

Can You Take It With You?

Have you ever seen a hearse pulling a U-Haul? Egyptian kings (like King Tut [Tutankhamun]) were often buried with riches, artwork, furniture, household goods, equipment, and even chariots to be used in the “afterlife.” The following is a brief lesson on what things we actually take with us when we die.

What we believe about the basic questions of life is what we call our “world-view.”

- Where did we come from?
- What is the meaning of life?
- Where are we going?
- What is right and wrong?

The Bible teaches that we are made up of **a spirit** (the New Testament Greek word is “pneuma,” for life-giving breath), **a soul** (“psuche,” for the essence of who we are apart from the body), and **a body** (“soma” or “sarx,” for the flesh of living creatures). All three are mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

The body is very important

However, many of us place so much emphasis on the body that it becomes an “idol.” Look up the following passages in the Bible and describe what each one teaches about the body:

- 1) God created man in His image (Genesis 1:27). God formed the first man from the dust of the ground (his body), and then breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living being (Genesis 2:7). Note that he was not alive until God breathed life into the man.
- 2) The body was immortal and perfect at first. In Genesis 3:6-23, the man and woman sinned against God, and the consequence was death and the return to the dust of the earth.
- 3) This caused “spiritual” death, and a separation from God (Ephesians 2:1-3). But, in God’s mercy, He sent His Son Jesus to die in our place to pay for our sin and restore our relationship with Him to give us life (Ephesians 2:4-10) for those who believe in Jesus and receive Him as our Lord and Savior (Romans 3:21-26; 5:8-11; 6:23; 10:9-10).
- 4) The body (flesh) is wasting away, but our “inner man” (soul and conscience) is being renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16 / NASB). The Bible here does not use the actual word for soul, but uses the word for “inner man” (“eso”) that alludes to the soul; the part of us that is not flesh.
- 5) Though our body is mortal, it is a temple of the Holy Spirit for believers in Jesus Christ and should be well taken care of (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

➤ So, the Bible teaches that our mortal body will die, and our mortal flesh cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15:50). The good news is that we who have given our lives to Jesus will be changed to immortal people (1 Corinthians 15:51-53) and death will be “swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 54-55; Isaiah 25:8).

➤ The soul will endure forever. As followers of Jesus Christ, we will be with Him for all eternity. Those who reject Christ will get their wish forever without Him (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). It is love for Jesus that saves our souls (1 Peter 1:8-9).

What about the body? So, if we give our life to Jesus, our soul is saved. Do we remain as a spirit and soul without a body? What do the following passages teach us?

- 1 Corinthians 15:45-55
- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17
- 2 Corinthians 5:1-5
- Philippians 3:20-21

We may not be able to take material things with us to heaven, but what about earning rewards?

- 1 Corinthians 3:8-15
- Colossians 3:23-24
- Mark 9:41
- 2 Corinthians 5:10
- Ephesians 6:7-8
- Revelation 22:12

Personal questions:

- 1) How could you better live out 1 Timothy 6:6-10?
- 2) Can you identify things in your life that may qualify as idols; people or things we place above God looking for that which only He can provide (love, joy, peace, hope, meaning, purpose or worth).
- 3) What steps can you, and will you take to better care for your body as a temple of the Holy Spirit?
- 4) How might you better earn eternal rewards, and forsake the short term gratifications of the flesh?