

Five Minutes After Death (If LOST)

I Samuel 20:3

1. Take God's Word would you please and turn to the Old Testament text. I want you to turn please to First Samuel, chapter twenty. And we're going to look but at a portion of verse three. First Samuel Chapter twenty and the last part of verse three.
2. Now, I want you to take your pen or your pencil, and as I read that, if you have your own Bible, I would suggest that you underline it and personalize it. It says this, "There is but a step between me and death."
 - a. I wonder if you realize that as true. Death is only a faint heartbeat away, only a heartbeat, only a step. Put your hand up there, do you feel that little heartbeat? That's all there is between you and death, only a step.
3. At Carbon Hill, where I once preached. An older couple, John and Vera Elliott, left church on Sunday night for their home on Nubbin Ridge, on the southside of US 78. Though they had shaken hands with all their friends and left church for home hundreds of times, they never made back to their home that night – at least to their home on Nubbin Ridge. For as they crossed US 78 they were hit by a truck. I doubt they even knew what hit them. I preached their funeral toward the middle of the week.. They never knew that Sunday night, that was the last church service they would ever attend.
 - a. There is but a step between me and death. Somebody said that every preacher ought to preach as a dying man would preach to dying men.
 - b. This may be the last sermon I will ever preach. It may be the last one you will ever hear on this earth. I don't mean to get over-dramatic. But I just want us to realize that there is but a step between me and death.
 - c. The most amazing time that you will spend, I believe, will be the first five minutes after you die.

POEM

"Loved ones will weep o'er my silent face.
Dear ones will clasp me in sad embrace.
Shadows and darkness will fill the place,
Five minutes after I die.

Faces that sorrow, I will not see.
Voices that murmur will not reach me.
But where, oh where will my spirit be,
Five minutes after I die.

Naught to repair the good I lack.

Fixed to the goal of my chosen track.
No room to repent. No turning back,
Five minutes after I die.

Mated forever with my chosen throng.
Long is eternity, oh so long.
Then woe is me if my soul be wrong,
Five minutes after I die."

4. What will happen five minutes after you die? Well my dear friend, If you die outside the Lord Jesus Christ, very soon after you die, you will be in torment.
 - a. You say, "I don't believe in hell." You will five minutes after you die. You will.
 - b. I don't enjoy preaching about hell, I have to make myself preach on hell. I don't want to preach on hell. I don't like preaching on the subject of hell. But to preach this Bible, which I believe, and to be fair to those who hear me, I must preach on the subject of hell.
5. We've come to the day and the age in which "hell" has become a by-word. It's slipped more and more frequently into books, movies, and just ordinary conversation. The world today uses the word hell in a careless flippant way.
 - a. If you really wanted to criticize a preacher and make him seem small, narrow, bigoted, uneducated, and a fundamentalist – what is he called? A hell-fire preacher. Isn't that right? He's one of those hell-fire preachers.
6. Who do you think is behind the idea of belittling the idea of hell? I think it is the devil himself. Because the devil knows that people who do not believe in hell, of course, are not going to seek a Savior.
 - a. So the Bible says in 2nd Corinthians 4:4 "The god of this age hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."
 - b. My friend, I must tell you with all of the clarity that I can muster, there is a hell. And it makes no difference if all of the scholars, and all of the so-called theologians, and scientists, and artists, and statesmen, and politicians, and musicians and all of the teachers on this earth were to say there is no hell, that would not change the Word of God.
7. The Bible says in 1st Peter 1:21 "The word of the Lord endureth forever." People have always scoffed when the Word of God speaks about judgement. Do you know why? The Bible says, "evil men understand not judgement." [Prov. 28:5]
 - a. I believe that if the Supreme Court of the United States of America could vote on it, they would outlaw hell as cruel and unusual punishment.
 - b. Men scoffed at Noah when God said He would destroy the world with a flood. The Bible tells us in Genesis 7:22 "That all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, and all that was in the dry land died." And all of their mockery and their protestations did not keep the flood from coming.

- c. Men scoffed at Lot, when God had warned Lot that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. But the Bible clearly and plainly teaches in Genesis 19:24-25, "Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from heaven." And the scoffing did not keep the brimstone and the fire from falling.
 - d. Men scoffed at the prophet Daniel, when Daniel warned that the Medes and the Persians were coming to overcome Babylon. But the Bible tells us in Daniel 5:30, "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." You see my dear friend, scoffing and mocking and ridiculing does not do away with the idea of hell.
8. I've read that one time that some soldiers on the battlefield asked their chaplain, "Chaplain, do you believe in hell?" He said, "I certainly do, but why did you ask?" They said, "It's very simple with us." They said, "If there is a hell, and you don't believe in it, we certainly don't want you for a chaplain, and if there is no hell, we don't need any chaplain."
- a. My dear friend, there is a hell.
9. Now, what is hell going to be like? Well, I want to take the word of God and tell you from the Word of God what the Bible says that hell will be like.
- a. Now, when I read these scriptures, you're going to say to me, "Preacher, are these scriptures literal or are they figurative." Well, dear friend, rather than arguing about whether we're going to take them literally or figuratively, may I suggest that you take them seriously, seriously.
 - b. What ever it is that God is saying, I'm going to preach it just like God wrote it. And one day when I meet the Lord, I'd much rather Him say "Preacher, you took My Word too literally." Than to have Him say, "Preacher, you tried to explained away My word when you had no right to do so." So I'm just going to preach it, exactly as I find it written in the word of God.
10. What is this place called hell? What's it going to be like?
- a. May I tell you first of all, it's going to be a place of vile associations. You think of the people who the Bible says are going to be in hell.
 - b. For example, take your Bible and turn to Revelation 21:8. And here God gives a roll call of the damned, those people who are going to be in hell. And I want to read this verse because there are many people who joke and laugh and they say, "Well, heaven for climate, but hell for company." That's what Mark Twain used to say, and everybody got a laugh out of it.
 - c. Well, who is going to be the company in hell. The Bible says "but the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murders and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
 - d. This is some of those the Bible will be in hell. You say, "Well, I'm not as bad as those people." Well, dear friend, if you're not a believer, you head the list.

- i. Number one on the list is the fearful and the unbelieving. There is no greater sin against the God of heaven than to aim the gun of unbelief at Christ on the cross and pull the trigger.
 - ii. The one that does not believe God has made Him a liar.
 - iii. There is no greater sin than to fail to love God. For the First and great Commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy being."
 - (1) Don't tell me you're not a bad sinner if you don't love God and trust Him and believe in Him. My dear friend, if you refuse the Lord Jesus Christ, you'll spend eternity in hell with all of these.
 - e. And there are those who talk about hypocrites. They say "I don't want to be a member of the church because there are so many hypocrites."
 - i. Well dear friend, I want to tell you, you'll spend all eternity with every hypocrite that ever lived if you refuse the Lord Jesus Christ.
11. Who will be there? Well, Satan will be there. Satan is not in hell yet, but Satan will be in hell. He's going to be cast into hell. For Jesus said that hell was prepared for the devil and his angels [Matt. 25:41].
- a. Revelation 20:10 says, "And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." Satan is not in hell yet. He's going to hell.
 - b. And when he goes, he's going to get a one way ticket. And when he arrives, he's not going to be the lord of hell running around with a pitchfork, making people shovel coal. You don't get that from the Word of God. He's not the lord of hell. Jesus Christ is the Lord of heaven, earth and hell beneath. He is Lord of lords and King of kings.
12. Who else will be there? Every wicked demon spirit will be there. 2 Peter 2:4 says, "for God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them in chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgement."
- a. The Fallen and rebellious angels that have become demon spirits will inhabit hell. It was not prepared for you. God doesn't want you to go there. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. But if you join the devil's crew, you'll end up there. Ungodly people are going to be there, the fearful and the unbelieving.
13. But not only my dear friend, is hell going to be a place of vile associations. Contrary wise therefore, hell will be a place of separation from all of the saints of all of the ages. The Bible teaches that those who go to heaven are saved and those who go to hell are lost. So those who are saved are the ones that go to heaven.
- a. So the Bible teaches in Luke 13:28, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all of the prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."
 - b. What does this mean? That God is going to take the godly to heaven, and you'll never see them again.

- c. Your godly mother who may have prayed for you, she'll go to heaven and you'll go to hell. You say, "could my mother be happy in heaven if I'm in hell?"
 - i. Absolutely, absolutely.
 - ii. She will be in total bliss in heaven while you're in hell. She will be transformed into the perfect likeness of her Lord. Her countenance will be burning with holiness and righteousness, and it will only seem right to her, that you, who spurned the Savior should go to hell.
 - iii. Your little children who have prayed for you will say it is natural and it is right that you, who turned from God and refused the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ, should go to hell. They will be in heaven. But if you have rejected the Lord, you will be cast out from Him.

What is hell going to be like? It's a place of vile associations.

What is hell going to be like? It is a place of the separation of all that is right and good and beautiful.

- 14. What will hell be like? Hell is going to be a place my friend, of eternal darkness. Listen to these scriptures.
 - a. 2 Peter 2:4. The Bible says, "For God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell," and now listen to this, "to be delivered into chains of darkness." What a poignant phrase. Chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgement.
- 15. The book of Jude [v. 13] talks about the false teacher who will go to hell. And it says of him, "He's like a raging wave of the sea, foaming out his own shame. Wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." The blackness of darkness forever.
 - a. Again in Matthew 8:12, Jesus speaks of those who are going to hell. And He says "they shall be cast into outer darkness," outer darkness, "and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
 - b. Some of you have gone to Mammoth Cave in KY, or to Carlsbad Cavern, and gone down to those inner deep caverns in the very belly of the earth, and they extinguish all of the flashlights, and they say, if you have an illuminous watch, just put your hand over the face of that watch.
 - i. There's not a light burning. The darkness is so dark, so black, that it seems like you can taste it, touch it feel it, hold it in your hand.
 - ii. That kind of darkness, outer darkness, forever and ever and ever. Can you picture a place where never again will the rays of the sun reach. Never again will you see the twinkle of the stars. Never again the luster of the moon.
 - c. No matter how dark it gets, we always hope for the morning. A preacher and his family were going home to one of their parents for Thanksgiving holidays when they had a tragic automobile wreck. His wife and children were killed. His broken and crushed body was in the hospital in Mississippi.

- i. And he was wondering "will I ever see the morning." He said to his friends, "I cannot explain that night." He said, "All through the night, I wondered will the sun ever come up?" He said, "I just felt if the sun would come up, then maybe I could endure it." He said, "After a million eternities, the sun came up that morning."
 - ii. Weeping may endure for a season, but joy cometh in the morning [Ps 30:5]. But my dear friend, there's never a morning, never a morning for those who are in hell.
 - d. A preacher by the name Robert Sumner, told a story of a young man about fourteen or fifteen years of age who lived in the community where he lived. And he was raised by a wicked and an ungodly father. And this boy, was at the point of death, he was going to die, they didn't know anything about God. They didn't know anything about the Bible. And this boy did not know that the soul left the body at death and went either to hell or to heaven. He was afraid of the grave and afraid of the darkness, and afraid of being put under the dirt. And he made his poor ignorant daddy promise him. He said, "Daddy, you promise me, promise me that you'll put a window on my grave so the sun can come down and touch my body." And that father fashioned a window that went right down to the casket so the sun, when it passed over that grave would shine upon that casket. But my dear friend, when you die without Jesus Christ, you will go to a place where no friend or foe can fashion a window that will let in any light. Hell is a place of outer darkness.
16. I'll tell you what else it is. My dear friend, hell is a place of eternal separation from God. Spiritual death means separation. Jesus on the cross took your separation and He was separated from God the Father.
- a. In Mark 15:34 the Bible says that "the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" Jesus cried. "Which being interpreted is, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus Christ took your sin, my sin to Calvary. He became sin for us, him who knew no sin. God hath made to be sin for us. And when he took our sins upon him, God, the Father turned His back upon God the Son.
 - b. I can't understand how could God forsake God, but at that moment, Jesus walked the burning corridors of the damned. Jesus baptized his soul in hell, and all of the sins of the world were distilled upon Jesus. All of the eternities were compressed upon Jesus. And Jesus being infinite, suffered in a finite period of time, which ye being finite would suffer in an infinite period of time. And there Jesus, God the Son was separated from God the Father.
 - c. And my dear friend, if you go to hell, you will be separated eternally from God the Father, and from God the Son, and from God the Holy Spirit.
17. Listen to 2nd Thessalonians 1:7 and following. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us,

rest with us. When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be separated with an everlasting separation." Death my dear friend, is not annihilation. When you die, you don't cease to exist, but it is eternal separation.

18. What else is hell? Hell is a place of memory. When you die, you take your memory with you. There, Jesus told in Luke 16 about a man who died and he said in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torment. He asked for a drop of water to cool his tongue.
 - a. And Luke 16:15, our Lord said, "remember, remember, remember." You carry your memory with you to hell. Do you know what you'll remember in hell? You'll remember services like this one. You'll remember times when a preacher stood here with his Bible. You'll remember the pleading in his voice. You will probably remember some invitation songs when you held tightly to the back of the pew to keep from responding.
19. Daniel 12:2, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake. Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."
 - a. Many in America every year commit suicide. Many of them are haunted by the ghost of memory, trying to escape memories. But my friend, you'll carry your memory with you to hell. And you listen to me, suicide never solves anything, nothing, it only makes matters worse, whatever they may be. Because there are memories in hell.
20. Also my friend, hell is a place of hopelessness, hopelessness. It is a place of despair. Listen to this scripture. Revelation 14:10 and following. Our Lord is speaking of those who will go to hell, and He says, and the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.
 - a. And He," listen to this, I would that every Jehovah's witness who does not believe in eternal punishment would hear this, "And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Holy Angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. And they have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image and whosoever receiveth the mark of the name."
 - b. Friends, I believe that hopeless is perhaps the second saddest word in the English language, after the word "LOST".. When someone is sick, we always hope they can get well.
21. I've been to the bedside of people who were supposedly dying, I never tell them you're going to die, because I don't know. You may be here tonight with malignancy in your body, and some greedy malady that's eating away at you, and the doctor may be saying to you, prepare to die, you can't live. But my dear friend, he doesn't know everything.
 - a. Thank God for physicians, but their art is limited. But God says I am the Lord thy

God who healeth all thy diseases. [Ps. 103:3] I believe that God heals our diseases by giving us talented physicians. But sometime, even Physicians may not know all the ways that God works providentially.

22. Your family relationships can be in shambles, but it is not necessarily hopeless. But my dear friend when you go to hell, it is hopeless. There's no way out, no way. The Bible says in Proverbs 11:7, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectations shall perish and the hope of unjust men perisheth." There is no hope.
23. Seventh– hell is a place of burning. I left this point last on purpose, because when people talk about hell so many times, they laugh at the idea, mock and scoff at the idea of hell being a place of burning.
 - a. My dear friend, may I tell you, that Jesus Christ, who was infinite in love had more to say about hell fire than any other preacher or prophet in the word of God. And to call a man is a hell fire preacher who preached about hell is to call Jesus one.
 - b. Listen to these words from the lips of infinite love, the Lord Jesus, Matthew 25:41 "Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Listen to what the Lord Jesus said in Mark 9:43, "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire than never shall be quenched."
 - c. Over seventy passages in the New Testament deal with hell and hell fire. The majority of them were uttered by our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - d. You say, Well God must be cruel. No, God is not cruel. God doesn't want you to go to hell. "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." [2 Pet 3:9].
24. If you are here LOST today God wants me to warn you. God would say to you, "Don't go to hell."
 - a. The prayers of this church and the prayer of your mother and your father and your brother and your sister, and your friends and your godly neighbors are, "Don't go to hell."
25. Our Father has raised up the blood stained cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and said, " If you go to hell, you'll have to crawl over the bruised, bleeding, broken body to go to hell." I don't want you to go to hell. The Lord is not willing that any should perish.
 - a. So my friend, if you die tonight outside of Christ, it is with a broken heart that I say according to God's Word, you will be go to hell.
26. But now, suppose you're a saved child of God. Suppose tonight as a child of God, with only a step between you and death, you close your eyes in this world. What's going to happen?
 - a. Friends, You'll be going into the presence of the Lord Jesus to be with Him, according to Paul and the New Testament. heaven. You say, "That's simplistic," Well, it's

- glorious. It's wonderful!
 - b. Heaven is not a state of mind, my friend, heaven is a real place. More real than Rogersville, Alabama, more real than London, Tokyo, or Beijing is the place called heaven. Heaven is so real, it is a place on God's map. Jesus Christ said, John chapter fourteen, "I go and prepare a place for you." I'm one of those who believe in such a literal heaven, I believe that right now, it has a geographic location. Jesus Christ is there in a resurrected body. It is a real place.
27. There are some people who erroneously teach that the soul sleeps with the body until the resurrection. Oh, no. It is only the body that sleeps, not the soul. There is no such thing as soul sleep. "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." Listen, 2 Corinthians 5:6 and following. The Apostle Paul says, "Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."
- a. For we walk by faith not by sight, not a one of us has literally seen Jesus. But he says, "We are confident I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. So when a Christian dies, he just moves out of his body, right into the presence of the Lord.