofs that this was none other than the prophet Samuel himself. Now let us examine this evidence thoughtfully and prayerfully in the light of the Word of God.

First, whoever delivered this message to King Saul was inspired of God. He brought God's message. The speaker foretold the death of Saul and his two sons, and told the time of their death. He also said, "The Lord shall deliver the host of Israel into the hands of the Philistines." Now, we know that this prophetic message was fulfilled to the letter — not one word of it failed.

A second proof is that King Saul himself understood that it was Samuel talking with him. The Word says that "'Saul perceived that it was Samuel." That word translated "perceived" is the Hebrew word "Yoda," which means "'to know," "to be acquainted with." So he knew that it was Samuel, for he was well acquainted with him.

A third evidence is that the speaker himself (who talked with King Saul) claimed that he was Samuel, and gave every evidence of it. Listen to his words: "And the Lord hath done to him as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David; Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day." Now, Samuel had told Saul many years before this that God would do this very thing, and here he reminds him of that previous message and tells him that the time has come for it to be fulfilled. And it came to pass just as he said it would.

We come now to our fourth and last proof which forever settles the question with me. Here is evidence from which there is no appeal, for it is God Himself speaking. In verse twelve, God says in plain and simple language: "The woman saw Samuel." In verse fifteen, He says, "and Samuel said to Saul;" and the message that he brought was so shocking we read in verse twenty that "Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid because of the words of Samuel." Please note that these are not the words of the witch of Endor, neither are they the words of the spirit who talked with Saul, but it is the Lord Himself speaking through the inspired penman. How on earth any one who professes to believe the Bible could say that this was not Samuel, is puzzling to me. To do so is to dispute the plain Word of God. And I warn you and intreat you in the name of the risen Lord not to listen to any such teachers, for they are false. Just how long Samuel had been dead we do not know, but at least months, perhaps years. His body was buried at Ramah (1 Sam. 25:1) many miles

away, and yet here he is at Endor talking with the distressed king, giving him God's message and telling him of his coming doom.

If there were no other passage in the Bible to tell us that the soul survives the body this evidence alone would be sufficient to disprove the fallacy of soul-sleeping. But let me give you another clear, definite, and unmistakable proof that the soul survives the body. I refer to the words of our Lord as recorded in Luke 16:19-31; the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Now I know that some one is going to say that this is "a parable," and because it is a parable we don't know what it means, or it does not mean what it says. I do not wish to be unkind or even to appear to be so, but I do want to be fair with you. Hence, I tell you in all seriousness that when you hear people talking like that there is just one of two things wrong, either they are grossly ignorant of the meaning of a parable, or they are trying to deceive you — one of the two, perhaps both.

Before we go further let us tarry for a moment and be sure that we know the meaning of a parable. What is a parable? For authority let us go both to the dictionary and to the Bible. The new Standard Dictionary, which is authority wherever the English language is spoken, says that a parable is "a brief narrative or descriptive allegory founded on real scenes or events such as occur in nature and human life, and usually with a moral or religious application; a short religious allegory, as the parables of the New Testament." Please note it is something "founded on real scenes or events." Founded on things that "occur in nature and human life." Now, what difference does it make if it is a parable? None whatever since a parable is based on "real scenes or events." Let us also go to the New Testament for a definition or illustration of a parable. Turn with me to Matt. 24:32. Jesus speaking to His disciples said: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh." Now, let us see if this parable is based on facts. Are there such things as fig trees? Yes. Do fig trees have branches? I think so. When their branches are yet tender do they put forth leaves? Yes. When they put forth leaves is that not a sign that summer is nigh? We all know that it is. Jesus calls this a parable. It is based on things "such as occur in nature." Now, the application of the parable is found in the next verse.

Let us take another parable. (Matt. 13:3-8.) The record says that "He spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold." Again let us see if this parable is based on facts. Do men sow seed? Any school boy knows they do. Is it not true that at times some of the seed falls by the wayside; that is, on a path or road that is near by or perhaps crosses the field? What happens to the seed that falls in the road or path? Is it not true that as a rule the birds get them? Other seed falls on stony ground and because there is no depth of earth the scorching sun soon withers it. Others fall among thorns and the thorns choke the tender plants. Still other seed falls on good ground and bears fruit, yet all do not bear the same amount of fruit. Hence, we have the thirty, sixty, and one hundredfold. Now is this true to life? We all know that it is a very common occurrence every spring and summer. Now, the Bible says that this is a parable. Later the disciples came to Jesus and asked Him for the interpretation or application of it and Christ gave it

to them. What was it? Was it something strange or weird? No, there is nothing strange or weird about it. It is something that is going on about us all the while; a common, everyday occurrence — something that is true to life. It could not be otherwise, since a parable is based on "real scenes and events such as occur in nature and human life." Now, as I have already stated, what difference does it make if this narrative in Luke 16 is a parable? None whatever.

With this truth in mind let us consider these most solemn words of our Lord. Briefly stated, Christ gives us three pictures of these two men. First, we see them in life. The Rich Man has an abundance. He lacks nothing. Lazarus, the poor man, seemingly lacks everything. He has nothing. He lacks even the common comforts of life. The second picture the Lord gives us is a death-bed scene. Lazarus, the beggar, dies. Though earth forgets him, God remembers him and angels attend him. Later the Rich Man also dies, and is buried. Does death end all? No! Are they asleep (as some would have us believe) in a state of unconsciousness? No! They are both alive, and very much alive, in another world. This brings us to our third picture. Christ said that the "Rich man died and was buried and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torment." He looks, and across a great gulf he sees Lazarus, and he is not alone. Abraham and others are there with him, as the context clearly shows. Neither is the Rich Man alone. Others are with him also. Now my friends, if this lesson teaches anything it teaches that death does not end all. Death did not render either of these men unconscious. We are told that the Rich Man in hell begged for water and cried for mercy. Both were denied him. He remembers his father's house and prays that Lazarus may be sent to warn them lest they come to that place also. In hell he could see, feel, thirst, think, and pray. And this while his body was in the grave.

To say that the soul does not survive the body is to take issue with Christ, for He said that it did. Some false teachers say that this is the state of affairs after the resurrection or after the judgment, but that is nonsense. For the resurrection had not yet come. Lazarus had not been raised from the dead. The Rich Man's five brethren were still alive on this earth. The Word of God was still being preached, and Abraham told the Rich Man that if his brethren would hear and heed Moses and the prophets they could escape that place of torment. No, it was not a future state, but a present state of affairs at that time. This lesson, with many others, teach us that physical or temporal death is neither annihilation nor soul-sleeping, but simply a separation from this present outward world; the end of our correspondence with our physical environment.

I fail to see why any one with an open Bible would think that a spirit must be in a tabernacle of clay (a human body) in order to be fully conscious. Are not angels spirits? True, they are not human spirits; nevertheless, they are spirits. The New Testament says they are. (Heb. 1:14.) Is it necessary for them to dwell in temples of clay, or bodies, in order to be conscious or have existence? No! Yet, we find them on more than one occasion appearing to men in bodies. You remember three men came to Abraham's door. He gave them a hearty welcome and insisted that they tarry with him, rest and refresh themselves. He sets a meal before them and they did eat. After dinner they start on their journey and Abraham walks down the road with them. To his unutterable surprise he awakens to the fact that one of them is the Lord Himself. The Lord and Abraham hold a conversation, but the two angels go on to Sodom. (Gen. 18:22; 19:1.) They enter the city. Lot sees them and thinks they are men. He insists that they spend the night with him. The wicked men of the city also think they are men, (for they are in human bodies) and they try to force them to commit lewdness with them. Now

do you think that these angels lived in those human bodies all the time? I don't believe that any one thinks so.

Another illustration. What are demons but fallen spirits or angels? We find them living in bodies or out of bodies. Christ tells us about a man who had an "unclean spirit" in him. The evil spirit was cast out. He tried to get back into the man, but he failed. He went and got seven other spirits more wicked than himself and they entered the man. But you recall they could live either in a human body or out of a body. The man of Gadara had thousands of these fallen spirits in him. They were cast out, and with Christ's permission, they entered a herd of swine. The swine ran into the sea and were drowned. You see these spirits could live in a hog or in a human body. They were not compelled to live in either. They were just as much alive out as they were in, or in as they were out. So it is with the spirits or souls of men. They are just as much alive out of the body as they are in the body. The poet speaking of "The Deathless Soul" said:

"These shall resist the empire of decay,
When time is o'er and worlds have passed away;
Cold in the dust the perished heart may lie,
But that which warmed it once can never die."

There was a class of religious teachers in Jesus' day who did not believe this truth. I speak of the Sadducees. They went even beyond the present day soul-sleepers. They believed in the eternal sleep of spirit, soul, and body; that death ended all. They came to Christ one day with a catch question and, mark you, they went to the Scriptures to get the foundation for their argument, and from that spun a theory just as soul-sleepers and others are doing today. They say to Jesus: "Master, Moses wrote unto us, if a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed. And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise. And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven. And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err." (Mark 12:19-27.)

Christ, in answering them, said: "You do greatly err." Why this error? Christ said that it was because they were ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God. This ignorance led them into a two-fold error concerning the dead. First, they erred concerning the resurrection, which thing they did not believe in. Christ answered their catch question, but He went a step further and answered their unbelief and infidelity concerning the state of the dead. For they not only believed that the dead were in a state of unconsciousness, but that they were completely annihilated. Christ tells them that those who had passed away from earth and were counted dead or annihilated by them, were at that time alive and very much alive. He asked them: "Have you not read in the book of Moses how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of

Jacob?" Now Christ interprets that Old Testament passage for those misguided teachers. Here is His interpretation: "He is not the God of the dead, (in their sense of the word) but the God of the LIVING." please note "THE GOD OF THE LIVING," present tense. Those Sadducees thought that they were annihilated, but Christ tells them that they were then "living." Listen to Luke 20:38. "For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: For all live." Rotherham renders that clause, "For all unto Him do live." Present tense, "ALL-do live." Weymouth, in his translation, renders it, "ARE all living." No marvel that some of the scribes who were standing near, who believed these truths, "Answering said, Master, thou hast well said." Christ completely silenced those Sadducees, for we read, "After that they durst not ask any questions at all."

Shame on any one with an open Bible who does not believe in the immortality of the soul. Cicero, the Roman orator and writer, though heathen, was a credit to some religious professors. He dipped his pen in ink and wrote in language sublime. "Yes, O yes! But if I err in believing that the soul of man is immortal, I willingly err, nor while I live would I have the delightful error extorted from me; and if after death I shall feel nothing as some philosophers think, I am not afraid that some dead philosopher shall laugh at me for my mistake."

You ask me then, "Where is the soul after death?" Turn with me to 1st Peter, chapter 3, verse 19. Here we read of "Spirits in prison," and, mark you, they are disembodied spirits. We are told "When" it was that they lived on the earth. It was "in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing." Verse 20 tells us that they were "sometime disobedient;" that is, they were sinners. Verse 19 tells us in language plain and unmistakable that Christ "went and preached unto these spirits in prison." Verse 18 tells us when it was that He went and preached to them. It was when He was "put to death." Referring, of course, to His shameful death on the cross. Did His spirit die? No, a thousand times no! The text says He died "in the flesh," suggesting that He did not die in spirit. But the Scripture goes further than a mere suggestion. It plainly states that He did not die in spirit. "Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit, (or alive in spirit) He went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

Here are two things that cannot be successfully disputed. First, that the spirits or souls of those who lived before the flood were alive somewhere when Christ died. Second, that Christ went to those spirits wherever they were and preached to them. Now, if we can find out where Christ went when He died on the cross, then we know where the spirits were, for they were together while His body lay in the grave. We know beyond any shadow of a doubt that He did not go to heaven. You recall that Mary was standing near the empty tomb weeping, for verily she thought that they had taken the body of her Lord away and hid it. Christ appeared and spake to her. She at first thought that He was the gardener, but when Christ called her by name, she recognized Him and she rushed forward to greet Him. But Jesus said unto her, "Touch Me not, Mary; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." John 20:17. He ascended to the Father, came back, and told them to handle Him and see if it was not He. Now where had He been during those three days that His body was in the tomb? Let the apostle Paul answer this question for us. In Eph. 4:9, he says, "Now that He (Christ) ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" According to this verse He was somewhere in the "Lower parts of the earth." And this is in keeping with Christ's own words. He made a prophecy concerning Himself and said, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Matt. 12:40. Please note it does not say in the grave, which is but the crust of the earth, but "in the heart of the earth." "The lower parts of the earth."

Let us take another prophecy, Psalms 16:9, 10. Before I read may I say there can be no doubt about the interpretation of this passage referring to Christ. For the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost explained these verses and showed clearly that they referred to the death and resurrection of Christ. Now let us read: "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; My flesh also shall rest in hope." Why is he glad? Why does he rejoice? Why does his flesh (his body) rest in hope? He tells us in the next verse. "For Thou wilt not LEAVE My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." Please note that he makes a distinction between soul and body. Now where was His body? We all know that it was in Joseph's new tomb. Where was His soul? The Word of God says "In hell." I confess that this passage used to trouble me a bit. Christ in hell? But when I saw the truth, or the meaning of it, my fears vanished. That word rendered "hell," is the Hebrew word "Sheol" — "the unseen state," (Hades is the Greek word for Sheol, meaning "the unseen world.") The truth of the statement is simply this. When Christ expired on the cross, they laid His body in Joseph's tomb, and His soul went to Sheol, the place of departed spirits. Two classes went to Sheol; the wicked, and the righteous. Both Christ and the penitent thief were there, for you remember that he was to be with Christ. Here we have the righteous. Then there were those spirits who were "sometimes disobedient." They were there also, for you recall Christ was preaching to them. The message Christ brought to them was a message of Proclamation and not Salvation. Here were the wicked. We also read in Psa. 9:17, "The wicked shall be cast into hell (Sheol) and all that forget God."

This is exactly in keeping with what Christ said in Luke sixteen: He said that the "Rich man died and was buried, (as to his body) and in hell, (Hades, or Sheol) he lift up his eyes, being in torments." Christ Himself tells us there were two classes there. You remember He said the Rich MAN looked and saw Lazarus. Abraham and others were there also. The Rich Man begs that Lazarus might bring him some water, but Abraham explains to him that there is an impassable gulf between them and that neither class could go across from one side to the other. On one side of the gulf, the wicked were in conscious torment, while on the other side the righteous were in conscious happiness. I had preached many years before I observed that both classes were called "prisoners." One class is spoken of as prisoners who "were disobedient." (1 Peter 3:19, 20) The others are called "prisoners of hope." (Zech. 9:12.) Why were they called prisoners of hope?" They had a hope, and even a promise that they would be brought out of Sheol. (Sheol here is called "the pit.") They did not share this hope alone. Christ Himself went to Sheol with a "hope." Speaking through the prophet, He said, "My flesh shall rest in hope." He not only goes there with a hope, but He goes there with a shout. "Therefore did My heart rejoice, and My tongue was glad." He tells us why He is glad, or exultant. "Because thou wilt not LEAVE My soul in Hades, or Sheol. The word here rendered Hell is Hades, the Greek word for Sheol. (Acts 2:26, 27.) The apostle Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost said: "That His (Christ's) soul was NOT LEFT IN HADES neither did His flesh see corruption." (Acts 2:31.) Now, when Christ came out of Sheol, He brought these "prisoners of hope" out with Him, fulfilling the Prophecy. "I have sent forth Thy Prisoners out of the Pit," (and how were they brought out?) "By the blood of Thy covenant." By the blood of whose covenant?

Let us read the context and be sure who he is talking about. "Rejoice greatly, Oh daughter of Zion; shout, Oh daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And He shall speak peace unto the heathen, and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for Thee also, by the blood of Thy covenant (by the blood of the covenant of Jesus Christ) I have sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit." (Zech. 9:9-11.) Compare this with Eph. 4:8. Here, we are told that when "He (Christ) ascended up on high He led captivity captive." The margin says that He led a "multitude of captives." Now the next verse makes it very clear where those "captives" (prisoners) came from. It says before He ascended (to lead them up on high) He "first" descended "into the lower parts of the earth." Beyond any doubt, Christ went to Sheol, stayed there three days and nights, and when He came out He brought the Old Testament saints out with Him. He went by Joseph's new tomb and got His body and appeared to Mary, the chosen twelve, and many others. Many of the saints who came out of Sheol with Christ also got their bodies. Matthew says: "Many bodies of the saints which slept arose, (please note that it was their bodies that slept) and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared to many." (27:52.) When Christ "ascended up on high" where did he lead (or take) those saints? Eph. 4:10 says, "up far above all heavens," into the very city of God, for the word tells us that Christ is "even at the right hand of God." Mark you, only one class of those "prisoners" were brought out of Sheol. The "disobedient" were left there, and all others who die out of Christ will go there, and so remain until the day of judgment, when "death and hell (Hades)" will deliver up their dead and will be "judged every man according to their works." (Rev. 20:13.)

At this point, with your consent, I will make a little digression from the question now under consideration, and raise another that is vitally connected with it, namely: What becomes of the wicked after the judgment when they are cast into the lake of fire?

There are some who tell us that they are annihilated. However, this is a false teaching for it is contrary to the Word of God. There is not a single passage in the Bible which teaches that the wicked are annihilated. This heresy comes from the misinterpretation and misapplication of scripture. One of the scriptures that these false teachers use to bolster up their pet theory is Revelation 20:14, which reads as follows: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." Now, if death means annihilation (as they insist) there could be no "second death."

A few verses below (21:8) God makes clear the meaning of the second death. Here it is in language plain and simple. It is for the wicked (and he names the different classes) to "HAVE THEIR PART in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; WHICH IS the second death." In chapter twenty-two and verse nineteen we read of another class who have their "part" or lot in "the holy city," which we know means life eternal. Now just as the righteous have eternal life in "the holy city," the wicked "have their part in the lake of fire," the abode of the unholy. And the Word says that they "Shall be tormented with fire and brimstone and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and forever: and they have no rest day nor night." (Revelation 14:10, 11.) In chapter twenty and verse ten we read, "and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. If being cast into the lake of fire means cessation of existence, then God never would have said "they

have no rest day nor night." Neither would there be anything to be "'tormented day and night forever and ever," nor would the "smoke of their torment ascend up forever and ever."

We have already shown from the Scriptures that the first death which comes to all who transgress is not annihilation, but separation, and from the same source we learn that the "second death" is not annihilation but the final separation of the wicked from the divine presence, plus the punishment which goes with it. The "second death" is for the ungodly to "'have their part IN THE LAKE," not out of it by annihilation or any other methods. Christ taught this same truth. The Word tells us that Christ will say to the wicked in the day of judgment, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25:41. In verse forty-six we read that "'these shall go away into everlasting punishment." Now, verse forty-one says that the "fire" is everlasting and verse forty-six says that the "punishment" is everlasting. Does that sound as if Christ believed in the annihilation theory? No! A thousand times no! Again in speaking to His disciples Jesus said: "The Son of man shall send forth His angels and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Time and again when Christ was speaking of the future punishment of the wicked He said that there would be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, and not one time does He say or intimate that they will cease to exist. But just the opposite; three different times in a single discourse, He said that their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:44-48.)

But some one may say I have a book or pamphlet by so and so and he teaches that the wicked will be annihilated, and he certainly does give scripture to prove it. Now mark well what I say: This class of people give many scripture references and quote a great deal of it, but they misinterpret and misapply it. But this is no new thing, for the devil himself used this same method of deception when he tempted Christ. You remember that he tried to get Christ to leap from the pinnacle of the temple, and quoted scripture to sustain his position.

If you will bear with me a moment, I will give you a concrete example and show you from their own writings how this class of teachers twist and misinterpret the sacred Scriptures. I hold in my hand a religious paper, called The Present Truth, published by the Seventh Day Adventists. (The Adventist teach both the soul-sleeping and annihilation theories.) From the front page of said paper I read: "Until life becomes extinct, the wicked suffer, but, at the last there will be an end to pain, death and the grave." The scripture they quote in trying to prove this statement is Rev. 21:4 which reads, "There shall be no more death, . . . neither shall there be any more pain." "If then, (they go on to say) there is to be no more pain, the wicked will not suffer on and on forever, but will be consumed root and branch." As a reference they give Mal. 4:1. Now the Word of God does say, "There shall be no more death . . . neither shall there be any more pain." But of what is it speaking? Does it say there will be no more pain in the lake of fire, where the wicked suffer, or does it say that there will be no pain in the "new Jerusalem" the home of the saints? Let us read the context and we will find out which place John was talking about. "And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down (to earth) from God out of heaven." You see plainly that John was talking about the "holy city," the new Jerusalem, and he had no reference to the lake of fire or the state of the wicked.

To quote this passage as a proof that there will be no pain in the lake of fire, or that the wicked will cease to suffer, is contrary to common sense and reason, and thinking people will reject such

wresting of the scripture. It would be just as sensible to quote Luke 16:24, where the Rich Man is in hell crying for water and apply it to the saints in Heaven as to quote Rev. 21:4 and apply that to the wicked. May God save us from such nonsense.

Let us now look at Mal. 4:1 and see what that passage is talking about. For this is another one of their favorite passages, that they quote in nearly every article of this kind to try to prove that the wicked will become extinct, and "will not suffer on and on forever," as they say. The passage reads, "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Now if this scripture were speaking of hell or the lake of fire, I would believe in the annihilation theory. But it has no reference to the lake of fire or to the future state of the wicked. It is a judgment of God upon the wicked in this world. Verse three makes this very clear. It reads, "They (the wicked) shall be ashes under the souls of your feet." Ashes under whose feet? The feet of the saints. "You that fear My name shall tread down the wicked." Now we know that God's people are not going to be in the lake of fire; hence it is something that will take place on this earth. Here is another passage that shows beyond any doubt that such an event will take place in this present world. "And they (the wicked) went upon the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them." (Rev. 20:9.) This has reference to the time when the wicked will make war upon the people of God, and God will rain fire from heaven and consume them, and they will be ashes under the feet of God's people whom they had tried to destroy. This will take place before the final judgment, as the context clearly shows. Hence it has no reference to the final state of the wicked. More than once, God has sent similar judgments upon the earth. For example, when He destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire, the wicked were reduced to ashes. Then again in the wilderness when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, the Bible says, "there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the hundred and fifty men that offered incense." (Num. 16:35.) Hence we see that within the camp of Israel the wicked became ashes under the people's feet.

David, speaking of this historical event, said, "The flame burned up the wicked." (Psalm 106:18.) But it took place on this earth, not in the lake of fire. He had reference only to the bodies of the wicked and not their souls. Those who teach the annihilation theory take such words as "consume," "perish," and "destroy" and interpret them to mean cessation of existence, which application was never intended. For example, take the word "perish." Queen Esther said, "If I perish, I perish." Esther, as we all know, was speaking of death and not annihilation. When Christ and the disciples were at sea, a great storm swept down upon them. The disciples out of fear cried, "Lord save us, we perish." Were they afraid of being annihilated? No! But they were fearful lest they would drown. Take the word "destroy." A person or persons may be destroyed either in a physical, spiritual, or moral sense. God said to Israel, "Oh Israel thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thy help." Speaking of the antedeluvian world, Christ said, "The flood came and destroyed them all." (Luke 17:27.) However, Peter, when writing his epistle nearly two thousand years later, said that they were "Spirits in prison" and that when Christ was put to death in the flesh, He descended into the lower regions of the earth and preached to them. Here is positive proof that "destroy" does not mean annihilation. We might go on for hours and give you many other such references and show you how

people wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction, but time forbids. We will now go back to those Old Testament saints that Christ brought out of Sheol.

The question arises, why didn't these Old Testament saints go on to heaven, why tarry in Sheol? Because the blood of bulls and calves could not take away sin! Neither could it admit them into that "eternal inheritance." Only the blood of Christ could do that. Christ died not only for those under the New Testament but for those under the Old Testament also. Hebrews nine, verse fifteen, tells us "that by means of (Christ's death), — REDEMPTION" was brought to those "that were under the first (old) Testament." Now since Christ "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," we never read of a redeemed soul going to Sheol, but always to heaven. When John saw "The souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held," they were not in Sheol, but in heaven. This was after the crucifixion and resurrection. Also Stephen, the martyr, shortly before he died, "looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." And when he bore witness to the fact, we are told that they stoned him with stones and with his dying breath he cried, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Now if Jesus received his spirit, we know that he went to heaven. As to his body we read that "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him." (Acts 8:2.)

Paul tells us in Philippians (1:22-24) that he is in a dilemma, that what may be best to choose he does not know. He says, "For me to LIVE is Christ, and to DIE IS GAIN." But he told the church that what would be his GAIN would be their LOSS. His "desire" and the church's "need" has him puzzled and perplexed. But he is unselfish, and says that "to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence I know that I shall abide and continue with you all FOR YOUR FURTHERANCE AND JOY of faith." Now let us look at Paul's desire. What was it? He says, I have "a DESIRE TO DEPART." That word rendered depart, in the original is a marine word, meaning "to loose up," as if to lift anchor. You have seen ships tied up in the docks. Have you ever noticed how restless they seem to be? I have seen them go from side to side, back and forth. And as they pulled and tugged at the ropes or anchor, they seemed to say, "Oh, let me out of here. I was never meant to be tied down and kept in a place like this, I was made to sail the boundless seas." So with the great apostle Paul. He feels himself cooped up and tied down by the limitations of the "flesh," and as he feels his great soul surge and struggle for freedom, he says, "I have a desire to depart." I want to lift anchor, and leave this dock called flesh.

Now, when he makes his departure where will he go? The soul-sleeper says, to the grave to remain in a state of unconsciousness until the morning of the resurrection. But where would there be any "gain" in that; for "to die," Paul said, "is gain." Evidently Paul was expecting something better than soul-sleeping. Suppose we ask him about his faith, where he expected to go when he made his departure. And here is the answer in his own words, "TO BE WITH CHRIST; WHICH IS FAR BETTER." That is the "GAIN." That is what he calls "FAR BETTER" than to "live in the flesh." In 2 Cor. 5:6-8, he tells us that when he is "at home in the body," he is "absent from the Lord." He also tells us that he is "willing RATHER to be ABSENT from the body." Not asleep in it, but "absent from" it. When he is "absent from the body," where will he go? Now here is his answer, in verse eight, as plain as language can make it; "to be PRESENT WITH THE LORD." Does that sound like soul-sleeping? No! My friends, your blessed dead are not in their graves, but in heaven "with Christ." And, if with Christ, WHY SHOULD WE WEEP?

"Why should we weep for those who sleep?
Our God doth comfort give;
Above the night, in realms of light
Our dead in Christ still live:
Our God is God not of the dead
Who cease to see and know,
He is the God of saints who live
Where joys forever flow.

"Our dead are blest, from toil they rest,
Beyond all pain and care;
No tear, no sigh, no wailing cry
Can touch their spirit's there:
In safe retreat, in joy replete,
They dwell in peace at home;
They always wait, at heaven's gate,
The hour that we shall come.

"Our Lord hath said, 'I'll bring your dead
When I come down the skies;'
Then, from the gloom, of dismal tomb,
Their bodies shall arise:
Up in the air, some place up there
We'll all be gathered home;
With Christ to dwell, where all is well,
Where death can never come."

Let us now receive the benediction.

BENEDICTION

"Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the Sheep," and hath by His word assured us that our dead in Christ are with Him in that great sheepfold above, bless, comfort, and keep you, today, tomorrow, and forever — AMEN!