

IMMORTALITY

- I. Biblical usages - NASB (exhaustive)
 - A. Greek word *athanasia*
 - 1. Meaning - "no death"
 - 2. Usages
 - I Cor. 15:53 - "this mortal must put on immortality"
 - I Cor. 15:54 - "when this mortal shall have put on immortality"
 - I Tim. 6:16 - "King of Kings and Lord of Lords; who alone possesses immortality..."
 - B. Greek words *aphtharsia* and *aphthartos*
 - 1. Meaning - "no destruction, no corruption, imperishable"
 - 2. Usages
 - Rom. 2:7 - "those who seek for glory, honor and immortality, (will get) eternal life"
 - I Tim. 1:17 - "believe in Him (Jesus) for eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God..."
 - II Tim. 1:10 - "our Savior, Christ Jesus, abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"
- II. Background of thought concerning immortality
 - A. Greek philosophy
 - 1. Plato indicated that soul of man is essentially divine, pre-existent and eternal.
 - 2. Aristotle limited divinity, eternality and immortality to "active intellect" of man's soul (rationalism)
 - B. Jewish thought
 - 1. Saducees
 - a. Did not believe in future life
 - b. Matt. 22:29 - "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God."
 - 2. Pharisees
 - a. Believed in resurrection of the body
 - b. Such was a reanimation or re-embodiment of physical, racial Jewish bodies in a physical, national community/kingdom.
- III. Immortality in Biblical perspective.
 - A. God and immortality
 - 1. God is immortal.
 - John 5:26 - "the Father has life in Himself..."
 - I Tim. 1:17 - "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God"
 - 2. Immortality is an attribute of God alone
 - I Tim. 6:16 - "who alone possesses immortality"
 - 3. God's attributes are exclusive and non-transferable
 - 4. God manifests His attributes ontologically
 - a. God expresses Himself in His own Person and presence
 - b. God expresses Himself in His own acts
 - c. God expresses Himself by His Son and His Spirit
 - B. Man and immortality
 - 1. Man is not essentially or inherently immortal
 - a. physiologically - body
 - b. psychologically - soul
 - c. spiritually - spirit

2. We must not attribute God's attributes to man
 - a. Such deifies man
 - b. Man is not divine, eternal or immortal
 - c. Such realities are extrinsic to man.
3. God's life and immortality can be invested in man
 - a. God is the creative source and sustenance of all forms of life
 Neh. 9:6 - "Thou doest give life to all of them"
 Acts 17:25,28 - "He Himself gives to all life and breath..."
 I Tim. 6:13 - "God, who gives life to all things"
 - b. God is the sole source of spiritual, eternal life in man.
 Jn. 17:3 - "this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent"
 - c. Christocentric immortality and eternal life
 I Tim. 1:17 - "the King eternal, immortal..."
 Jn. 14:6 - "I am the way, the truth, and the life"
 Col. 3:4 - "Christ is our life"
 II Tim. 1:10 - "Christ Jesus abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"
 - d. Immortality in man is derived ontologically and dynamically from God in Christ by His grace
 John 11:26 - "everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die"
 John 14:19 - "because I live, you shall live also"
 - e. Immortality in man is conditioned on our receptivity of the ontological essence of God's immortality made available in Jesus Christ
 Rom. 2:7 - "those who seek..immortality, find eternal life"
 Gal. 6:8 - "the one who sows to the flesh reaps corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life"
 - f. Immortality and eternal life are received in regeneration
 Jn. 3:7 - "you must be born again"
 Jn. 3:16 - "whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life"
 I Pet. 1:3 - "born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"
 - g. Immortality and eternal life will be displayed in our future bodily resurrection
 - (1) The glorified and spiritual body will be an immortal body
 I Cor. 15:53,54 - "the mortal shall have put on immortality"
 - (2) Spiritual immortality of eternal life is not delayed until bodily resurrection. It is not just a future acquisition.
 - (3) There is a perpetuity and continuum of our spiritual identification with the character and destiny of spiritual being.
 - (a) Not annihilationism
 - (b) No denial of the perpetuity of hell
 Matt. 25:41 - "eternal fire prepared for devil and his angels"
 Matt. 25:46 - "eternal punishment"
 II Thess. 1:9 - "eternal destruction..."