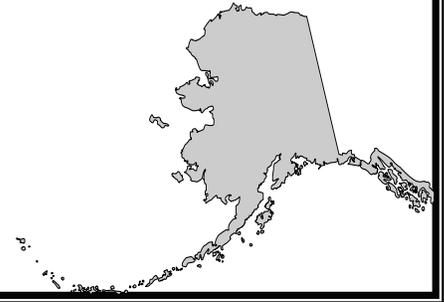


Hidden Hills *Missionary* Baptist Herald

“Preaching Jesus Christ crucified, buried, and risen to a condemned world”



Volume 5

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Number 1



An Appointment You Will Keep!

by Joel R. Beeke

Dear Reader,

You and I may not know each other; possibly we shall never see one another. Yet, I desire to write a personal letter to you.

I write to you because you and I have more in common than you may realize. Though we may never meet each other in this world, we shall one day be in each other's presence because *we both possess a never-dying soul*. With this soul both of us must appear before God, your and my Creator, in the great judgment day. *"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"* (Heb. 9:27).

You may do all in your power to put the *thought* of death away from you. Yet you cannot escape the *fact* that you must die. You *know* that you *must* die and face God. Perhaps you are reluctant to think about death because you also know judgment follows death as surely as night follows day. In all seriousness, therefore, could I possibly press upon you a more significant question than this: *What is going to happen to you when you die?*

The Bible, conscience, and common sense, all declare to you that there is an eternity you must face.

More than 150,000 dead from Sumatra Earthquake

The world's most powerful earthquake in more than 40 years erupted underwater off of the Indonesian island of Sumatra on Dec. 26. It sent walls of water barreling thousands of miles. The number of dead is now an estimated 150,000. (Sources: New York Times reporters; The Associated Press; Land Scan population database)

The undersea **2004 Indian Ocean earthquake** that occurred on December 26, 2004, produced tsunamis that were among the deadliest natural disasters in modern history. The tsunamis devastated the shores of Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, and other countries with waves of up to 15 m (59 feet) in height, even hitting as far as the east coast of Africa, especially Somalia, 4,500 km (2,800) miles) or more west of the epicenter. The plight of the many affected people and countries prompted a widespread humanitarian response.

This rare mega-thrust earthquake took place at 00:58:53 Greenwich Time (10 hours earlier, Alaska time) in the Indian Ocean off the western coast of northern Sumatra, Indonesia. At a magnitude of 9.0, it was the largest since the 9.2-magnitude Good Friday Earthquake off Alaska in 1964, and it tied for fourth largest since 1900,

An appointment you will keep — Continued

Therefore, don't avoid this question for your own sake: *Am I prepared to die and face God as Judge?*

I am sorry to have to tell you that millions today think they are prepared to meet God who shall end in hell following the great day of judgment. This is what God tells us in His Holy Word: *"Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity"* (Matt. 7:22-23).

Did you ever consider what a terrible awakening it will be for those who are traveling on in this life thinking all is well with them to hear in that day as they stand before the Most High God Words cannot describe the anguish of soul as this, *"I never knew you"*? sentence will be passed upon them: *"Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*

Shall you and I also be among these disappointed "many" that Christ speaks of in Matthew 7?

Dear reader, please give me five minutes of your time to try to show you who will end in hell and who will end in heaven.

The Broad Road to Eternal Destruction

First, I must honestly tell you the Bible informs

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us in Matthew 7 that the vast majority of people will be going to hell. *"Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."* Perhaps this sounds cruel to you, but this sad fact is true not because God is cruel; rather, we are cruel to ourselves. We willfully defy our Creator and despise His love, while trampling upon His commandments given for our true well-being. Due to such rebellion and wickedness, *we have all earned death and hell.* These are the only two things we have deserved, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* (Rom. 3:23), and the *"wages of sin is death"* (Rom. 6:23).

What kinds of people are included in this vast multitude which is hell-bound?

All *ungodly people* shall end in hell. This includes those who openly live wicked lives, doing such things as:

- spending their time in taverns and their money on drink and drugs,
- engaging in unlawful sexual relationships,
- daily watching graphic display of sin on a TV screen,
- openly swearing against God by using His Holy Name in vain, living a life of rebellion against parents and authority given by God.

Such ungodly people shall end in hell unless they are brought to true repentance and conversion by the almighty power of God's grace. Are you one of this group? If so, I urge you to seek repenting, confessing, and turning to God's grace before it is forever too late to seek the Lord!

(2) All *worldly people* shall end in hell. Those shall end in hell who abstain from gross sins, but whose lives are intertwined with the world, who live unburdened when they continually do such things as:

- place self above and before God,
- esteem the possessions of worldly riches above the riches of God's grace,
- promote the desires of other people above God's will as revealed in His Word,
- value the needs of daily life above the need of a

An appointment you will keep — continued

Savior for their immortal souls,

- consider the results of sin to be more tragic than offending and sinning against their holy Creator who showers them with blessings, believe it is more important what their neighbors and friends think of them than what God thinks of them.

These shall end in hell unless they are brought to true repentance and conversion by the almighty power of God's grace. Are you one of this group?

If so, I must say to you: Heaven itself would be no happiness to you if you arrived there, for the Lord of heaven is not your friend — what pleases Him does not please you; what He dislikes gives you no pain. His Word is not your counselor; His day is not your delight; His law is not your guide. You care little for hearing of Him; you know even less of speaking with Him. To be forever in His company would be a thing you could not endure; the society of saints and angels would weary you. As far as your practical life is concerned, the Bible means little, Christ means less, and salvation is a needless thing. *"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."... You cannot serve God and mammon*" (Eph. 5:14; Matt. 6:24).

(3) Many *religious people* shall end in hell. It is possible to be hell-bound though we are faithful church attenders, Sunday school teachers, and even ministers. Religion can be our favorite subject, our conversation can be about God and Christ, and our outward walk of life can be blameless — all without our soul being saved from destruction.

We can be as religious as the five false virgins in Matthew 25, possessing the same confession, the same expectation, the same lamps, and the same outward appearance as the five wise virgins — and still perish. We can be as religious as Ahab of whom Scripture says, ". . . he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly" (I Kings 21:27) — and still be unconverted.

It is possible to experience common convictions of sin and impressions of God and His holy attributes — even to acknowledge sin and be somewhat humbled under it, to weep and pray over

it, to be afraid to sin again — and still not be able to enter the kingdom of heaven. Think of Cain, Saul, and Judas.

We need more than half-hearted religion and church attendance. We need the irresistible, regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in order to be born again and converted. Only then will we love God with our entire being — the key ingredient missing in the foregoing examples — and pant after God as a thirsty man pants for cold water. Only then shall we be enabled by God's grace to be prepared to meet the Lord.

"Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness" (Luke 11:35).

How may I know if I am included among those who are heaven-bound?

The Narrow Road to Eternal Life

All those who shall arrive in heaven will confess their salvation to be a great miracle of God's free grace. They shall all be souls that have been truly born again by the Holy Spirit (see John 3). They are people who have been converted by God. In their conversion they experience three things:

- (1) heart-felt sorrow over their own *sinfulness*,
 - (2) heartfelt joy over *salvation* in Jesus Christ,
- and
- (3) heartfelt *gratitude* to God for His great salvation (see Rom. 7:24-25; Ps. 50:15).

When the Holy Spirit begins to work salvation in a sinner He does not begin with revealing Christ to him. There is no room in our hearts by nature for Christ. Rather, He brings such a sinner face to face with his tragic misery and dangerous state of sinner-ship before God. The sinner is brought to experience:

- heartfelt sorrow over his innumerable actual sins in thoughts, words, and actions against an all-knowing God;
- heartfelt sorrow over being without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world;
- heartfelt sorrow over his dreadful original sin through his deep fall in Adam, being taught his entire heart is nothing but a fountain of pollution and corruption;
- heartfelt sorrow not only because the burden of sin becomes too heavy to bear, but also because

An appointment you will keep — continued

he finds it impossible to free himself of this burden;

- heartfelt sorrow when he is brought to the point where he realizes that he cannot save himself and yet that he must be saved so that he cries out, "Lord, Thou art righteous and just to cast me away forever, but is it possible that there is a way in Thee to escape Thy divine punishment and be restored into Thy favor?"

Have you also become such a concerned, miserable, unworthy, guilty, and lost sinner — a sinner who knows by experience that there is no hope of salvation from your side?

When the sinner experiences he has no future but condemnation from his side, and the Holy Spirit enables him to cast himself upon God as the only place of refuge, that same blessed Spirit shall unveil the triune God's unspeakably rich way of salvation and deliverance through the blood and satisfaction of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sinner is brought to experience:

- a need for Christ;
- a view of some aspect of Christ's atoning work in its beauty, fullness, and suitability;
- a revelation of Christ in his soul by means of Word and Spirit through which he learns how Christ has fully obeyed the law and fully borne the punishment of sin on behalf of fallen, unworthy sinners;
- an application of Christ by which he may embrace Christ with unspeakable joy as his Savior and his salvation.

Have you also experienced something of Christ as the great way of deliverance through the power of the Holy Spirit applying God's Word to your soul? Has it caused you to desire to know Christ more and more as your All-in-all — to know Him *experientially* as the exclusive, willing Savior who saves to the uttermost?

(3) Finally, those who truly experience God's way of salvation in Jesus Christ will also express a wholehearted gratitude for such a great deliverance: "*What shall I render unto the LORD for all His benefits toward me?*" (Ps. 116:12). They desire to surrender everything, soul and body, for time and eternity into the hands of the Lord, lie at His feet in true submission, and confess, "*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" Despite many short-

comings on our part, we then desire to live to the glory of God above all, and to lovingly serve our neighbor to his spiritual and temporal welfare.

Dear reader, examine yourself.

Which Road Are You Traveling?

Are you traveling the broad road to eternal destruction or the narrow road to eternal life? In this world there are many different roads, but in the spiritual world there are only two, and these two never intersect. They are as opposite from one another as darkness from light, Satan from God, nature from grace, and hell from heaven. Only God, in His free grace, can take us off the broad road to destruction and place us on the narrow road to everlasting life.

Sinner, we beseech you, turn from your sinful and evil ways. Cry for true conversion from Him who not only said, "*Ye must be born again,*" but who also testified of Himself, "*The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.*" Your soul is lost and your condition miserable; therefore, beg the Lord to show you this, so that room may be made within you for the gospel message of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Allow me to leave you with a final warning. In the twenty-seven books of the New Testament hell is mentioned 234 times. If life's road were twenty-seven miles long, and there were 234 billboards along this route which all read, "This road leads to hell," would you stay on that road? As long as you are an unrepenting, unbelieving, Christless, self-satisfied sinner, you are on this road to hell. Hell is the end of a worldly or religious life which remains without Christ.

This short message is still another billboard sent by God to you on your pathway of life to warn you that all the ways of man end in death. "*Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near*" (Is. 55:6).

How many more billboards will the Lord send your way before His patience comes to an end, and He fulfills His own Word: "*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment?*"

Make haste, sinner, for your life's sake. The thread of your life is not yet cut, but it is growing increasingly thin and brittle. The Lord still calls to you, "*As I live, saith*

An appointment you will keep - continued

the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" (Ez. 33:11).

The door of grace is still open. The throne of Christ is not yet shut. Will you hear His voice before it is too late? *"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him" (Ps. 2:12).*

All those who have lived without God on earth shall be without God in hell. How terrible it shall be to experience with the rich man in Luke 16, *"In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments ... And he cried ... I am tormented in this flame."*

Dear friend, I desire to warn you with love. You and I cannot escape death. It is an appointment we will keep ... regardless.

Are you prepared to die?

Sincerely, Joel R. Beeke

**Earthquake—continued**

when accurate global seismographic record-keeping began.

Jesus said, *"...there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows."* — Mark 13:8, KJ Bible. According to his words, there shall be earthquakes in different places on earth, but the end is not yet. It is the beginning of sorrows. Can we imagine the magnitude of sorrow in the coasts decimated by the monstrous, killing tidal waves? It is almost beyond human comprehension to think of a wall of water 50 feet high traveling at a speed of 500 miles per hour. What chance do human beings have against such awesome power? The answer is obvious. We can set up warnings, but we are without power to stop such tragedies as these. It is at such times that men see something of their insignificance in comparison to the Almighty. We are told that God has his way in the storm.

"The LORD is slow to anger, and great in

Earthquake — Continued

power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." — Nahum 1:3, KJ Bible.

The writer's mind's eye could not help but go to the Scriptures and their warnings about what is yet to come. There is coming a great day of world-wide devastation such as never was up to that time nor ever shall be. The Bible tells us of an earthquake that shall come which will move every island out of its place and every mountain shall fall. What will men do in that day?

"...when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" — Revelation 6:12-27, KJ Bible.

We are told that scientists can tell us something of the mechanics of earthquakes and tsunamis. Most say earthquakes come from the shifting of the earth's "tectonic plates." We do not doubt these things to be true—yet there is an awesome power above all these mechanics. The Bible says Jesus upholds all things by the word of His power. In other words, the power that keeps this universe from disintegrating is the Word of God.

"... Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, . . ." — Hebrews 1:3, KJ Bible.

The same God who created the heaven and the

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Don't build your house on the sand!

Earthquake — Continued

earth in the beginning sustains their existence by His word. Our God has determined that He will dissolve both in the future. Men's hopes and aspirations are for the here and now, but God is eternal. He has purposed to give eternal life to all who believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some of his people, believers, will be living when the heavens and the earth are dissolved. For them, the hope is not the here and now; it is in the world to come—the new heavens and new earth.

*“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto **the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?** Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for **new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.**” — 2 Peter 3:11,13, KJ Bible.*

Yes, dear reader, whether you meet God in “natural death,” or in a tsunami, as did those 150,000 people in Asia — meet God you shall. Believe it or not, you shall meet him.

“. . . As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment...” — Hebrews 9:27, KJ Bible.

One day, the earth shall reel to and fro like a

Schedule of Services

Sunday Worship.....12:00 PM
 Wednesday Prayer..... 7:00 PM
 Our meeting house is located just south of the intersection of Bendapole Road and Passthebait Avenue

drunkard. The Lord shall remove the sinners out of it. He will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend.

“The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.” — Isaiah 24:20,21 KJ Bible.

Only those who have believed and obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ shall escape these things that shall come to pass on the earth. It will be a day of unspeakable horror for the sinner when he meets “his God.” For the believer — the child of God who now has eternal life because of the Son of God, Jesus Christ — it will be a time of blessing and triumph.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. . . . **He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**”** — John 3:16,18 KJ Bible.

