

From Death To Life

**The Official Magazine of the Conditional
Immortality Association of New Zealand**

Bible Teaching • Life • Death • Resurrection • Eternal Destiny

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Editorial

MORE ON TEAM CIA

We have received lots of very positive feedback concerning this magazine, particularly concerning the last issue (Issue 30):

**"Congratulations on the latest issue, No. 30- July 2006. Good format, clear type, very readable."
(BC, New Zealand)**

**"I've been on your mailing list for a while now, and enjoy receiving the "From Death to Life" newsletter."
(DT, Australia)**

"Thanks so much and thanks greatly for your work in making these materials available." (DG, USA).

"The last issue of Death to Life was awesome, thanks for all your hard work and effort. (DWD, USA)"

One dear soul with years of experience editing various works took time, not only to commend us for the work we do, but also to offer me some helpful advice.

Brothers and Sisters as far away as Kenya (See page 28) enjoy the Magazine.

This magazine is not the result of any one person's efforts. Many people write or have written for us. Others make their writing available to us. Others pray. Still others offer financial support by way of subscriptions.

Thank you all. Be encouraged. Your effort on behalf of this ministry is bearing fruit. The truth is being proclaimed and God is honoured.
David Burge.

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2006**

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Revelation 6:9-11 & Hebrews 11:4

Many Christians will be familiar with *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, which book contains a graphic account of the persecution of faithful men and women of God down through the centuries. Today Christians are still suffering and dying for their faith, mainly among Muslim and Communist nations and on the Indian sub continent.

One of the purposes of John's Revelation was to remind the suffering church that God has not forgotten his people. In his own time God will act to avenge the faithful, to judge the wicked, and to establish a kingdom of everlasting righteousness upon the earth.

To this end John was given a vision whereby after he sees Christ open the fifth of seven seals, he sees "under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained" (v. 9).

This verse is all too often cited by those who believe in the immortality of the soul to prove that the real person lives on in a conscious state after the death of the body. Indeed does not John actually see the immortal souls of



martyred Christians in conscious communion, even conversation with the Lord? Admittedly, it is odd that these "souls" are seen dwelling under an altar, but if it be assumed that this altar is in God's heavenly temple, then do we not have before proof that departed saints are conscious in heaven?

The short answer is, no!

Revelation is a book of symbols. This does not, however, mean that the book can be made to teach what ever we please. Fully half of the visions are interpreted for us, by the angel that accompanies John, for example. Where no interpretation is given, in most instances, the figures used in Revelation are used elsewhere in the Scriptures, particularly in the Old Testament, and thus the true meaning of these visions is readily available to us.

Note the following:

1. In the case of the martyrs under the altar we must turn to the Bible's account of the first martyr: Abel. When Cain murdered his brother it was Abel's blood, not Abel himself, that is said to cry out to the Lord for justice (Gen. 4:8-11). Abel's blood,

however, is not literally a part of Abel separable from Abel himself. This is but a very graphic figure of speech. Abel's blood stands for Abel himself. Just as Abel did not literally cry out from the ground, so too the "souls" of the martyrs (not a part of the martyrs, separable from the martyrs, but the martyrs themselves) do not literally cry out for justice.

2. The book of Leviticus draws a strong connection between the life of the soul [the person] and the blood (Lev. 17:11). Medically speaking, blood carries oxygen throughout the body. Life is thus literally carried in the blood! The Bible often uses the terms soul and blood in parallel, even interchangeably. Isaiah prophesies

of the Messiah that he "poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12). It was Jesus' lifeblood that was poured out unto death at the cross.

3. Indeed, though the priests of old put some of the blood of the sacrifice upon the horns of the altar of incense, they poured most of the blood onto the ground at the foot of the altar of burnt offering (Lev. 4:7). The "souls" of the martyrs are "under the altar", their blood, as it were, poured out in sacrifice to God.



Though the language is figurative the truths expressed are very real: The oppressors of God's people will not go unpunished; his servants will be rewarded. They may have to wait. They may have to suffer, even unto death, as many have before them, but they are not forgotten. Their blood speaks, as does the blood of Abel before them.

Meanwhile, Hebrews 11 is God's own version of Foxes Book of Martyrs. It furnishes us with

numerous examples of how the heroes of old bore witness (the meaning of the word martyr) to the true God by way of faith. By faith Enoch walked with God until he was translated (v. 5). Noah showed his faith in building an ark (v. 7). Abraham left Ur (v. 8) to dwell in the

land of Canaan (v. 9). He believed that Sarah would bear him a son (v. 11). Later he was willing to sacrifice that son (v. 17). So too, much later, Moses showed his faith by forsaking the wealth of Egypt to be with God's people (vv.24-28).

The lives of each of these worthies is an example to us, but none more so than Abel. By faith he still speaks (though not literally) despite his being dead (v. 4). His example commends to us the way of faith.

David Burge

This Is My Story

I was born at a very young age, and taken along to church shortly afterwards. I don't actually remember all that, but I was told as much by a reliable source. What I do remember is that a lot of what I learnt at church when I was growing up never made much sense.

Why did the bible talk about people falling asleep when they died, when I was told that they had gone to another place and were conscious? Supposedly they'd gone to paradise temporarily; but wasn't paradise the place you went to eternally? Then there were the complicated diagrams showing how people were supposed to go off somewhere after they died, then come back to earth when Jesus returned, ready to head off somewhere else with Jesus (or was it back to the same place?). They certainly never made much sense. If an engineer made diagrams as confusing as

those he'd get sacked. How could a God who was supposed to be love spit-roast the bad guys forever and ever amen?

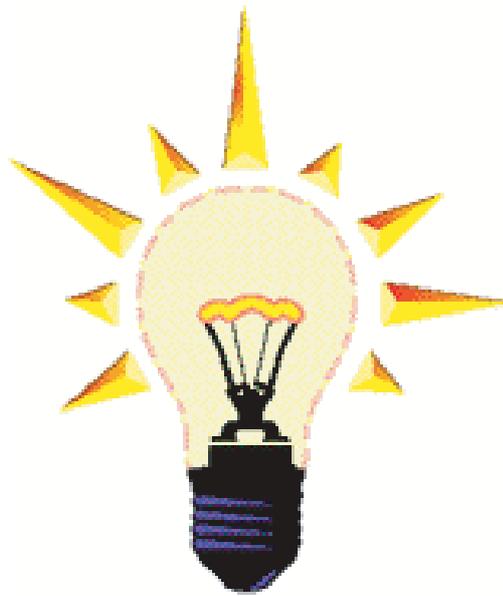
In 1998 I started going along to the Takanini Church of Christ Life & Advent. I remember Russell Carle telling me that he believed that dead people were in an unconscious state. I thought that I'd got involved with some weird cult!

I'm glad to say that that wasn't true. If what a preacher tells you about a verse is true you'll have a light bulb moment and the verse will suddenly become clear to you. It is also very important that the preacher's explanation matches up with other verses, i.e. scripture interprets scripture.

After I learnt about conditional

immortality I had many light bulb moments as I read the bible. Here's a few of them:

* Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is



"If what a preacher tells you about a verse is true you'll have a light bulb moment..."

eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” It doesn’t get much clearer than that; one path leads to death, one path leads to life. How can eternity in hell be “death”? Death is clearly cessation of existence. See also Proverbs 11:19.

* Psalm 6:5. “No one remembers you when he is dead. Who praises you from his grave?” That’s a rhetorical question: no one praises God from his grave because everyone is asleep in their grave!

* John 3:16. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” How can be Christians be given the gift of eternal life when (supposedly) everyone will live forever? How can we be given a gift that we already have? We can’t be given a gift we already have! We are born as sin-corrupted descendants of Adam, destined for a final, complete and awful death in hell. The wonderful gift of God is that if we believe in him and follow him we can instead look forward to spending forever with him.

This is why I care about conditional immortality: because when I learnt about it, the bible started making sense, and so many questions were answered. I also learnt about a God who wasn’t cruel, but instead simply gave people the consequences of their actions: death or life.

I grew up with a theology that confused, now I have found a theology that clarifies.

Learning about conditional immortality helped me to witness to people in a number of ways. Firstly, I had a new found confidence in and grasp of the bible; it’s hard to share something your confused about! Secondly, most people have an image of God barbecuing the bad guys forever in some vindictive and vengeful manner, and this understandably makes them object to following such a god: I can now tell them that that simply isn’t true. Thirdly, conditional immortality provided a base on which to tie together everything in the bible. This meant that I could get away from the fire-and-brimstone approach to evangelism, and instead start with Adam receiving the breath of life in creation week, and move on through God’s grand scheme shown in the bible to show a loving god who is knocking at the door of people hearts.

Jachin Mandeno

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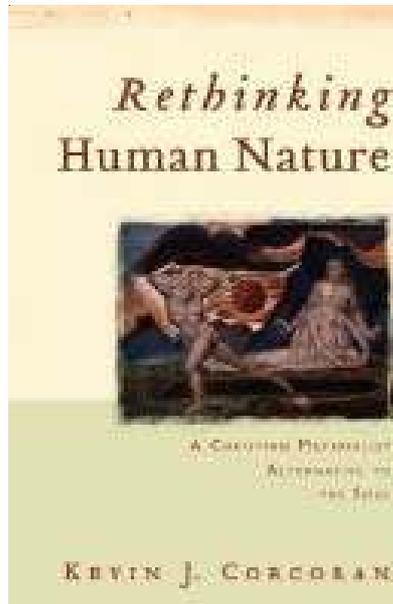
Subscriptions may be sent to the above address in the amount of NZ \$15 for four issues.

From Off Of The Shelf

Rethinking Human Nature: A Christian Materialist Alternative to the Soul by Kevin J. Corcoran.

Kevin J. Corcoran begins what is a philosophical book with a very personal reflection: "In 1968 I lost my father to cancer," Corcoran recalls. "I was four years old. I can still remember the funeral home. And I can remember that as I looked into the casket, my mother told me that my father was now with God in heaven. I remember feeling perplexed. And why not? My father was lying lifeless before me. How could he be with God in heaven?"

He goes on to say, "I came to understand that my mother believes what most Christians have believed down through the centuries: humans are immaterial souls capable of disembodied existence." Corcoran, however, no longer holds his mother's point of view. In fact, he flatly denies that human persons like you and me have any immaterial "soul".



Corcoran rightly says that both Christian tradition and Christian doctrine, with respect to the afterlife, emphasise the resurrection of the body not the immortality of the soul.

"None of the Ecumenical creeds of the Church confesses belief in a doctrine of soul survival," he says. "No, the Christian doctrine regarding the afterlife is a doctrine of resurrection."

From a philosophical point of view the notion of the resurrection of the body is no more difficult to comprehend than that of soul survival. "Both dualists and materialists have the problem of telling a coherent story about how a body that peters out and ceases to exist can somehow turn up in the New Jerusalem," he says.

What sets Corcoran's treatment apart from other discussions of biblical anthropology is the emphasis he places on the moral implications of his views in the here and now.

"A materialist view of human nature," he says, "makes good sense of the urgency and

importance of our call to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and pursue justice. Why? Because we are material beings; starvation, want and physical impoverishment are kingdom concerns. Contrary to the sacred hymn, this world is our home. It is broken, disfigured and diseased to be sure, but it matters to us. It matters to us because we are created for this world in all of its physicality."

While scholars debate the nature of humanity the question, What makes us human? is not only of academic interest. End-of-life ethical decisions, human cloning, fetal tissue transplants, and stem cell research make this an issue of utmost importance to ordinary people.

Corcoran's view — called the "constitutional view"— suggests that we are constituted by our bodies without being identical to them. A building is constituted of bricks and mortar yet is not mere bricks and mortar. A statue is constituted of marble yet is not mere marble. So too, a human being is constituted of a animal body but is no mere body.

It has been suggested that Cocoran's view is morally flawed; that by reducing human beings to the level of "mere animals" he destroys any rational ground for maintaining the sanctity of human

life — especially at the margins, where a fetus or a person in a persistent vegetative state exhibits none of the capacities we normally associate with "personhood" and which many claim distinguish a human being from an animal.

In discussing abortion, however, Corcoran argues that the opposite is true. As a "potential person" and a member of the human family the fetus deserves protection. But if the "soul" continues to exist after the demise of the organism it animates; and the "soul" carries with it the identity of the person; then abortion does not end the life of a "person" or "potential person". What grounds have we for saying abortion is wrong? The materialist viewpoint is thus, in fact, the better starting point from which to build an "ethic of life".



Corcoran concludes that anthropology alone is insufficient to ground an "ethic of life" (other theological ideas come into play as well) but a materialist anthropology is superior to the dualistic alternative in that it does more to connect the philosophy of human nature with the great themes of Biblical theology: themes such as Creation, Incarnation, the New Creation and the Resurrection; all of which reaffirm God's commitment to this material world and embodied life. I am inclined to agree.

- David Burge

From Death To Life (Volume 1)

Issues 1 – 30 (1993 – 2006) of From Death To Life is now available on CD ROM, mostly in black and white, as pdfs. Over 50 articles, 40 editorials, 11 book reviews, 3 testimonies plus Carey Park and Advent Christian Mission reports for those interested in the history of CI works in New Zealand.

Including ...

A Brief History of Conditional immortality and Answers to Critics (Part 1&2), Dave Green

A Loving Challenge, Edward Fudge

A Reformation Crisis Concerning The Soul: Immortal or Mortal, (Part 1&2), W. Kilgore

A Review of The Passion of The Christ, Glenn Peoples

Conditional Immortality: Does It Matter? Should I Care?

(Conference 2006), D. Burge

Conference 2000 (Editorial), C. Josephson

Fire and Flood: How The New Testament Uses The First

Testament To Teach on Final

Punishment (Parts 1 to 4), G. A.

Peoples

Hebrews 12:23 (Twisted Scripture),

D Burge

Hell – A hot Topic (Part 1 to 3), Edward Fudge

Hell, Emotion and the Christian Attitude To Others, G. A. Peoples

Hinduism & Conditional Immortality (Conference 1996), B. J. Hollis (Ching)

How Orthodox Are We? D. Burge

In The Image of God He Created Them: The Call To Be Human, Joel Green

Is Death Better By Far? (Twisted Scripture on Phil. 1:20-24), D. Burge

Jesus is Coming, D. Burge

Just A Reminder: Why Is Conditional Immortality Important? C. Josephson

Matthew 10:28 (Twisted Scripture), D. Burge

On Being Filled With Hope (Conference 1988), D. Dickson

Raised Immortal, D. Burge

Reclaiming The Gospel (Parts 1&2) (Conference 1997), W. Prestige

Saul and The Witch of Endor, W. Rundle

The History of Hell (Parts 1&2), D. Burge

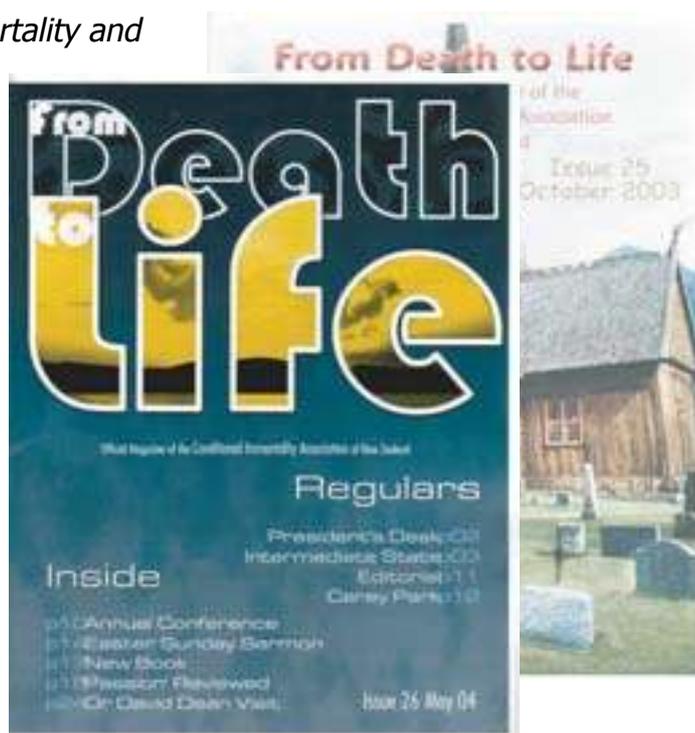
The Intermediate State in Paul (in 14 Parts), C. Josephson

The Life and The Advent (Conference 2005), C. Prestidge

The Resurrection of the Dead (Conference Address 2003), W. Prestidge

Three Pioneers of CI in New Zealand (Conference 2003), D. Dickson

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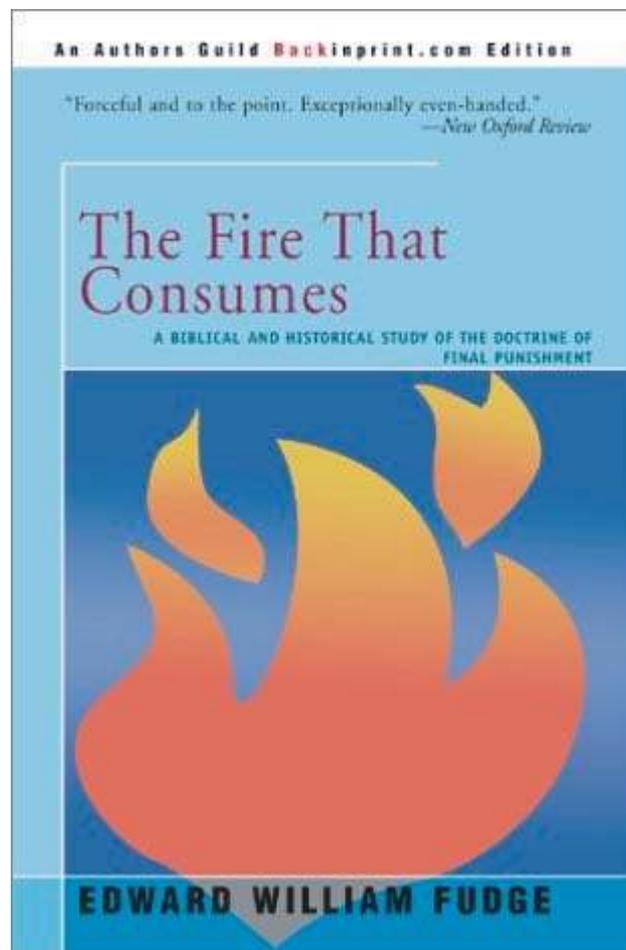
THE POINT OF HELL

By Edward Fudge

There is considerable discussion these days about the nature of hell. Indeed, I have done my share to stir this discussion and also to participate in it. Does Scripture really teach that God, who “so loved the world” and who does not wish for anyone to perish, will preserve alive forever everyone who fails to trust in Jesus (including those who never heard of him) so that he can torture them in fire throughout eternity without end? Or does the Bible actually teach that those who knowingly and persistently reject God the only source of life will finally find themselves in hell, where they will disintegrate into nothingness while suffering whatever pain perfect justice requires in each individual case? Is there any basis for thinking that hell will involve a pain that purges, so that all who go there will finally be

purified by fire as it were and eventually join God in eternal life and joy?

Although I grew up with the first view mentioned above, a yearlong exhaustive study of the whole Bible and 2,000 years of church history led me to the second view just described. I have recorded in detail the biblical and historical evidence that caused my own mind change in *The Fire That Consumes*, a 500-page book with 1,600 footnotes that was a selection of Evangelical Book Club and that is now popping up in the bibliographies of Bible dictionaries, religious

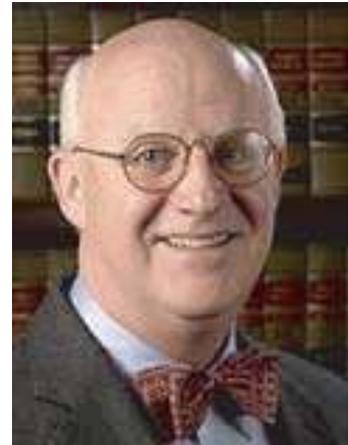


encyclopedias and theology textbooks. In *Two View of Hell*, I summarize the evidence in less detail and respond to my co-author's arguments for the traditional view of unending conscious torment. You can learn more about both books at www.EdwardFudge.com/written .

But there are practical questions we all need to ask, whatever we think hell will be like. What is the point of hell anyway? Whom does Jesus warn about it? What evils elicit his mention of it? Does Jesus, like many preachers and professing Christians today, thunder hellfire warnings to unchurched sinners: to prostitutes, drunkards and homosexuals? Does he use hell to spur conversions and to bring people to faith? The answers to these questions might surprise us — and teach us something important as well. Jesus specifically mentions hell (*gehenna*) just 11 times in the Gospels. You will find his statements at Matthew 5:22; 5:29-30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47 and Luke 12:5.

When we read everything in the Gospels that Jesus said about hell, we find him speaking twice to the Pharisees, warning these rigid and self-righteous morality policemen that God is unhappy with what their teaching turns their converts into and with the hypocrisy of their external-only religion (Matt. 23:15, 33). Everything else Jesus says about hell is directed to his own disciples. Twice he is encouraging them not to be afraid of those who might oppose them but to be afraid of God who can destroy the whole person in hell (Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:5). Every other time Jesus mentions hell he is warning his own followers not to mistreat or misuse vulnerable people, whether women (Matt. 5:29-30), "little ones" (Matt. 18:9; Mark 9:43, 45, 47) or anyone

with whom one might be angry (Matt. 5:22). What if we used hell the way Jesus did? Would that change the way we use it, whatever we think it will actually be like? Would it change the way we ourselves live and treat others?



Edward Fudge

The Conditional Immortality Association was privileged to have Edward and Sara Fudge as our guests here in New Zealand back in the year 2000. Edward's ministry and his gracious manner impacted all who heard him.

*The above article originally appeared as part of Edward's daily (Monday to Friday) ministry of "gracEmail" and is used with Edward's generous permission. You may visit Edward's website at www.edwardfudge.com to sign up to receive "gracEmail" or to order his book, *THE FIRE THAT CONSUMES* direct from the publisher.*

*We stock *TWO VIEWS OF HELL: A BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE* also by Edward Fudge and Robert A. Peterson (see the insert with this magazine) where Fudge argues the Conditional view and Peterson argues the "traditional" view.*

David Burge.

Bits And Pieces

"Bits and Pieces is just that. Bits and pieces gathered from recent (and sometimes not so recent) books and articles that have something to say about life, death and eternal destinies that may be of interest to Conditionalist readers.

HOT AS HELL?

"Some think hell can't be any hotter than 832 degrees Fahrenheit. Above that temperature, brimstone vaporizes" (Chuck Crisafulli and Kyra Thompson, *Go to Hell: A Heated History of the Underworld*, SSE/Simon & Schuster, reviewed by Religion News Service in *Christian Century*; 24/01/2006, Vol. 123 Issue 2, p7).

No Comment :-)

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO LIMBO?

In an article entitled, "Whatever Happened To Limbo?" Gerald M. Fagin notes that "Limbo" was part

of the teaching of the Roman Catholic church for over 700 years.

Limbo is best known as the place where (according to Catholic teaching) unbaptised babies go when they die to remain there forever.

Traditionally limbo is an

intermediate state, neither heaven nor hell, a place free of suffering and pain, yet without a share in the "eternal blessedness" God promises to those who die in grace.

This teaching arose in an attempt to soften the teaching of Saint Augustine

(4th century) who, because of his belief in the absolute necessity of baptism for salvation, condemned unbaptised infants to the eternal fires of hell.

According to Fagin, Limbo's absence from the recent *Catechism of the Catholic Church* raises "searching questions":

"Has the [Roman Catholic] church changed its teaching on the fate of infants who die without baptism?"



Was the church simply mistaken ... about a teaching that touched the lives of many Christians?

Does the church have a responsibility in integrity to state clearly that this is no longer a church teaching and to explain why this teaching has changed ...?

Does this change in a pastorally sensitive teaching imply that other such teachings are also open to re-evaluation and change?"

("Whatever Happened to Limbo?" by Gerald M. Fagin in America; 18/03/2002, Vol. 186 Issue 9, p15-16).

Will the Roman Catholic Church ever change its teaching on Heaven and Hell, the immortality of the soul and such like? What a reformation that would be!

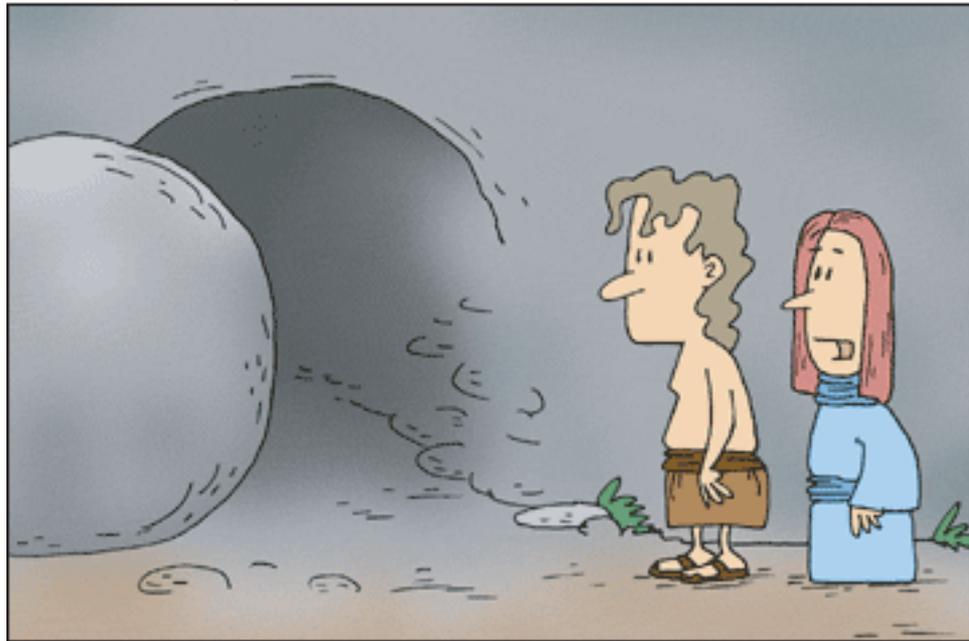
RESURRECTION STATISTICS

Thomas Hargrove and Guido H. Stempel III reporting for Scripps Howard News Service (05-APR-06) tell us: "Most Americans don't believe they will experience a resurrection of their bodies when they die, putting them at odds with a core teaching of Christianity."

A recent Scripps Howard/Ohio University poll put most Americans in conflict with both the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed.

The Nicene Creed, adopted in 325 at the First Council of Nicea concludes with the words: "We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen."

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Thanks to Pam Winn (See John 20:1-18)

04-12-2004

NOTHING IS CERTAIN EXCEPT WHAT AND TAXES?!?

Similarly, the Apostles' Creed proclaims Christianity's belief in "the resurrection of the body."

Only 36 percent of interviewees answered "yes" to the question: "Do you believe that, after you die, your physical body will be resurrected someday?" 54% said they do not so believe and 10% were undecided.

Among prominent theologians asked to comment, retired Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong, author of "Resurrection: Myth or Reality"

and other books that deny the miraculous in the Bible said: "Maybe the old Greek idea of an immortal soul has taken over and the idea of a resurrected body has fallen into disrepute."

This same poll found that 90% believe in a God or a Supreme Being, 65% are "absolutely certain" that God exists. 72% believe in an afterlife in which they will have "some sort of consciousness," though only 47% are "absolutely certain" of this.

A previous poll (2003) found that 63% of Americans were "absolutely certain" Jesus died and rose from the dead. 60% believed

Jesus was born of a virgin.

It seems most Americans affirm that they believe what Christianity teaches. The trouble is they simply do not know what the Bible teaches on the subject of life, death and eternal destinies.

This is not just true for those outside of the church: The poll found that only half of those who had attended church recently said they believe they will experience a physical resurrection someday. This compares well with the fact that only a quarter of those who had not attended a public worship service

recently said the same. However, lest we blame "The Liberals" for this woeful ignorance of doctrine among church goers, note the following: Only 59% of those who profess to be "born again" - that is, they at least profess to be signed up, card carrying, evangelical Protestants - only 59% of these people believe in a personal resurrection.

If 41% of "born again" Christians do not believe in a personal resurrection to eternal life for those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ then there is certainly a need for an Association such as ours that boldly proclaims these truths as part of our Christian heritage.



"... only half of those who had attended church recently said they believe they will experience a physical resurrection someday."

The Intermediate State In Paul: Summary and Conclusions

Those of you who have been receiving this magazine since Issue 14 will have had opportunity to benefit from an edited version of the late Carl Josephson's Masters Thesis, The Intermediate State in Paul: Seeking Consistency in Paul's Understanding of Death and the Resurrection.

Carl never had opportunity to complete the series by presenting to you his summary and conclusions. In presenting to you this simplified version of Carl's summary and conclusions - in a manner that allows the many of you who have only recently begun to receive our magazine to read this article "as it stands" - I hope I have done justice to his work.

Like Abel, Carl by his faith still speaks, even though he is dead (Hebrews 11:4) - Editor

THE ELEMENT OF TIME IN PAUL

There is confusion among both scholars and lay-people around the whole subject of death and the

intermediate state. Theories abound which try to piece together the evidence. These are often unsatisfactory because they centre on Paul changing his mind, or upon his holding two paradoxical (or contradictory?) beliefs. They offer non-Pauline alternatives, such as a 'disembodied' existence and / or bodies uniting with souls at the resurrection. Paul, however, can be read with integrity and still be found to have a level of consistency in his theology of death, and more particularly in his understanding of the 'intermediate state.'

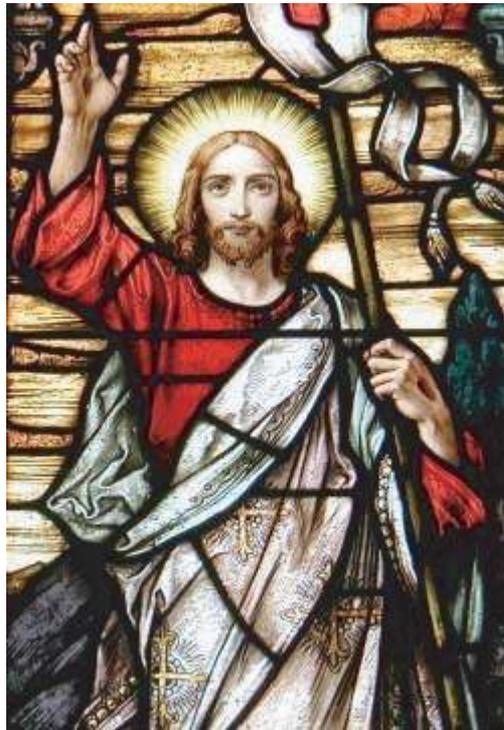
There is a growing awareness, even consensus, in recent scholarship that Paul was thoroughly Jewish in his understanding of

the human person as a unified, mortal being. Such Greek terms as "body", "soul" and "spirit" are, merely different ways of viewing the whole person, or different aspects of the person. This view is in complete accord with the First Testament. A number of scholars have gone 'half-way', acknowledging Pauline monism in this life but then postulating theories of 'conditional' or 'temporary' dualism in the time

**Paul was
thoroughly
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between the death of an individual believer and the Second Coming.

Paul is clearly dualistic in his eschatology. He understands believers to be "citizens of heaven" (Phil. 3:20) yet still called "to live on in the flesh" (Phil. 1:24) for the sake of the gospel and other believers. He understands himself to be living in the 'overlap of the ages' in which the Kingdom of God has been inaugurated but not consummated. This already / not yet tension creates a number of paradoxes such as being united with the (victorious) risen Christ (e.g. Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:4), yet at the same time suffering for him (Phil. 1:16); or being "more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37) yet subject to persecution, hardship and death (2 Cor. 4:8-10). This



form of dualism is a key to understanding some passages in Paul that have been traditionally understood as teaching or assuming a form of anthropological dualism.

If human beings are monistic in composition it is logical, as well as Biblical, to conclude that death is an end to existence. It is not just the body that dies it is the person. The First Testament references to 'shades' or similar are poetic and to be understood as imagery rather than actuality. This understanding

gives full recognition to God in Christ in whom Paul's hope centred. Paul did not talk of surviving death, unless he is to live here on earth until the Coming of Christ.

Paul frequently refers to the state of believers between their death and the resurrection as 'sleep' – in fact it may well be his only reference to that 'state.' We understand the imagery of 'sleep' to include the concept of being inert; of being unaware of life around about; of being unaware of time; and of being something we are able to be roused from.

This awakening is what Paul focuses on in 1 Corinthians 15. Paul centred his whole theology, and his life, on the sure and certain hope of resurrection to come. This was

based on his conviction that Jesus had already been raised. At the Coming of Christ the victory of God will be complete and God will be all in all. Meanwhile, in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul understands that the dead are 'asleep' awaiting the great day when "the dead shall be raised first" (1 Thessalonians 4:16) and "we who are alive will be caught up to meet Him in the air" (v. 17). Paul did not change his understanding, only his perspective, in this area of theology.

In 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 Paul was not thinking of the 'intermediate state' but only of the contrast between faith and sight, between the seen and unseen, between appearance and reality, between the mortal / temporal and the eternal. In particular he did not understand his 'earthly tent house' (5:1), his decaying, weakening outer man (4:16), as indicative of weak faith or God's disfavour. On the contrary, he saw this

'weakness' as evidence of his own identification with his Lord (4:11), and understood that he was being renewed on the inside (4:16). In the future, at the coming of Christ, he would receive a heavenly house (5:1) that would never die. His perspective is now

from one who might not live until that Coming, and from that point of view the transfer from this life to the next might be understood as 'instantaneous' because of a dead person's inability to measure time. However he does not spell this out, rather he uses the terms "to go away from [the body]" and "to come home to [the Lord]" in a way which suggests a journey.

Again in Philippians 1:20-23 Paul's view is consistent. Here again Paul is dealing with the contrast between

appearance (imprisonment – 1:7) and reality (free to proclaim the gospel – 1:12) and with the prospect of death before Christ comes. Once more the term "to depart" suggests a journey in which the beginning (death) and the final outcome (being with Christ) are certain.

Paul doesn't specifically deal with time and timelessness (He may never have thought the concept through) but there is at least a hint of a change in 'time'. Time is suspended for those 'asleep' in Christ. This is especially so if death is annihilation and resurrection is re-creation. Romans 4:17, although not necessarily referring to the final resurrection, does give God full credit for being able to call into being the

things that are not and to raise the dead. The whole concept of 'raising the dead' indicates not survival but a new act, a re-creation, which is not time dependent. That is, whether the person has been dead a moment or a millennium is irrelevant to the Creator.

In his earlier letters, especially 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15, Paul views death from the point of view of 'those who remain'. From this perspective the death of fellow believers naturally involves a



continuation of time and Paul uses the metaphor of sleep in keeping with this.

In 2 Corinthians 5 and Philippians 1 Paul's perspective changes as he now faces the prospect of death himself. He does not refute his understanding of death as sleep, but he does understand that to someone who is asleep or dead, time is not important. Death may well be regarded as a step into timelessness. Just as one can awake from a good night's sleep not knowing 'where the time went', so for the deceased the length of time between death and the Coming of Christ is irrelevant – it will seem but a moment.

Therefore if there is a sense of immediacy between death and final resurrection it is only from the point of view of the deceased, not from those who remain on. For 'we who remain' time continues and the dead are asleep. F.F. Bruce raised such a possibility, but does not seem to have developed it, when he noted, "The tension created by the postulated interval between death and resurrection might be relieved today if it were suggested that in the consciousness of the departed believer there is no interval between dissolution and investiture, however long an interval might be measured by the calendar of earth-bound human history."¹⁴

K. Giles writes, "Probably the best solution is the view that the moment of death for the believer is the last day for him or her because in death the Christian moves out of

time, so that death is experienced as the moment when Jesus returns."¹⁵ This is similar to the conclusion Lillie makes. Citing Leopold von Ranke's dictum that "each moment of time and history is equidistant from eternity,"¹⁶ he then writes,

"We may hold that the man who died in the first century of our era is at an equal distance from the final judgment to the man who dies in our own century. No-one at death needs to wait for the last judgment in our ordinary sense of waiting."¹⁷



- Carl Josephson

(Footnotes)

¹⁴ F.F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1977) 312 n40.

¹⁵ K. Giles, *Understanding the Christian Faith* (Canberra: Acorn, 1982) 73.

¹⁶ William Lillie, *An Approach to II Corinthians 5:1-10*, 61, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 30:1 (1977), 59-70 cites this from R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (London, 43), Vol. II, 311.

¹⁷ Lillie, 61.

Faith of Our Fathers

A Reformation Crisis Concerning the Soul: Immortal or Mortal? By William Kilgore (Part Three)

In this third and final instalment William Killgore continues his history of the ascendancy of the traditional doctrine of the immortality of the soul over the biblical doctrine of Conditional Immortality during the period of the Reformation.

-Editor.

Zwingli And Bullinger

Both before and after Calvin wrote Psychopannychia, another reformer named Huldreich Zwingli (1484-1531) also vigorously defended the immortality of the soul. In 1531, Zwingli wrote his Exposition of the Christian Faith, in which he refuted soul sleep:

"... I maintain against the Catabaptists [Anabaptists], who contend that the soul sleeps with the body until the day of judgement, that the soul whether of angel or of man cannot sleep or be at rest."

Zwingli did basically what Calvin did in Psychopannychia, though much more briefly. After some philosophical observation, he focused on a few select passages

from the New Testament to demonstrate the immortality of the soul. Like Calvin, he asserted his belief in no uncertain terms: "I believe, then, that the souls of the faithful fly to heaven as soon as they leave the body." Again, he wrote in Platonic language of being "freed from the body."

Calvin also had the support of Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575), who likewise denounced soul sleep as an Anabaptist heresy in 1548. While he treated the subject scripturally, as had both Zwingli and Calvin, Bullinger resorted to crude denunciations at times.



Calvin In Later Life

Calvin, with the support of other important Protestant reformers like Zwingli and Bullinger, exerted much influence on the Protestant churches. Further, Calvin did not

waver one bit from the Catholic position on the soul in later life. This is apparent in his monumental work, The Institutes of the Christian Religion, completed in its final form in 1559. Calvin defined the soul as "an immortal though created essence" that "is freed from the prison-house of the body" at death. Further, Calvin not only used Platonic language (i.e., "prison-house"), but also referred to Plato and stated his substantial

agreement with the philosopher on the matter of the soul.

Like Augustine before him, who actually was a strong influence on his own theology, Calvin had successfully championed the traditional, Catholic view of the immortal soul. The Westminster Confession of Faith (1643-1646), later adopted by the Presbyterian and Reformed churches that existed in Calvin's shadow, was very specific concerning this matter, stating that, while the human body decays after death, "their souls ... neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence". In fact, every original Protestant group – Lutheran, Anglican, Presbyterian/ Reformed, and Baptist – embraced the traditional view defended by the eloquent Calvin by the time they were settled and organized.

Did Luther Change His Mind?

As for Luther did he maintain his position against the Catholic doctrine of the immortality of the soul? It is thought that Luther embraced the traditional view in his later writings. At least some of Luther's followers were expressing a belief in the immortality of the soul as early as 1525. The question is: why would Luther change his view? While we may never know for sure,

some scholars have suggested the obvious: that Luther and his followers simply had more important things that concerned them. Their priorities were more central doctrines such as justification by faith alone and the authority of scripture alone. To have perpetuated a dispute on the nature of the human soul among themselves would have been counterproductive against the backdrop of the principal issues facing of an infant Protestantism.



There is also another possibility for which there is some evidence. It seems that Luther's viewpoint on the afterlife may have been in flux for some time. A survey of his writings yields some signs of tentativeness and uncertainty. The soul is variously described as "living," "asleep," "at rest," "conscious," and "not conscious." It is

known that, as early as 1522, Luther expressed his discomfort with being too dogmatic on the question in conversation with his friend Amsdorf. Generally, "the precise condition of departed souls was not entirely clear to Luther," and he had "arrived at some rather paradoxical, if not incongruous, conclusions."

Thus, perhaps Luther never really committed himself to his denial of the immortality of the soul as Tyndale clearly had. Perhaps Luther simply flirted with the idea of a

mortal soul before said flirtation was halted by the writings of the other leaders. That Psychopannychia was expected to reach Luther, and possibly offend him, was one consideration of Calvin's in delaying its publication. One further factor may have been the fact that, in the final twenty years of his life, Luther himself had no great love for the Anabaptists. If he accepted the Anabaptist label given the soul sleep doctrine by Calvin, Zwingli, and Bullinger, perhaps his animosity influenced him to abandon his own speculations on the issue.

Conclusion

For all practical purposes, and certainly for the vast majority of Protestants even up to the present day, Calvin settled the issue once and for all with his Psychopannychia. Everywhere from Christian funerals to cartoons, it is taken for granted that the soul of an individual departs to its deserved place after death and continues in conscious bliss or torment until the resurrection.

- William Killgore

William Killgore is a Charismatic Southern Baptist in Texas. As a longtime advocate of conditional immortality, and a graduate student at the University of Houston, he wrote a fuller version of this paper for a Reformation history class (including a lot of footnotes!). He kindly gave me his permission to publish this edited version of his paper

-Editor.

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Carey Park Report

In July we had our teen campers here at Carey Park for Movie Camp. It was fun as each of the kids were in teams making movies from scratch. Each group was given a line, an object and one



special effect they had to incorporate into the movie. This helped make each movie interesting and unique. They learnt the ins and outs of having to re do scenes and learn lines. The highlight however was having Dean Clark, Special Effects Maestro, come blow things up, smash bottles over kid's heads (fake bottles!) and fill a room with smoke. We also got to see how a rain machine works and feel the effect of a wind machine powered by a V8 engine.

The kids had a blast playing with the effects and seeing how they work. As well, many teens walked away with a deeper understanding of God. Many formed great relationships with the leaders and are going to church regularly. They are getting to ask questions outside of the camp setting.

In September we are holding a leaders reunion for anyone who has been a leader past or present. There are leaders attending who haven't been to one of our camps for more than 10 years and leaders who were here in July. Tim Long (past Director),

has worked with myself, Caitrin Aitken (Receptionist) and Warren Stubbs (Camp Host), to get people along to a weekend that will be fun and a great time to catch up.

This is also my chance to say good bye. I am moving on from Carey Park. This was a very difficult decision for me, but I know that God has led me to this point and I know He has new things in store for me and for Carey Park. I have loved my time here at Carey Park and most of all the people. I will most probably go back to my



previous trade of engineering. The camp is in good hands with a talented, competent Board of Trustees I know will select the right person to replace me. Please pray for Carey Park and the staff. They are a great bunch

to work with and awesome servants of God.

Thank you for all your support, I have appreciated getting to know many of you and valued your prayers and encouragement. I look forward to keeping in touch with the camp and watching it progress as it always has done. It is an exciting ministry and it has an exciting future.

God bless you all.

Cameron Dick

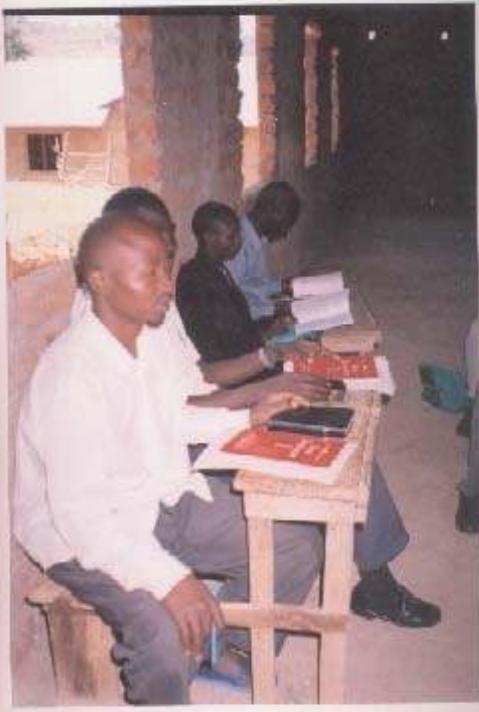
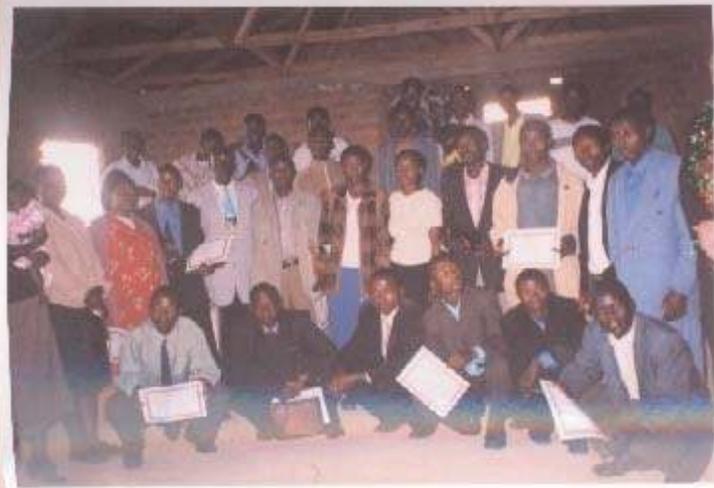
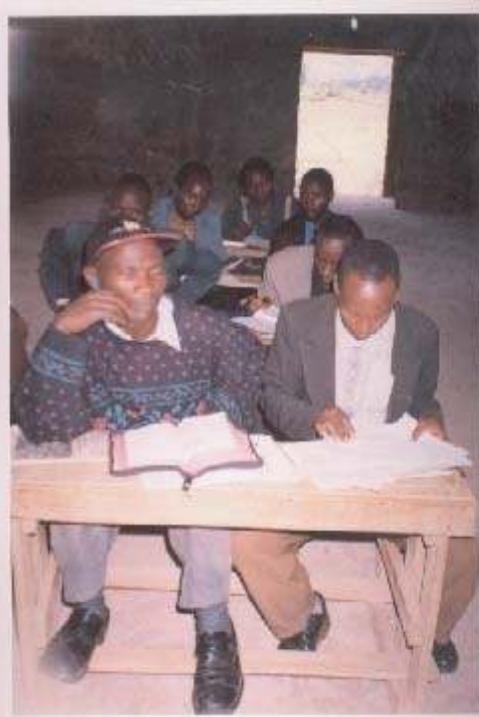
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A Letter From Kenya

Hi brother Rev. David Burge,

Greetings to you from your bothers and sisters in Kenya! Thank you so much for your kind response to my e-mail. I tell you brother, it is truly a great encouragement to hear from you.

I thought to send to you our latest Pastors Conference photos to print in the next



Conditional Immortality Newsletter, for prayers from the Lord's people. How is the ministry in your part of the World? I hope you are doing well. Here the Lord has been our great refuge, and above all, He has led us in the way we knew not! We are most blessed by His word and we continue to be blessed. Please continue to send our News letter in bulk form, in good number, because many are here who are interested in reading and sharing the message of

Conditional immortality with others! Thank you brother for taking us into your heart and sending us more Magazines. With all love. Warm regards - Simeon.