

How does God define death?

Is death merely the cessation of life? While this is true of all living organisms, is there something different about human beings?

1. The book of Genesis introduces the concept of death with the creation of man and the judgment of Adam's first sin. Carefully observe how God defines death here.

Then the LORD GOD formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Gen 2:7, NASB)

The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may freely eat; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it you will certainly die." (Gen 2:16-17, NASB)

By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return. (Gen 3:19, NASB)

2. Through various writers of God's word, God speaks of another type of death, which is used in the context of the living. What do you see?

Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short that it cannot save; nor is His ear so dull that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear. (Isa 59:1-2, NASB)

So you too, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Rom 6:11, NASB)

3. There is a third type of death that God speaks of, which applies to the dead. What do you observe?

These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power... (2 Thes 1:9, NASB)

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev 20:14-15, NASB)

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Teacher Notes

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Ask the student: how does God define physical death? Circle any words that you think important that may help you.

Physical death is when a person's body dies and is separated from his spirit (soul).

Ask the student: was death created by God?

God did not intend death to be a part of His Creation. Physical death is the consequence of sin in God's court of law.

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Ask the student: what is being implied in these two verses? What sort of death do you perceive?

Spiritual death is the personal separation of a **living** person's spirit from God.

Ask the student: what is the cause of this spiritual death?

Because sin cannot come in the presence of God, a person's spirit, who is unsaved, cannot have a relationship with God.

Ask the student: how do you come alive and have a relationship with God?

If you come to faith in God's Son Jesus Christ, then the Holy Spirit will indwell in you and restore your relationship with God. The separation is permanently removed.

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Ask the student: what is the second death?

Second death is the eternal separation of a person from God. It is the final confirmation of a person's spiritual death while they were alive.

Ask the student: how is this described? Circle the words / phrases that help you visualize this second death and its implications.

Allow time for a review and discussion of these three types of death that God speaks of. Help the student understand the remedy and be prepared to lead any to Christ.