



## CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY

### *One Sheet*

*Conditional Immortality* (or *conditionalism*) is the understanding that God will ultimately fully give over to godlessness those who do not give themselves to him (through Christ). The giving over to godlessness leaves the person unable to maintain his or her own existence.

#### **Conditionalism's Foundational Principles:**

**#1: Definition of Life:** Life, by definition, means relationship with God. Genesis 2 presents God forming from the ground (physical essence) the body of the *adam* before breathing into that person the breath of *life*, whereby that human became a *living* being. In the upper room as Jesus and his disciples ate the last Passover before his death, Jesus told them that he was going to God. Thomas, not understanding, asked for clarity. Jesus answered, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). In that statement, Jesus explained that being with God was life. And everlasting life, Jesus had said earlier, was based on God's love (John 3:16).

**#2: Definition of Death:** Death, by definition, means separation from God. From the picture of exile from the Garden when Adam and Eve sinned, through constant reminders, such as Isaiah 59:2 telling us that iniquities have built barriers between people and God, to Paul's proclamation that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, and finally to the ultimate judgment of Revelation 20, in which sin of people who will not have relationship with God separates them forever from him, God reveals his warning from a heart of love and mercy that death will ultimately be complete separation from his truth, goodness, and beauty found only in love embrace with God.

**#3: Current Age of Life and Death:** After the flood, God promised ultimate destruction would not occur until his restoration plan was complete. God, not willing that any should perish, so coordinates events of this age to continue sustaining life—even for the rejecters—in order to give opportunity for relational acceptance of everyone who will come to him. A time will come when no one else will come. At that time, final judgment takes place—God gives those who reject his relationship over to their own wills and no longer sustains them. That point for the individual is ultimate death—the everlasting absence of God from that individual.

**#4: The Second Death:** Ultimate death (that of the individual soul, which is beyond the mere physical death of earthly existence) occurs as the final judgment for rejection of relationship with God. At that point, without God's life-sustaining influence, the human soul cannot continue—cannot exist. There can be no conscious everlasting torment to a non-existent soul. Revelation 20:14 tells us, "Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire." Revelation 21:4 tells us, "Death will no longer exist." If death (separation from God) ends, it means there is nothing left that is separated from God. Thus, the rebellious souls can be no more.

**#5: Depictions of State of Ultimate Rejectors:** The Bible provides several images of death—separation from God (e.g., darkness, fire, weeping and gnashing of teeth, destruction, perishing). However, in all those images, the Bible never states even a single time that humans will be tortured or tormented forever. The penalty for sin (death—separation) can never be overcome, but conscious, tormented existence is not part of the picture.

**#6: One Difficult Verse—Rev 20:10:** We read, "The Devil . . . was thrown into the lake of fire . . . to be *tormented day and night forever and ever*." The Greek of this statement can be understood, "The Devil . . . was thrown into the lake of fire . . . to test the worth (good or bad) of his deeds performed for age upon age." Just as with any refining fire, the lake of fire burns off the bad, destroying Satan.

Since the Devil's destruction (not everlasting torment) is spoken of in Hebrews 2:14, we see his progression from defeat at the cross to final and ultimate destruction in the final judgment.