BASICS OF CHRISTIANITY - PART 6: DEATH AND ETERNITY

A. INTRODUCTION

We all know we will die someday. Death is one of life's few certainties. Yet most people don't like to think about death. As a result, most people are totally ignorant about what happens when they die!

B. DEATH

1. Temporary separation of body (physical) and soul (spirit) - Ecclesiastes 12:7
   a. Body decays in the ground (burial) or incinerated (cremation)
   b. Soul/spirit continues to exist - Matthew 10:28
      i. Alive and conscious - Luke 16:22-24; 23:43
      ii. Separated from the body
      iii. This "intermediate state" will continue till Jesus Christ returns
2. State of the Spirit after death
   a. Believers
      i. Immediately made perfect in holiness - Hebrews 12:23
      ii. Continues to be united to Christ (by His Spirit) in a state of joy - 2 Corinthians 5:8
   b. Unbelievers
      i. Continue in a state of sin/rebellion (but now without common grace)
      ii. Condition the Bible describes as "torment and suffering" - Luke 16:23
   c. These conditions are irreversible and unchangeable - Luke 16:26

C. JESUS CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN

1. Contrast Christ's visits to earth
   a. First coming
      i. Few observed - some in Israel/Palestine in 1st century AD (Gospels, few historians)
      ii. In humility: God's servant to accomplish salvation for God's people - Luke 24:46-47
      iii. In fulfillment of the OT Scriptures, to do God's will - 1 Corinthians 15:3
   b. Second coming
      i. On a world-wide scale: all will see him - Matthew 24:27
      ii. In triumph as God's king to judge mankind - Acts 17:31
      iii. In fulfillment of entire Bible/human history - 2 Pet 3:10
      iv. On one future unknown day - Matthew 24:36
2. What will happen when Jesus returns? (1 Corinthians 15:35f)
   a. General resurrection
      i. Bodies of all who have died will be raised - John 5:28-29
      ii. Body and spirit will be reunited again
   b. Bodies of those resurrected will be changed (fit for eternity cf earthly living)
      i. Personal identity preserved - Luke 24:39
      ii. Believers: bodies will be made like Christ's resurrected body - Philippians 3:21
      iii. Unbelievers: bodies fit for eternal condemnation - John 5:29
   c. Bodies of those still alive on earth will be changed - 1 Corinthians 15:51-52
   d. Judgment Day - Jesus Christ will judge all people - Romans 2:16
      i. Based on God's word - John 12:48
      ii. Believers: spend eternity with Jesus in His glorious kingdom - Matthew 25:34
      iii. Unbelievers: spend eternity under God's punishment with Satan - Matthew 25:41
   e. God will recreate a new heavens and earth - 2 Peter 3:10
   f. Mankind will remain in heaven or hell forever - Luke 16:26