

# Living in the Kingdom

## Lesson 4: The Last Things Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell



CCC 1013

Mt 7:13-14, 22:1-14

CCC 55, 1 Tim 2:3

Ecc 12:1,7, Gen 2:17, Rom 6:23  
CCC 997, 1006-09

CCC 1013

CCC 1010-12  
Phil 1:21-23

CCC 1014

CCC 1021-22  
Heb 9:27

CCC 1023-29  
Rev 22:5

CCC 1030-32  
1 Cor 3:12-15

Rev 21:27  
1 Pet 4:1, Gal 4:19

CCC 1472

1. Death is the end of man's earthly pilgrimage, of the time of grace and mercy which God offers him to work out his earthly life in keeping with the divine plan, and to decide his ultimate destiny.
2. Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and few find it. "Many are called, but few are chosen."
3. God wills all to be saved, and so he has made it possible. But we must look for the means of salvation: where we spend eternity is our choice.
4. Death is the separation of body and soul, and the end of earthly life. It is a consequence of sin, contrary to God's plan. But Christ has transformed the curse of death into a blessing.
5. Death is the irreversible entrance into everlasting life. We shall not return to other earthly lives. There is no reincarnation after death.
6. Christian death has a positive meaning. Through baptism, the Christian has already "died with Christ." If we die in Christ's grace, physical death completes our incorporation into his resurrection. We must prepare ourselves for death.
7. The particular judgment: Death is the end of the time open to accept or reject divine grace. Each will be rewarded immediately after death in accordance with his works of faith. Christ is the measuring rod.
8. **Heaven:** The ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme definitive happiness, the communion of life and love with the Trinity (the "beatific vision"), with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all the blessed.
9. The blessed retain their true identity; not dissolved into "nirvana." They will reign with Christ forever.
10. Images of heaven: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise.
11. **Purgatory:** All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified must undergo final purification after death, to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.
12. Purgatory is not a "second chance" after death. Only the "saved" can go there.
13. "Nothing unclean will enter heaven." We are not only *considered* righteous (snow-covered dunghill), but must be *made* righteous. We are purified through suffering, and must labor until Christ is fully formed in us.
14. Sin has a double consequence:
  - a. Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and makes us incapable of eternal life (eternal punishment).
  - b. Every sin entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which

<p>CCC 1473, 2 Sam 12:13-14</p> <p>CCC 1031-39 CCC 1460,71,78 CCC 2447</p> <p>Ps 6:4-5, 16:10, 18:5, 55:15</p> <p>Acts 2:27</p> <p>Mk 9:44, Rev 20:14</p> <p>Lk 16:19-31</p> <p>1 Pet 3:19, Eph 4:9</p> <p>CCC 1033-37 Isa 66:27, Mt 5:29, Mt 10:28, Mt 13:42, Mt 25:41</p> <p>CCC 997-98 Dan 12:2</p>	<p>must be purified either on earth or after death in purgatory through "<u>temporal punishment</u>".</p> <p>15. The forgiveness of sin entails the remission of the eternal punishment, but temporal punishment remains. E.g. David was forgiven after he sinned, but his child died as punishment.</p> <p>16. The role of the Church and power of the keys is crucial in God's provision of our "sin problem." How to take care of unhealthy attachments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purgatory, the "final purification of elect";</li> <li>Prayer for the dead;</li> <li>Works of mercy: "charity covers a multitude of sins";</li> <li>Works of penance, fasting, prayer, almsgiving;</li> <li>Indulgences; sacrifice of the Mass;</li> </ol> <p>17. Is purgatory in the Bible?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Old Testament: <i>Sheol</i> is the abode of the dead</li> <li>In the New Testament: <i>Sheol</i> = <i>Hades</i></li> <li><i>Sheol</i> is not hell (<i>gehenna</i>). At the end of times: "<i>death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire.</i>"</li> <li>The rich man and Lazarus: The rich man in "Hades" talks with Abraham and has mercy on his brothers;</li> <li>Christ "went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient."</li> </ol> <p>18. <b>Hell:</b> The definitive self-exclusion from God and from the blessed. To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God's love means remaining separated from him for ever by our own free choice.</p> <p>19. The existence of hell is a call to responsibility and a call to conversion. God predestines no one to go to hell; for this, a willful turning away from God (mortal sin) is necessary, and persistence in it until the end.</p> <p>20. The resurrection of the body: At the end of the world, God will grant incorruptible life to our bodies by reuniting them with our souls. All the dead will rise, "those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment."</p> <p>21. To live the life of heaven, we need extra powers in our soul: the Supernatural Life of God (grace), which we receive in the Church's liturgy and sacraments.</p>
--	---

### Questions for Discussion

- Do you believe that you will have an eternal judgment? Do you think anyone will go to hell?
- If God wants all of us to be saved and offers each of us his mercy if we repent and accept it before death, what does this mean for our relationship with God and our priorities?
- If we are judged by the good we do or fail to do, what should we do while here on earth?