

## 13 – Voices From Beyond the Grave

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1

### Can the Living Talk to the Dead?

(Note: This sermon is about spiritism. It does not address the state of the dead specifically. That is covered in Sermon 14. Care should be taken not to make statements about the state of the dead not biblically substantiated until Sermon 14. This sermon is based on the biblical counsel that prohibits communication with the dead.)

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2

The idea of talking to the dead seems to fascinate many today. It's the subject of movies, novels, and serious news reports. Books on mediums and their activities even top best-seller lists. Communication with another world, or with those who were once among us, captivates the imagination of many.

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3

But are psychics and mediums right when they say they can put us in touch with the souls of the loved ones we've lost in death?

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4

Can the spirits of the dead take possession of living people, using their bodies, their voices, their minds, to act and speak?

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What we are talking about this time is one of the most serious matters that any of us may ever be called upon to meet.

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6

And it is so serious that it can be truly called a life and death matter.

Our eternal salvation may be at stake, so we must be sure about this.

How can we really know for absolute certainty whether an experience we have is genuine and real—or false and dangerous?

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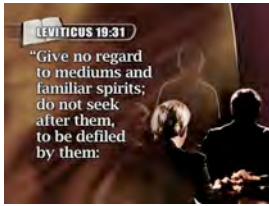
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The answer is that in the Bible, Jesus gives us the truth!



God in His word has clearly condemned spiritism and He has forbidden any attempt on our part to communicate with the dead. Notice the warning that God gave to His people about consulting a person who tries to talk to a “familiar spirit.”

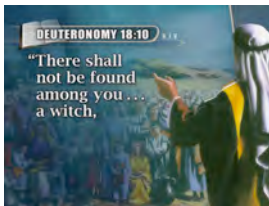


(Text: Leviticus 19:31)

Leviticus 19:31: “Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them:

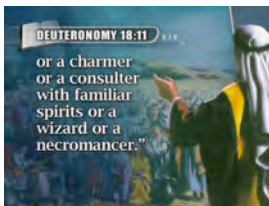


I am the Lord your God.”

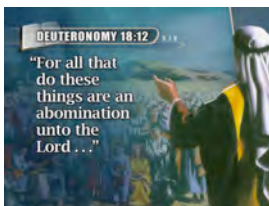


(Text: Deuteronomy 18:10-12)

Before the people of Israel went into Canaan, they were strictly instructed, “there shall not be found among you... a witch,



or a charmer or a consulter with familiar spirits or a wizard or a necromancer.



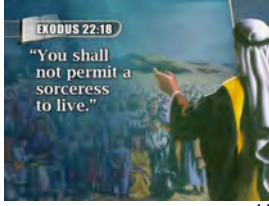
“For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD...”

Deuteronomy 18:10-12, KJV.

God knows that people who consult with familiar spirits would cause His people to be misled and so He told them this:

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(Text: Exodus 22:18)

“You shall not permit a sorceress [witch] to live.” Exodus 22:18

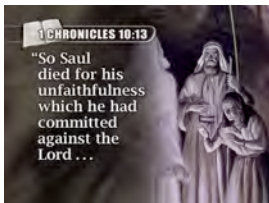
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The experience of King Saul in consulting a spiritist medium demonstrates the folly of trying to speak to the dead.

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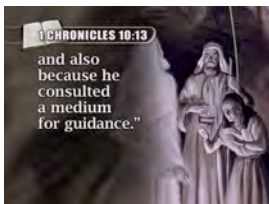


16

(Text: 1 Chronicles 10:13)

“So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the Lord...

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17

and also because he consulted a medium for guidance.”

1 Chronicles 10:13

But why would God want to prevent us from communicating with the dead? Does He no understand our need for comfort or guidance?

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18

Jesus is our Friend.

He understands what we go through when we have lost a loved one in the valley of the shadow of death.

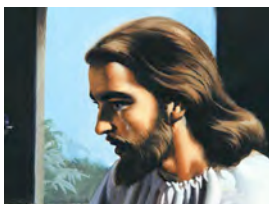
He is touched by our grief. He has been there.

So we will turn to Jesus to discover what He said about death, resurrection, and eternal life.

If Jesus said it, I will trust my life to it.

That settles it. Can we agree on that?

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19

Aren't you thankful for Jesus?

He is touched by our sorrow.

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(Text: John 11:35)

At the funeral of a friend, the Bible says that “Jesus wept.”

John 11:35.

He has been through the valley of the shadow Himself.

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21

(Text: Revelation 1:17, 18)

“... Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

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22

I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forever more. Amen.

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23

And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.”

Revelation 1:17, 18.

What is more, Jesus is the Life giver.

He has come that we might have abundant new life now.

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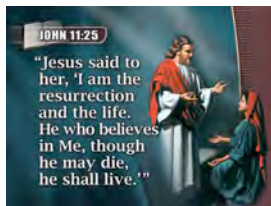
(Text: John 10:10)

“... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

John 10:10

He promises a totally restored life forever.

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25

(Text: John 11:25)

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.’”

John 11:25

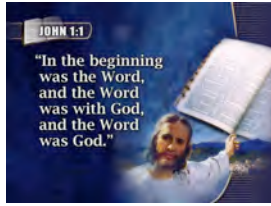
Jesus is the Life Specialist.

He knows more about it than anyone in the universe, because He created life on this planet.

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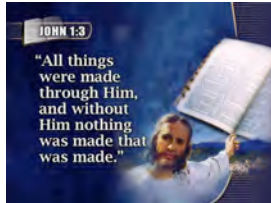
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26

(Text: John 1:1, 3)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.



27

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made."

John 1:1, 3.



28

(Text: Colossians 1:16)

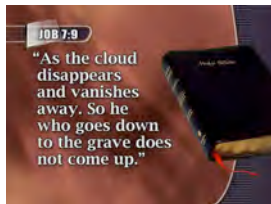
"For by him all things were created... all things were created through Him and for Him."

Colossians 1:16.



29

So if God in His word tells us something, we can trust that the One who created and made us knows what's best for us! The reason He prohibited His people from trying to communicate with the dead is because it is impossible!



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(Text: Job 7:9, 10)

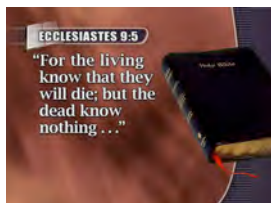
The Bible clearly states that the deceased do not return to communicate with the living. "As the cloud disappears and vanishes away. So he who goes down to the grave does not come up." Job 7:9



31

"He shall never return to his house, Nor shall his place know him anymore." Job 7:10

How much knowledge should we expect to receive from the dead? Ecclesiastes states the matter unequivocally:



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(Text: Ecclesiastes 9:5)

"For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing."

Ecclesiastes 9:5

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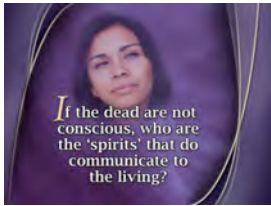
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From the teachings of God’s word, we conclusively know that the living cannot communicate with the dead.

Why not? “The dead know nothing.”

They have no knowledge to communicate with us.

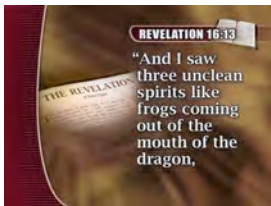
You may be asking—and with some apprehension if you are in communication with spirits—



34

“If the dead are not conscious, who are the ‘spirits’ that do speak to the living?”

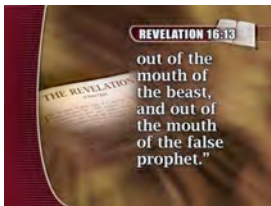
The Bible makes it very clear who they are:



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(Text: Revelation 16:13, 14)

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon [Satan],



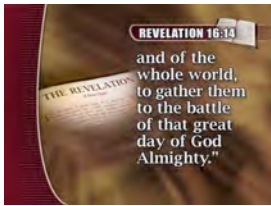
36

out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet.



37

For they are spirits of demons [fallen angels], performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth,



38

and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.”

Revelation 16:13, 14

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39

The Bible further reveals not only who they are but where they came from:

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40

(Text: Revelation 12:7-9)

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,

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41

but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.”

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42

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world;

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43

he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”  
Revelation 12:7-9

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44

They are fallen angels! Friends, beware!

It is the most dangerous thing you could ever do to have anything whatsoever to do with the “spirits.”

Their only purpose, I repeat, their only purpose, is to deceive you and turn you away from Jesus and cause you to lose your eternal salvation.

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45

It should make your hair stand on end, send shivers up and down your spine, and cause you to put distance between yourself and the “spirits.”

If you believe that the dead are alive, you are wide open to be deceived and lost, because you haven’t seen anything yet!

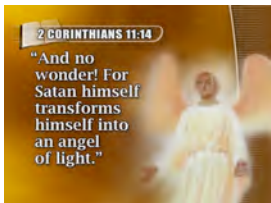
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46

Yes, Satan’s deceptive power is so great that he can impersonate others, even appearing as a good angel!

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47

(Text: 2 Corinthians 11:14)

“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”

2 Corinthians 11:14.

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48

Have you wondered how a person can talk with someone who looks, talks, acts like a person they knew before death? The Bible says it is because Satan (and his angels) are so intimately acquainted with our traits and personalities.

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49

They can impersonate any person who has ever lived. It is absolutely frightening to think that good people can be thus deceived and drawn into Satan’s embrace, thinking all the while that they are enjoying the comfort of a departed loved one!

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50

But this Scripture reveals something even more sinister: Satan himself will seek to impersonate Jesus.

Can you imagine how multitudes will be deceived because they do not know the truth of the second coming of Jesus?

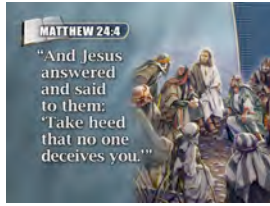
Is it any wonder that Jesus gave such a serious warning about this very thing?

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51

(Text: Matthew 24:4, 5)

“And Jesus answered and said to them: ‘Take heed that no one deceives you.’”



52

“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”

Matthew 24:4,5

So serious is this matter that Jesus repeated the same warning in the same sermon:



53

(Text: Matthew 24:23-25)

“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it.



54

“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive,



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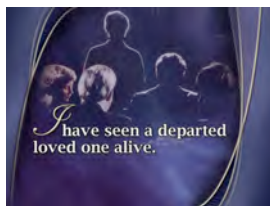
if possible, even the elect.”



56

“See, I have told you beforehand.”

Matthew 24:23-25



57

But someone may be saying-or you may know someone who says, “I have seen a departed loved one alive.”

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58

Someone else may insist, "I have talked to my departed husband."



59

Still another, "I lost my son in a terrorist attack, but I visit with him, talk to him, and he is a great comfort to me."

What did God tell us?

Don't talk to the dead – and that "spirits" would DECEIVE if possible the very elect.

Millions will be deceived.

Why? Because they trust more in their feelings, senses, and experiences than in the Word of God.



60

Why are the "elect" not deceived?

Because they believe Jesus.

They trust the sure Word of God instead of their senses, feelings, and experiences.



61

This is the issue:



62

will we accept God's truth,



63

or will we believe Satan's lie?

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64

Only those who have fortified their minds with the words of the Bible will be able to stand against the overwhelming tide of deception that is already beginning to flood the world. We need to know these things and believe them with a resolute will, and not allow any experience, feeling, or “appearance” dissuade us from the truth.

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65

Perhaps you have wondered about “near-death” experiences, in which people who have been pronounced clinically dead have been revived

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66

and report that they found themselves hovering in the hospital room looking down at their own body—

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67

or that they saw a bright light and Jesus or an angel beckoning them to come. Some even report having seen a departed loved one on the other side of death. Only with the truth of God’s Word can we detect the falsehoods and be safe from deception.

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68

We can make a fateful decision when we base it on our senses, our feelings, our experiences—rather than on the Word of God, the Bible. There are just so many false beliefs that prevail about death around our world.

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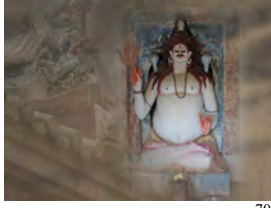
69

Take reincarnation, for example. Millions believe that when a person dies, he is reborn in another form, yet he never knows which. It quite possibly could be as an animal, such as a cow, rat, or snake.

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70

Or it could be as another person, with the possibility of being very rich, or a king, or poor, or a beggar, or blind or deaf, or crippled, or having a painful and disabling disease.

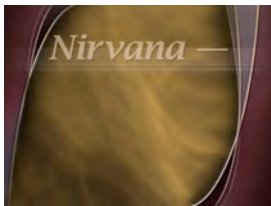


71

Hinduism teaches that there is a “Wheel of Life” that constantly revolves, and that when a person dies, he is reborn—and that there are endless repetitions of this on earth.

Many people are intrigued by this without really knowing the philosophy behind it.

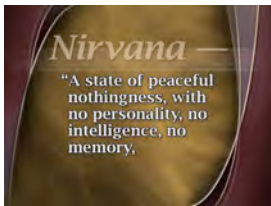
In this belief, there is no control by the individual, no choice, no decision to be made.



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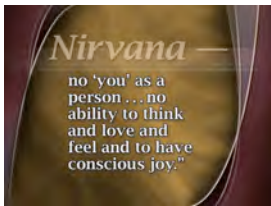
The goal is not conscious life with personality, choice, joy and friendship.

Instead, the person eventually reaches Nirvana—



73

“A state of peaceful nothingness, with no personality, no intelligence, no memory,



74

no ‘you’ as a person, no ability to think and love and feel and to have conscious joy.”



75

The self is absorbed into the universe as a drop of water is absorbed into the ocean, with complete loss of identity.

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76

Buddhism is similar.

However, Buddha taught that you could get off the “Wheel of Life” at the end of this life—that you didn’t have to go through endless cycles of rebirth if you had the right karma.

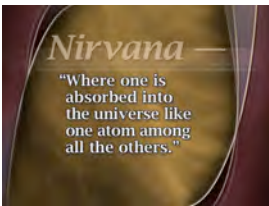
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77

Through the subconscious control of the will, the teaching goes, a person can come to the point in life where there is a complete cessation of desire.

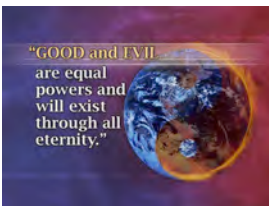
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78

When this state of mind and body is reached, he can go at death directly to Nirvana, where he is absorbed into the universe like one atom among all the others.

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79

There is also, with both these major religions, the belief that good and evil are equal powers and will exist through all eternity.

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80

On the Island of Bali in Indonesia, one can witness the Barong Dance.

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81

The Barong, dressed in a costume that looks like a large boiled egg, confronts six men armed with kris—which are crooked but sharp and deadly daggers.

They are under the influence of some local drug.

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82

The Barong advances toward them, and they back away. He shrieks and turns, and the men run after him, striking the air and trying to cut him down.

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83

The Barong stops and turns to face the men.

They stop. He advances one step, and they retreat one step.

This is repeated, back and forth, time and again, until the six men get whipped up into such a wild state of frenzy they lose control.

It is not uncommon for one or more to throw his kris and hit a bystander by mistake.

At this point, men from the village come up behind the men, wrestle them to the ground and pour water on them as they wretch.

Finally, they shake their heads as though coming out of a trance,

get up and walk off toward their huts, while the Barong walks away in the opposite direction.

What does it mean?

It is a religious festival in which men act out their beliefs.

The Barong represents God, and the six men represent evil.

According to their superstitious belief, there is an eternal struggle between good and evil.

Neither wins—it is always a draw.

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84

I am so thankful for Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, aren't you?

What a wonderful hope He brings!

Evil will not always prevail.

All history is moving toward the time when God will create a new earth for real people without sin, disease, war, food shortages, suffering or death.

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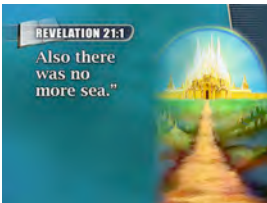


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(Text: Revelation 21:1-4)

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.

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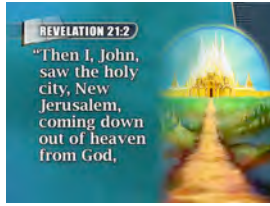
86

Also there was no more sea.”

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87

"Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,



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prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."



89

"And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men,



90

and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.'



91

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying.



92

There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Revelation 21:1-4



Won't you choose Jesus now and be "reborn?"

Not after death, when it will be too late.

Not through endless repetitions of reincarnation in various life forms for millions of years.

But now, today!

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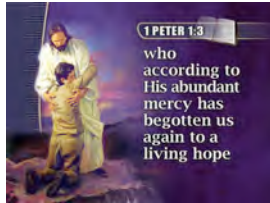
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94

(Text: 1 Peter 1:3, 4)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,



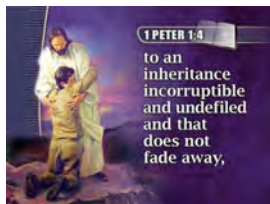
95

who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope



96

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,



97

to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away,



98

reserved in heaven for you,”

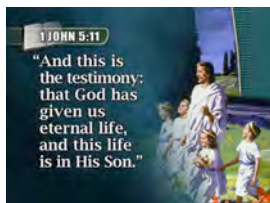
1 Peter 1:3, 4



99

You can have life forever more.

That is the assurance that God wants you to have today.



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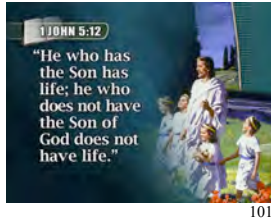
(Text: 1 John 5:11, 12)

“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.



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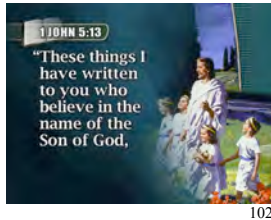
101

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."

1 John 5:11, 12

How do we know? How can we be sure? God's Word makes it crystal clear:

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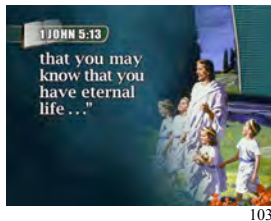


102

(Text: 1 John 5:13)

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God,

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103

that you may know that you have eternal life..."

1 John 5:13

The question that each person must answer is: "Do I have Jesus?"  
You can have Him at this very moment.

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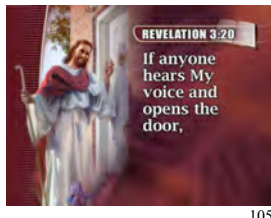


104

(Text: Revelation 3:20)

He says, "Behold, I stand at the door [of your heart] and knock.

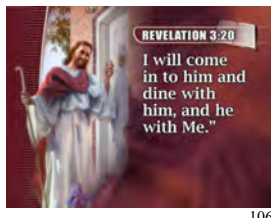
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105

If anyone hears My voice and opens the door,

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106

I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."

Revelation 3:20

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Yes my friends, there's one voice from beyond the grave that is speaking to us. That's the voice of Jesus, the One who died for us but rose from the dead! He's speaking to your heart and mine tonight. He's asking us to trust Him. He's warning us against listening to other voices, voices of deception. And He's asking if we will just open our heart's door and let Him in. Don't you want to hear His voice just now? Don't you want His assurance of eternal life, His assurance of the life He has planned for you? Would you like to kneel with me as we pray tonight? Just open the door of your heart right now, and invite Him in as we pray.

*[Suggested Prayer]*

*“Dear Lord Jesus, tonight we've learned that we can't trust just any voice. We can't trust just anything that's supernatural or spiritual. But tonight we thank you that we can trust your voice speaking to us in Your word. Thank you for impressing us with your truth. Thank you for knocking on our heart's door. Tonight, Lord, we want to open that door and let you in. We want you to be the One who is speaking to us, who is comforting us, and who is guiding us. We want you to be Lord of our life and owner of our hearts. You see each heart bowed before you here tonight. You know each one, each need, each heartache, each desire. Tonight I pray that you will bless each one for the decision they have made for you. Keep them from deception and temptation, Lord. And keep them ever listening to your voice and studying your word, we pray, in Jesus' name, Amen.”*

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