

## [Finding Hope in Crisis: Consciousness After Death](#)



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When I finally started studying God's Word, and the Holy Spirit began to lead me into a study of Bible prophecy, I started making discoveries about the future that ministered great hope to my spirit. I had just discovered God's marvelous promises for the future that are designed to give us hope in the present.

### **The Fallacy of Soul Sleep**

The first discovery I made concerned "soul sleep." I found out it is an unbiblical concept. It is true that when we die, our bodies "sleep" metaphorically, but the spirits of the dead never lose their consciousness.

Jesus clearly taught this in His story about the rich man and Lazarus ([Luke 16:19-31](#)). When they died, their spirits went to Hades. The rich man's spirit went to a compartment in Hades called "*Torments*." The spirit of Lazarus went to a compartment named "*Abraham's bosom*." On the Cross, Jesus referred to Abraham's bosom as "*Paradise*" ([Luke 23:43](#)). The two compartments were separated by a "*great chasm*" which could not be crossed.

In Jesus' story both men are pictured as fully conscious. They even carry on a conversation with each other. Their souls are not asleep.

Further evidence of consciousness after death can be found in Revelation 7. John has been taken up to Heaven and is being given a tour of the throne room of God. He sees "*a great multitude... from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues*," standing before the throne of God "*clothed in white robes*" and waving palm branches in worship ([Revelation 7:9](#)). They are fully conscious as they sing, "*Salvation to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb*" ([Revelation 7:10](#)).

John wants to know the identity of these people. He is told that they are martyrs for Christ coming out of the "*great tribulation*" ([Revelation 7:14](#)).

Here are two scenes in Scripture of people after death who are fully conscious.

## Paul's Affirmations

The Apostle Paul affirmed consciousness after death. In [2 Corinthians 5:8](#) he wrote that he would prefer to be *"absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."* He repeated this sentiment in his Philippian letter where he wrote, *"to live is Christ, and to die is gain"* ([Philippians 1:21](#)). He elaborated on the meaning of this statement by adding that his desire was *"to depart and be with Christ"* ([Philippians 1:23](#)). Paul had no concept of lying comatose in a grave for eons of time. Upon death, he expected to be with the Lord immediately.