1 Thessalonians 4:13 "Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope." (NIV)

► **The state of existence we will experience between our death, and the second coming of Christ and our bodily resurrection, is called the INTERMEDIATE state.**

Luke 16:19-31 "19 There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. 20 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores 21 and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

25 But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

27 He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

29 Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' 30 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' 31 He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'" (NIV)

1. Our SOULS will be separated from our bodies.

   Genesis 2:7 "… the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." (NIV)

   Matthew 10:28 "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both the soul and body in hell." (NIV)

   Luke 23:46 "Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit **my spirit**." When He had said this, **He breathed His last**." (NIV)

   Acts 7:59-60 "59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, **receive my spirit**. 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, **he fell asleep**." (NIV)

   Revelation 6:9 "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar **the souls** of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained." (NIV)

2. We will go IMMEDIATELY to our next place of existence.

   Luke 23:42-43 "42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." 43 Jesus answered him, 'Truly I tell you, **today** you will be with me in paradise." (NIV)

   Philippians 1:21-24 "21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire **to depart and be with Christ**, which is better by far, 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body." (NIV)

3. We will go to a DIMENSION that is real but unseen.

   2 Kings 6:17 "And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." (NIV)

John 20:19-20 "19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After He said this, He showed them His hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when the saw the Lord." (NIV)

Acts 7:55-56 "55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."" (NIV)

4. There will be an initial JUDGEMENT.

Daniel 12:2 "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt." (NIV)

John 3:16-18 "16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. 18 Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already in the name of God's one and only Son." (NIV)

Matthew 16:24-27 "24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciples must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what they have done." (NIV)

Revelation 20:11-15 "11 The I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from His presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was **judged according to what he had done**. 14 Then death and Hades

were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (NIV)

5. The godly will go to the present HEAVEN.

Hebrews 12:22-24 "22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel." (NIV)

6. The ungodly will go to the present HADES.

Luke 16:23-26 "23 In Hades, where he [the rich man] was in **torment**, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in **agony** in this **fire**.' 25 But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a **great chasm** has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' (NIV)

2 Peter 2:4, 9-10 "4 For God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment … 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment of the day of judgment. 10 This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority." (NIV)

7. We will keep our PERSONALITY and have some kind of FORM.

Matthew 17:1-3 "1 … Jesus took with Him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and

His clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus." (NIV)

8. We will be CONSCIOUS of our surroundings and situation.

Revelation 6:9-11 "9 … I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. 10 They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" 11 Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer …" (NIV)

9. Both locations are TEMPORARY places.

Revelation 21:1-4 "1 Then I saw **a new heaven and a new earth**, for the **first** heaven and the **first** earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, **coming down out of heaven** from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and **God Himself will be with them** and be their God. 4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for **the old order of things has passed away**." (NIV)

10. We will wait until JESUS RETURNS.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "13 Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 14 For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep with Him. 15 According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words." (NIV)

BOTTOM LINE

2 Corinthians 5:6-8 "6 Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 For we live by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at **home with the Lord**. 9 So we make it our goal to please Him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." (NIV)