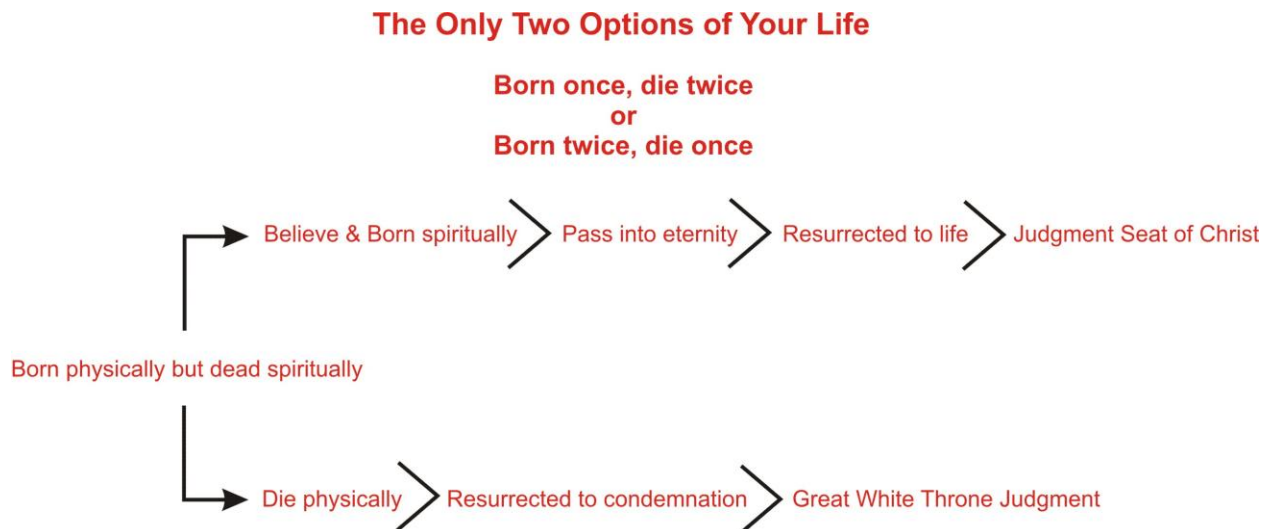


## Resurrection 2

### The Only Two Options of Your Life

#### Hebrews 9:27



We all know what an option is, right? It's a choice, but it's more than a choice. It's a choice that affects our future. In many ways it's like standing at the beginning of several different paths. We choose which one to travel and reject the rest. Our life in the future will be what it will be because of the option we choose.

For example, when you apply for health insurance, you're given a sheet with several columns. Each column is titled Option A/B/C. And in each column you read different amounts of deductibles and co-pay.

In Option A you pay \$25 to see the doctor. B it's \$35. C it's \$50. Each option shows how much you will pay for surgeries and prescriptions and all the details of your healthcare. The option you choose determines the future path of your finances when it comes to healthcare.

Or, if you follow professional sports, you know that players sign contracts. They are given different options by different teams. So many years for so much money to play for a team. They either choose the option or reject it. Their choice determines their future career.

Life is filled with options – choices we make that determine our future. But did you know that for life itself there are options? Only two. They are given to us by God Himself. And each of us WILL choose one or the other.

Here's what they are. The only two options of your life.

You will choose to either be born once and die twice. Or you will choose to be born twice and die once.

Now, all of us have been born once, right? If you think you got here any other way, we need to talk, OK? We've all been born once, and now each of us is faced with choosing one of these two options.

The choice we make determines our future – forever. Let's take a close look at each. We'll look at a lot of scripture today, so have your pens ready.

Last week as we answered the question “what happens when we die?” we started by reading this verse.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

It clearly tells us that for each of us, it is established – it’s a fact, a reality – that we will die once and after we die, we will be judged. Here we are: born once. And now each of **MUST** die once. But what exactly does that mean? Let’s take a look.

The birth each of us has experienced was a physical birth, right? But, even though we were born physically into a physical life, we were born spiritually dead. Turn to Ephesians 2:1. Paul is writing to the church in the city of Ephesus, baptized believers like us here at Mosaic. And he’s writing to them about what God has done for us through Christ. He says:

Ephesians 2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

So, we were dead – spiritually dead – in our trespasses and sins. Why? Well, we need to go back to the Garden of Eden to see why.

When God gave everything in the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve He told them they could enjoy **ALL** of it, with only one exception: they couldn’t eat the fruit that grew on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If they did, there would be terrible consequences. God told them:

Genesis 2:17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

Well, you know the story. They ate the fruit. And the instant they ate the fruit, they died. They didn’t die physically; they died spiritually.

Death means separation. When we die our spirit separates from our body. When they ate the forbidden fruit, they immediately became separated from God spiritually. They immediately died spiritually. Dead in their trespass and sin. And the spiritual death they experienced has been passed on to every one of their descendants.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned —

All of us are born physically, already dead spiritually. This is why the Bible talks so much about God making us alive when we trust Christ. Just like Jesus instantly gave physically dead Lazarus physical life, God gives spiritually dead us spiritual life when we trust Christ. Ephesians 2:5 says,

Ephesians 2:5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Jesus used another analogy to help us understand this option. When he was talking to Nicodemus about salvation Jesus said that unless a person is born again he can’t see the kingdom of God, he can’t enter the kingdom of God; he **MUST** be born again.

John 3:7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

So, here we are. Born physically. Dead spiritually. We need spiritual life and only God can give it to us. And He does when we trust Christ. Later in chapter 3:15-18, Jesus equates being born again to believing in Him.

When we trust in Christ we’re born a second time. We’re now born twice and die only once. Think about it. We’ve already experienced the only death we’ll experience! And it’s spiritual death.

Do you remember what Jesus said in John 8:51?

John 8:51 Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.

Remember the context of what He says here. "Keeping his word" means believing He's the Savior. And listen to what He says! Those who believe in Christ will never see death.

In other words when the time comes for our physical death, we won't see it. The instant our eyes close in physical death is the same instant our eyes open in eternity. Isn't that awesome!

For Christians it's a blink of the eye. It closes in this world and instantly opens in God's presence. Christians are born twice and die only once.

But what about those who don't believe? They're born physically. They're dead spiritually. They never trust Christ so when they die physically their future is the second option: they will experience a second death.

When they die physically they open THEIR eyes in hell, in a state of eternal separation from God that can never be changed. And ultimately their spiritual death will be sealed forever. Listen to Revelation 20:14 as it describes the future. The world and time as we know it are gone. Eternity is about to begin. Look at what will happen.

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Those are some sobering verses, aren't they? We'll look at the Great White Throne in just a minute. Remember, Hebrews 9:27 that two things are established for every one of us: death and judgment.

But these last two verses tell us that, as God's plan enters into eternity, those people who never believed, whose names are not found written in the Book of Life, are cast into the lake of fire and experience a second death. Absolute, eternal separation from God.

They're born once, die twice.

Now, regardless of the option a person chooses, they will be resurrected. Jesus said,

John 5:28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Remember, "doing good" = believing. Those who believe will be resurrected to life. Those who don't believe will be resurrected to condemnation. ALL will be resurrected.

And after this resurrection, their lives will be judged. That's what we read in Revelation 20:12. These are all people who didn't believe. It's important to understand that this judgment of their works is NOT to determine whether they go to heaven or hell.

The Bible is clear. Our works can NEVER save us. These people are already in hell because of their unbelief. They never trusted Christ. But! Their lives, their works are still judged.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Notice that both “books” and “Book of Life” are opened. Those being judged are thrown into the lake of fire because their name isn’t found written in the Book of Life.

But, their lives are still judged. The other books contain written records of every their work/ action/ word. And because they are resurrected to condemnation their works will be judged and condemned. This is a judgment to determine WHERE in hell they will spend eternity.

But! Believers are different.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Believers are in Christ and so there is no condemnation in us. Why? Because we have accepted by faith the work of Christ. We believe that on the cross Christ took our sins and paid for them. Listen to what Jesus says in John 3:18

John 3:18 He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Why are people condemned? According to Jesus, people are condemned because they haven’t believed He is the Savior. But those who DO believe are no longer condemned. By faith we have received the payment Christ made for our sins on the cross. Now, there is nothing in us for God to condemn! Isn’t that great!

So our judgment will not be a judgment of condemnation. It will be a judgment of rewards! Turn to Romans 14:10. This is written to the church in Rome, a church like Mosaic, a church of baptized believers.

Romans 14:10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

11 For it is written: As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

Just like the Great White Throne judgment, this isn’t a judgment to see if believers go to heaven or hell. That ‘s already sealed and settled by the option we chose in THIS life. We chose to believe in Christ. Our name is written in the Book of Life.

We WILL go to heaven, not because of our works, but because of what Christ did for us. But! Our works WILL be judged, not to be condemned, but to be rewarded!

“Judgment Seat of Christ” is translated from the Greek word “bema” which refers to the original Greek Olympic games. The games were a bit different then than they are now. Everyone who finished received a crown. That’s why the Bible talks so much about believers receiving crowns as rewards.

Today, at the end of the games they reward the winners with medals – gold, silver and bronze. But, still, no one is condemned, right? The only way a contestant loses in the Olympics is by losing the reward they could’ve won.

You see, as believers, the only loss we face in the future is losing potential rewards by not being obedient to Christ. We WILL stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ and we WILL give an account of our life.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

The “we” refers to believers. “Good” and “bad” refer to worthy of reward and not worthy of reward.

In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul illustrates the Judgment Seat of Christ in another way. He uses the analogy of our life as a building. By our works, we’re building a building that will one day be judged.

1 Corinthians 3:11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.

15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

The only two options of your life. Born once and die twice and judgment of condemnation. OR Born twice and die once and judgment of rewards.

We began by reading Hebrews 9:27.

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

But notice the sentence doesn’t end, does it? There’s no period. It continues in verse 28:

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, 28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.

Because Jesus Christ died ONCE bearing our sins, we only have to die ONCE if we will trust in Him. And we will never be judged, because CHRIST was judged for our sins on the cross.

He made it easy for us to choose the right option.

The only two options of your life. Believing in Christ makes all the difference. Which will you choose?