

From Death to Life

The Official Magazine of the
Conditional Immortality Association
of New Zealand

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From The President's Desk

Report to Conference

Overview:

The work of the Conditional Immortality Association involves some things which we continue to do year after year:

- The publication of our magazine, "From Death to Life";
- The sale of Warren Prestidge's book, "Life, Death and Destiny" as well as other literature;
- The up - keep of a CIA website;
- Our support of theological students and others in studies / ministry related to Conditional Immortality; as well as
- Our involvement with Advent Christian Missions through ACMNZ; and
- Our support of Carey Park Christian Camp.

As well as this on-going work we have over this year sent representatives to the Triennial Session of the Advent Christian General Conference of America. I also had opportunity to go on behalf of the CIA to the Hamilton Church of Christ and preach a message on the importance of Conditional Immortality.

We have completed our negotiations with Titarangi Baptist Church in regard to handing over Title to the building to their new Trust. We are in the midst of negotiating with several other ex-Churches of Christ and several difficult matters remain outstanding.

ACGC Triennial Session:

Attending the Triennial Session of the Advent Christian General Conference of America on behalf of the CIA was something of a high light for me. It also provides a good background for some of my other comments so I begin here.

I went with Ernie Schache to the Founders Inn, Virginia Beach, Virginia. The last Conference was in California on the west coast (nearer home). Virginia is on the east coast. It was further to go but worth the effort. It was a wonderful opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones over many meals together. I am glad the airlines weigh the luggage and not the passenger!

The events of 9 / 11 have not made Americans any less hospitable nor have they made Advent Christians in America any less committed to a vision of making disciples, not just converts, in fulfillment of the "Great Commission" (Matt. 28:16-20).

The Conference began on Thursday, June 20th, with a Denominational Women's Conference to which - for obvious reasons - Ernie and I were not invited. The next was a Leadership Conference, including the opportunity to attend the training seminar "Growing a Healthy Church". The Conference itself was a mixture of business, workshops, and evening speakers. All of this (even the business) was interesting and inspiring.

The Conference was followed by a special Mentoring Session for overseas guests on the 26th and 27th. We heard teaching on a number of topics important to Advent Christian work around the world. These included sessions on the world-wide Advent Christian strategy, on leadership development and on Advent Christian doctrine and history. We discussed finances, biblical stewardship and how we might all help each other in the world-wide work of Advent Christian missions. These sessions broadened my vision.

Our Magazine, Books And Other Literature:

I know many people at home have been impacted by our "literature" ministry. It was exciting also to meet lots of people in the USA who have been blessed by our literature - whether our videos or Warren's book, "Life, Death and Destiny". Many asked about our next project. World wide there seemed to be a hunger for "Conditional Immortality" teaching and good literature. Many folk throughout the world, from both within and outside of the Advent Christian denomination are wanting CI literature.

I recently received a letter from Keith Moxon in Australia. He publishes a newsletter and is keen to reprint some articles that have appeared in "From Death To Life" (with appropriate acknowledgment). God may yet enlarge our ministry beyond what we might ask or imagine.

Our Support of ACM's and Missions:

As President of the CIA it is exciting to know that our involvement with Advent Christ Missions New Zealand, especially in the sending of Grant Aldridge to the Philippines and Ernie Schache to India, is instrumental in fulfilling the "Great Commission." It was a privilege to be able to represent you all at a Sunday evening service to commission Ernie and three others for service on various Advent Christian Mission fields as part of my trip to the ACGC Triennial Session.

Frank Jewett (ACGC Area Director for Africa) works with others to arrange teaching seminars / Conferences in Africa. They bring the "teachers" with them. He was interested in the idea of some of our "teachers" linking up with them. We would benefit from their experience thus making it possible for us to take up some of the opportunities put before us (The CIA has in the past been invited to teach a fortnight of seminars to a very large gathering of Pastors in the Democratic Republic of Congo, for example).

Again, God may yet enlarge our ministry beyond what we might ask or imagine.

Scholarship Assistance

This year we have continued our financial support of Glenn Peoples who began working on a Ph.D. in Theology. His thesis will explore the notion of Jesus as the object of God's wrath; what the death of Christ shows us about final punishment and what this means for our understanding of Christ and the Trinity, from a Conditionalist perspective. I don't think such a study has even been done before at this level and we are privileged to be able to be coworkers with Glenn in this way.

Ongoing Goals:

As an Executive we have some ongoing goals.

We aim to:

- **Publicize our existing ministries:** we want to build up a wider base of support across the Christian community.
- **Recruit new members** to carry on the work at Executive level and bring a new perspective and enthusiasm.
- Be involved in searching out, encouraging and supporting **CI teaching** related opportunities.
- To make use of **quality speakers / Bible teachers** from home and overseas to give our message a higher profile.

In the light of this last point we are taking steps to get Dr. David Dean, noted Advent Christian scholar and author, out to New Zealand next year. God willing he will do a speaking tour which will include various Bible Colleges and a series of public meetings on the importance and / or centrality of the resurrection.

We would of course be over joyed to supply a speaker to your church, homegroup, or whatever as we did for the Hamilton Church. Let us know.

We invite you all to be partners with us in achieving these goals.

Our Executive:

Since Conference 2002 our Executive has consisted of Grant Cameron, Rob Carr, Beryl Ching, Brian Cooney, Sylvia Coulter, Don Dickson, Carl Josephson, Jachin Mandeno, Warren Prestidge and Edwin Tucker as well as myself.

I am privileged to work with such dedicated people committed to the truth of "life only in Christ" and above all to Jesus himself.

May God bless us all and this ministry.

David Burge.

(President)



Conditional Immortality Association Of NZ Inc.

MINUTES of the one hundred and twenty-first Annual Conference held on Saturday 14th June 2003 at the Barrycourt Conference Centre commencing 4.30 pm.

The meeting was presided over by the President, Pastor David Burge, who welcomed those attending. Approximately 48 people were present.

DEVOTIONS: The President read Prov 20:7. Righteous men and women who came before us have blessed our organization. What are we doing to be a blessing to those coming after us?

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: The President reminded those present of the need to fill in the nomination forms, if they had any fresh nominations, and hand them in.

NOTIFICATION OF GENERAL BUSINESS: Notifications were asked for, but none were received.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Doug and Rita Kern, Doreen James, Cyril & Nola Betteridge, Dawn Prestidge, Tim & Mary Long, Jachin Mandeno, Glennis Mafi. The apologies were accepted.

GREETINGS: Greeting was received from Advent Christian General Conference America through Cleo Thomas World Advent Missions. David Burge to prepare a greeting and reply.

CONDOLENCES: There was a short time of silence in memory of Pastor Lloyd Chalmers (who was on Exec. committee for many years), Margaret Carter, Allan Fraser, Harry Page, Trevor Hodges, Jean Campbell, Ann (Beattie) Sickling.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 120TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE: The minutes were taken as read and accepted. They had been provisionally confirmed by the Executive Committee. There was no business arising from the Minutes other than what appeared elsewhere on the Agenda.

ANNUAL REPORTS: (Copies of all but the Financial Report are included in this magazine)

a. Presidents Report. Presented by the President, Pastor David Burge.

b. Treasurer's Report. Presented by the Treasurer, Rob Carr. His final comment was that we were blessed to be able to help others.

Rob Carr/ Carl Josephson Accepted

c. Adventure Camp Trust Board (Carey Park) Presented by Wayne Schache. Due to the grant for operating expenses the finances have broken even this year. ASB have notified that there will be reduced amounts available in the future.

Wayne Schache/ Viv Gilling Accepted

Comments were made as to not making the Gospel presentation compulsory for campers.

Motion: That loan to Adventure Camp Trust Board is left as it is, an interest free loan with no capital repayments, being reviewed on an annual basis.

Edwin Tucker/ Brian Cooney

Carried

d. Resurrection Publishing. Presented by Carl Josephson. Noted that the web site was www.afterlife.co.nz.

Carl Josephson/ Bill Ching Accepted

e. Advent Christian Mission NZ. Presented by Garry Schache.

Garry Schache/ Ernie Schache Accepted

Presentation by Ernie Schache home on furlough from Advent Christian Mission in India. He noted that only 5% were Christian in that country – a tremendous need for the gospel. His dream was a partnership between Church/ Mission/ Advent Christian Mission NZ to provide good churches and adequate housing for Pastors in India.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President - David Burge; Past President – Carl Josephson;
Secretary – Beryl Ching; Treasurer – Rob Carr.

Ernie Schache/ Carl Josephson Carried

Committee Members – Grant Cameron, Don Dickson, Warren Prestidge, Sylvia Coulter, Jachin Mandeno, Brian Cooney, Cyril Betteridge, Lorraine Smith. (Those not present to have their willingness to be reappointed confirmed)

Rep to Camp Trust Board – Edwin Tucker, Viv Gilling

Edwin Tucker/ Glenise Burge Carried

GENERAL BUSINESS

There was no general business.

CONFERENCE 2004 DATE & PLACE

Agreed that the Executive set the date for Conference on a Saturday in June 2004.

Pastor Warren Prestidge then spoke to the conference on Conditional Immortality and Resurrection Life. (1Cor 15: 3-5)

Don Dickson then closed the conference in prayer 8.42 pm.

Confirmed: _____ President Date: _____

(Provisionally confirmed by the Executive on 28.07.03)

Resurrection Publishing Report to Conference 2003

I guess the best way to summarize this last year is 'more of the same'.

We continue to produce the magazine, *From Death to Life*, and feedback is generally positive. Our mailing list remains about the same within New Zealand (c220), while our overseas readership has increased from 66 to 81. This was in the most part due to a list of possibly interested people sent to us from the Resurrection Fellowship in the UK. One area we have developed is the correspondence, especially that from Africa. They continue to appreciate the complimentary copies sent to them, and the opportunity for their prayer and other needs to be reach a wider audience. As always suggestions for ways to improve/ expand are welcome.

Book sales continue at a reasonable pace. This is mostly due to one organization in the USA (The Restoration Fellowship) that is clearly doing a wonderful job of promoting Warren's book, *Life, Death and Destiny*, having now bought a total of 275 copies for resale. A few copies each of *Two Views of Hell* (Fudge/ Peterson), *Why I Believe in Conditional Immortality* (Hatch), *Daring to Differ* (Hatch), and *Heaven, Hell and Hades* (Barton) have also been sold in the last year.

The photocopying side of the work continues to struggle. A good contract through Kim Beale (SoccerPlus NZ) and the occasional other job have meant there is some regular income but nowhere enough to cover the basic expenses. As you may have seen on the display table Lesley Look and Sharon Josephson have combined their interest in photography with the availability of the photocopier to produce some very good quality greeting cards. This provides another small source of income for us, but is heavily reliant on the time input of those two ladies, whom I'd like to thank for making their cards available tonight.

Despite good intents the website has remained unaltered for another year! Nevertheless we do still receive occasional emails asking questions or seeking further information as a result of this.

We look forward to continuing to share the message of life and hope in Jesus Christ in the year ahead.

Thank you for your support.
Carl Josephson



meetings. Hard copy and OHT versions were also produced so there was something to suit all the various meetings and facilities.

Ernie Schache to India:

Soon after Grant left, in June 2002, Ernie announced his desire to serve the Lord on a foreign field and was subsequently seconded by Advent Christian World Missions to the position of Administrator serving the Advent Christian Conference of India and Blessed Hope Fellowship. After a commissioning service on the evening of July 28th, held at Ernie's home church, Owairaka Baptist, in cooperation with ACMNZ (which took the format of a Hymn Sing at Ernie's request), he commenced his work there August 1st. This allowed him time with the Wrights before they departed India for home and their furlough.

Ernie too plans to take a one-month furlough each year to return home to NZ. As part of that he is here with us today to tell us in person something of the work that he has been doing.

PACCI Orchard Farm Project:

A project very dear to our hearts is the Philippine Advent Christian Conference Incorporated Farm Project. This is a well-researched farming program utilizing 4.75 hectares of land to grow several local fruits. The objectives stated are:

- To establish an orchard farm as an income generating project of the PACCI
- To uplift economically all the Pastors and Church workers of the PACCI
- To support church planting and missions for the realization of the goals and objectives of PACCI.

We all now have the opportunity to "sponsor" a plant! The thrill of this project is that it is a local initiative - we simply have the opportunity to help them help themselves! This is to be encouraged both in the Philippines and in other mission territories.

The OBC Audio Visual Room:

As part of on-going efforts to meet the requirements for CHED accreditation the OBC directors decided to set up a permanent Audio Visual Room to house the multi-media equipment required for their courses. ACMNZ has generously supported this project.

OBC used money from the Helen Schache Memorial Fund to set up the Audio Visual Room. In honour of Helen a plaque has been set up.

Silver Fern Apartments - update

We have supported this project now for some years, prayerfully, financially and by the sweat of our work teams. The units were officially opened at Christmas while Ernie was there with Grant. Filipino college staff members now occupy three of the four apartments. Non-national staff may utilize the facilities if not already occupied by national staff.

A Work Team Planned:

Our Work Teams are an important part of what we do. It was while serving as leader of the 2001/2002 Philippine Work Team the Grant heard the call to full time service! A Work Team was planned for India 2003 / 2004 to assist on any of three different possible projects in Guindy and / or Madurai. We are still waiting for confirmation as to whether this will be possible, but at this stage it looks unlikely.

Financial Matters:

Significant amounts continue to be forwarded to projects in both India and the Philippines as our 'focus zones'. Local support for Grant and Ernie is coming in well. Although a large part of Grant and Ernie's support is provided by ACWM in America we take seriously the need to do all that we can to raise as much as we can to support our own missionaries. Donations are still coming in for OBC Students Blessing Fund and the OBC Building Project. The PACCI Orchard Project has begun attracting donations and funds have already been forwarded towards the project.

ACMNZ Web Page:

Work is under way on a Missions web page. Philip Alexander has designed a website for ACCONZ which can be found at www.acconz.org.nz. The Mission page is now under construction will include ACMNZ information, India & Philippine newsletters, a photo gallery etc. The project is expected to be completed and launched end of June 2003.

See over...

Ongoing Goals:

As a committee we have some ongoing goals.

We aim to:

- Publicize our mission opportunities in new and relevant mediums and formats to attract and challenge a wider base of participants and supporters.
- Assist locals and members into missions – long or short term.
- Recruit new members to carry on the work from NZ and offer fresh ideas, perspectives and enthusiasm.
- Continue to be involved in offering relevant people and skills to assist international projects on short-term foreign mission trips.
- Be involved in encouraging and supporting internationals in developing their own support projects with the resource and skills they already have with a view to self-sufficiency.
- Offer our own missionaries the best profile and support opportunities we can – through publicity, communications, financial support raising, and most of all prayer.

We invite you all to be partners with us in achieving these goals.

Garry E. Schäche
(Trust Board Chairman).



Please continue to pray for Grant Aldridge and Ernie Schache

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD
(Conference Address, 2003) by Warren Prestidge

A boss asks his employee, "Do you believe in the afterlife?" "Well," replies the employee, "as a matter of fact I do." "I guess that explains it," the boss observes. "After you left work early yesterday to attend your grandmother's funeral, she dropped in here to see you."

Well, actually I don't believe in the afterlife at all. However, I do believe in something quite different: **the resurrection of the dead.**

How many of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World can you recall? By far the best known of them is the pyramids of Egypt. The pyramids are also by far the oldest and the only one of the seven still standing. Tremendous feats of imagination, of engineering, of empire, of slave labour. And what are they? Tombs! Colossal monuments to human anxiety about death. They confirm for me the truth of what the Bible says, in Heb 2:15, that mankind lives in lifelong bondage to the fear of death.

Death is a huge problem for us. It is hard to bear, very hard, especially when it comes before we have, as they say, "had a good life". And, in fact, very often it does come far too soon. Isn't this why the human imagination has been so busy with the idea of an "afterlife"? Isn't this why, despite the plain evidence of everyday experience, we're so concerned to convince ourselves that death is somehow not what it seems:

the end of life: because it fills us with such anxiety? This is why we react in inauthentic ways and concoct spurious solutions, out of fear and pride.

Some of these solutions can appear very impressive, even noble, even spiritual: solutions like the pyramids; or the doctrine that the "real me", the human soul, is immortal, that it doesn't die, a doctrine developed so persuasively by the Greek philosopher Plato some 400 years B.C. Yet such solutions, or rather, evasions, are certainly not signs from God.

You will even find Christians arguing that the soul must be immortal because the belief is so widespread! But this idea, that death is not real, certainly did not come from God. Read Gen 3:4. It's not God who told Eve, "You will not die." It's the snake. "You will be like God," said the serpent (Gen 3:5). And she believed him. Similarly, this is what Plato wrote (*Phaedo* 80b): "...the soul is in the very likeness of the divine and immortal..." God says, however, "You are dust and to dust you shall return" (Gen 3:19). That is what death is: the end of life and the dissolution of the whole person. And that is why we must die: to learn that, after all, we are not divine, so that we will start making room for God.

Many accounts of faith make it sound as though belief in the immortality of the soul is essential to true

religion. John Calvin, for example, argued that we could have no knowledge of God at all unless we had immortal souls (*Institutes* I.xv.2). The Apostle Paul says otherwise! In Rom 1:21-23, he writes that it is when we turn our attention from "the glory of the immortal God" to "mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles", that we lose the knowledge of God.

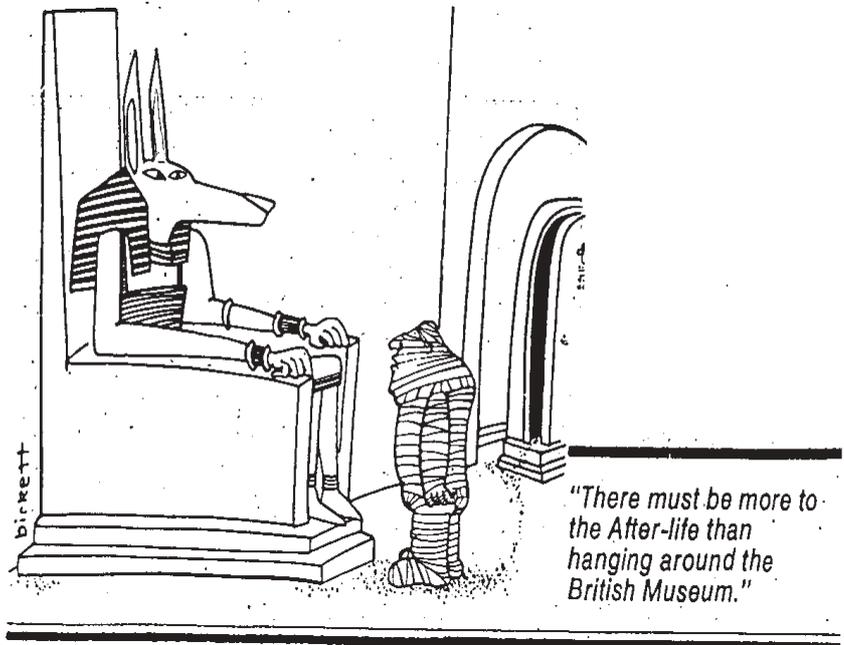
The doctrine that the soul is immortal is a foundation of false religion, not of truth, in that it puts the focus upon us, instead of upon God. But the Bible says: get rid of your illusions about death and you will be rid of serious illusions about yourself and begin to make room for God. "Lord, let me know my end and what is the measure of my days: let me know how fleeting my life is.... Surely every man stands as a mere breath... And now, Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you" (Ps 39:4-7).

The Bible says that God "alone has immortality" (1 Tim 6:16). When we die, we die. And, frankly, we knew that all along. There is no "afterlife". But the wonderful thing is, that God is also offering us immortality, not now but in the future, as His gift of sheer grace, through Jesus Christ. Not the phantom survival of some disembodied spirit, but the resurrection and transformation of the whole person – "glory and honour and immortality" (Rom 2:7) – at the return of Christ.

In **1 Corinthians 15**, Paul is writing to people who cannot see the point of the resurrection of the dead: "...how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (v12). Now, these people are Christians, in the church at Corinth. And, yes, they do believe in a future life. Verse 29 tells us that some of them are even getting baptized on behalf of others who have died, to try and ensure these people go to heaven. Yet they cannot see the need for resurrection.

Many people, including many Christians, are still like this today. Ask many Christians what has happened to Christians who have died and you will be told that they are in heaven. So then, what is the point of resurrection?

Most of these Corinthian Christians were Greeks, of course, and they had been brought up in the whole tradition stemming from Plato, that we have immortal souls. Naturally enough, resurrection had no place in that tradition. If the "real me" lives on, that is all that matters. In fact, these Greeks would have said we're better off without bodies! Similarly, the Greek philosophers Paul addressed in Athens took him seriously until he began to speak about the resurrection of the dead (Acts 17:32). True, these Corinthian Christians had come to accept that Jesus rose from the dead in some sense, but they certainly saw no such future for themselves. Bruce Winter explains: "It was not the resurrection of Christ that



was denied, but the resurrection of the Christian's body over against the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul." And further: "To the first century mind, the immortality of the soul was unquestionably true for most pagans" (*New Bible Commentary*, 21st Century Edition). Today, most Christians do not really get the point either, because we still retain that pagan legacy also. The point is: *resurrection is our only hope!* Resurrection is God's way, the only way, out of death.

Paul goes back to the fundamentals of the Gospel, here in 1 Cor 15:3-5. I wish all Christians would do the same, in dealing with the question of death, because we really have no business basing our faith or our message upon anything except what God has revealed and done in Jesus Christ. And here Paul reminds us all of the fundamental witness, going right back to the formative days of the faith: "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures...he was

buried...he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures and...he was seen...."

That's it, says Paul. We are not dealing here with manmade ideas. This is the truth that God has done. Now, what does this tell us? Everything. And, in this great chapter, Paul goes on to say practically everything there is to say on the subject of death and what follows.

First, the nature of resurrection. The Gospel witness tells us that *Christ* died, that *Christ* was buried and then that *Christ* was raised in glory and seen. Resurrection means, the making alive again, and transforming, of the whole person who died. Clearly this involves bodily life.

From verse 35 onwards, Paul writes about this at length, while addressing the question: "How are the dead raised. With what kind of body do they come?" Answer? "What is sown a physical body, what is raised a spiritual body. This perishable nature puts on the imperishable and this

mortal nature puts on immortality” (vv44, 53, 54).

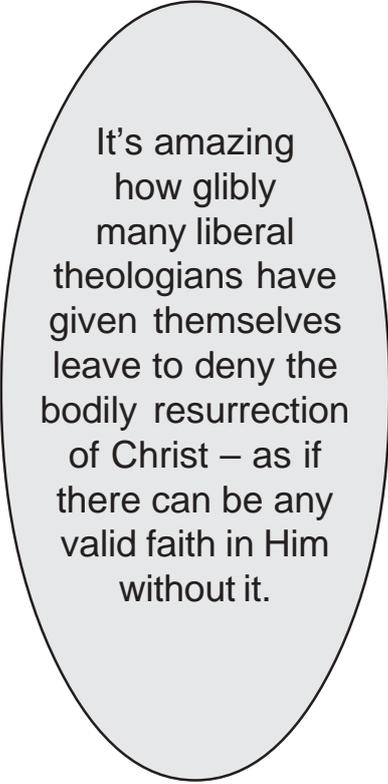
How? God does it (v38). It is God, and God alone, who can raise the dead. And He can do this, because He made us in the first place. He is “the God...who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist” (Rom 4:17). Just as we contribute nothing to our salvation, so we contribute nothing to our resurrection. We have to trust entirely to God’s power and grace. We have to be content to be entirely in God’s hands, to “rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead” (II Cor 1:9).

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is the invention of people looking within themselves for their salvation, not to God. But then, that doctrine is only a theory. Resurrection is a fact!

Second, the certainty of resurrection. The second thing the Gospel witness tells us, is that resurrection is a fact. It has actually happened: “in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead” (v20).

True, apart from Jesus, death would be a closed book. But not now! Michael Green wrote of this change in his book *Man Alive!* In the late Middle Ages, people all over Europe were speculating about the possibility of a sea route to India around the bottom of Africa. However, “All attempts to round that Cape had failed. So much so that this treacherous headland where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet was known as the Cape of Storms and it was

the scene of many a wreck. However one intrepid mariner was determined to try again. At length, he succeeded in rounding the Cape and reaching the East. There is still a monument to this famous sailor, Vasco da Gama, in China today.... The very name of that terrible Cape was changed to its present title, the Cape of Good Hope.... Up to the time when Jesus died and rose again, death was like that Cape of Storms, littered with



It’s amazing how glibly many liberal theologians have given themselves leave to deny the bodily resurrection of Christ – as if there can be any valid faith in Him without it.

wrecks.... His resurrection has turned it into the Cape of Good Hope” (London: IVP, 1968, pp62-63).

The resurrection of Jesus is a fact. Yet so far it is a totally unique fact. It is not simply an outstanding example of what happens to everyone at death, a sign that we all survive! It points to Christ alone, to life only in Christ. However, Paul goes

on (I Cor 15:20-23): “In fact Christ has been raised from the dead, *the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep*. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. However, each in his own order; Christ the first fruits, *then at his coming, those who belong to Christ*.”

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the “first fruits”, the first instance, basis and pledge, of a great harvest to come. If you belong to Christ, then the fact of his resurrection makes your resurrection a certainty also. When? “At his coming.”

Now, don’t tell me that Jesus comes when a person dies! Or that, when you die, you enter into a timeless realm and so take on resurrection immediately! True, the next thing you *know* is resurrection. But Paul is very explicit. When we are raised, we are raised along with everyone else (1 Cor 15:23, 51-52; I Thess 4:16-17). Furthermore, the coming of Christ is not a timeless event. There will be people still alive upon earth when he comes (I Cor 15:51, I Thess 4:15-17)! That means, that his coming will invade our time and publicly consummate our collective human history.

So the, what is the condition of the dead in Christ at the moment? Are they in heaven? No, I Cor 15:20 tells us that they “have fallen asleep” and I Thess 4:13 tells us that they “are sleeping”. They are neither active nor

Carey Park Christian Camp Report to Conference 2003



It's been another big year for Carey Park. Again, all glory & honour to our Heavenly Father.

Highlights of the Year:

- The Gospel has been unashamedly presented, and embraced, and peoples lives have been changed! Praise God!
 - Our Kids and Teen camps continue to be great times where lives are changed/challenged
 - The vast majority of schools using the camp are presented with an evening of games and a Gospel presentation.
- The sewerage system is finished!!! It includes a water recycling system, which feeds 'grey' water into toilet cisterns. I don't know how many years this has been prayed for, now we spend the same number of years thanking God for it!!! This project finalisation was made a reality by another grant from the ASB Trust, and (hopefully) one promised from the Waitakere City Council.
- The fields are drained
- Top toilets got a full makeover
- We have a new staff room/office area

All these projects (and other smaller ones) were achieved through last year's successful application to the ASB Trust.

The Staff:

Cameron Dick has ably led the staff this year. He, and they have done another great job. They continually need your prayer, for wisdom & protection.

There has been a significant staff movement in the last 12 months. Both the head chef and Education Officer have moved on, and been replaced by Colin Yearsley (he just couldn't keep away from us) and Warren Stubbs. We are thankful for the Lord's provision of these 2 and all our staff.

Due to the increased administration load, we are advertising for an office manager. This is a new role, which we are creating, in faith, to ease the load for our Director, and enable him to focus on the strategy/vision moving forward. Please pray that the Lord will provide the right person to fill this role.



Financial

This year has seen an improvement in our operating finances.

Two big issues affecting the year-end result were:

1. We had to pay for the removal of the transformer from our property, and the establishment of one outside the property. Whilst this cost us a significant amount of money initially,

we are saving \$40 odd *per day* in power costs, and the initial cost will be recovered by now.

2. We were also able to gain funding from the ASB for Operating Expenses. This significantly eased the financial pressure. We will use some of this grant to encourage schools of lower decile ratings to use the camp, when they wouldn't usually come through financial constraints.

These two issues aside, we were able to break even in our operating finances. This is significantly a better position than previous years. Praise God!!

The Future

The points of focus for the future in which we would value our prayer support:

- Staying faithful to the proclamation of the Gospel
- Salisbury Lodge – what to do with it
- Effective marketing that will enable us to fill our camp 100% of the time.
- The Administration role

Trust Deed

We amended our Trust Deed this year to reflect what we are in fact doing at Carey Park, and how we go about it.

We are grateful to the CIA for its continued support and interest, and wish to thank the Executive and all the members.

Wayne Schache
Secretary
Adventure Camp
Trust Board



Cont'd from Page 12

conscious. But they are secure in Christ.

Resurrection is the reconstitution and transformation of the whole person who died.

Resurrection is a fact.

And third, resurrection is an absolute necessity. Otherwise the whole Christian faith is null and void. Otherwise, says Paul (1Cor15: 12-19), "those who have fallen asleep - died - in Christ have *perished*"(v18).

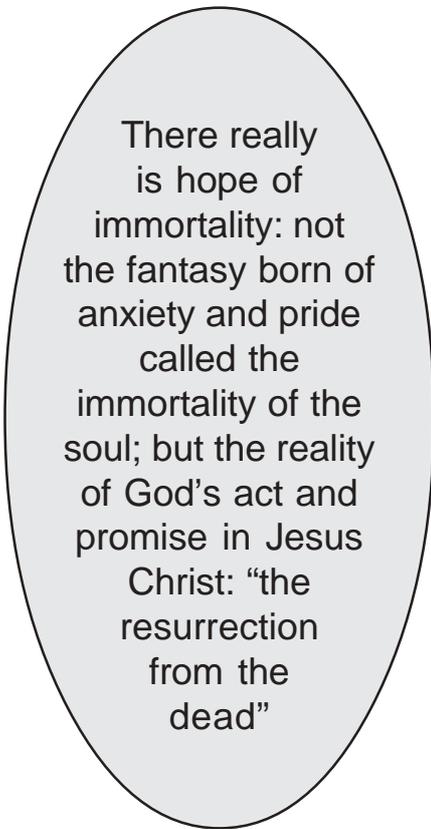
Why? Because otherwise God has not reversed the sentence of death under which Christ died. In which case (v17), "your faith is futile and you are still in your sins."

It's amazing how glibly many liberal theologians have given themselves leave to deny the bodily resurrection of Christ – as if there can be any valid faith in Him without it. Paul says here, there can't. In fact, unless He's raised, there is no forgiveness of sins at all. Furthermore, the whole Christian Gospel is blasphemy: "we are even found to be misrepresenting God" (v15)!

Why is the resurrection of Jesus such a big deal? Because only God Himself can declare any person, let alone a person put to death on a cross, to be His own Son. Only God could reverse the curse Christ died under. Only God could legitimise Jesus Christ - or anyone - as the One who takes away sin.

The resurrection was God's own direct act, something only the world's

creator could bring off. Frankly, if the *real* Jesus didn't really die at all, why is His resurrection such a big deal? No. In Rev.1:18, Jesus says: "I died and behold / am alive for evermore." Not the resurrection of the body only, but the resurrection of the person! God's own act. And so our very faith in Jesus, indeed our faith in God, goes hand in hand with this fact of Christ's resurrection. 1 Pet 1:21 says: "Through Christ



There really is hope of immortality: not the fantasy born of anxiety and pride called the immortality of the soul; but the reality of God's act and promise in Jesus Christ: "the resurrection from the dead"

you have confidence in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, and so your faith and hope are in God."

The resurrection of the dead was necessary to vindicate Jesus. It is also necessary to make life worth living.

Maybe you have heard of Brooke Shields? Apparently, she was being interviewed once for the job of

Spokesperson for a federal anti-smoking campaign in U.S.A. and this is what she said: "Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life"! Yep! Actually it's even worse than that, Brooke! If you're killed, if you're dead, you've lost everything. It's "the last enemy" (v26) - and only resurrection can bring you back.

Here in 1Cor 15:32, Paul is trying to bring this home to these Corinthians who believe in soul survival. He writes: "If the dead are not *raised*, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.'" Did Paul believe there was any other way? Obviously not. Unless the dead are raised, he says, human life can have no higher purpose, ultimately, than self-indulgence. Because it all ends in death. You see, it is not "just" my body that dies: I die.

"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Paul is actually quoting Isa 22:13. But he's also picking up on a slogan that was attributed in his day to the Epicureans, people who were materialists and believed death was the end. You see, not all Greeks, not all pagans, believed in the immortality of the soul. Some believed in nothing. Paul says: Well, they're right - if there's no resurrection!

It's the same today. Many today do believe in some sort of afterlife, usually a kind of new-age version of the immortal soul. But many others have come to recognize there's really no basis for any such idea, that

in fact human beings are a unity of outer and inner and that without the body we can't live at all. The Christian Church needs to catch up with those people. Paul has. He says to them here: "Yes, you're right, if there's no bodily resurrection there's nothing." Verse 53: "this perishable *must put on* the imperishable and this mortal nature *must put on* immortality."

You Corinthians, he says in v29, you've been acting like fools, if there's no resurrection. There you are, getting baptized on behalf of people who've died – but, you know, there's no afterlife without resurrection! Me too, I've been a fool, exposing myself to persecution and suffering, risking death every day – for nothing, if there's no resurrection (vv30-32a)

You see, death is what it seems to be: the death of the whole person. When the Bible says, "You are dust and to dust you shall return", it doesn't "just" mean your body. And that's not "just" the Old Testament, either. It's the New Testament. It's here, in 1Cor 15. Here's Paul *quoting* Genesis. Verse 45 Paul quotes Gen 2:7: "the first man Adam became a living being." "Being." That's the Greek word *psuche*. It's actually the very word Plato used for the "soul". But the Bible says here, not that we *have* souls but that we *are* souls. The first man *was* a living soul. In fact, he was a "soulish body". And now I'm referring to v44. "It is sown a physical body". The point is, that word "physical" (or some translations say "natural") is also this same

word *psuche* – "soul"; *psuchikon* – "soulish". We are whole, unitary beings: soulish bodies. And now v47: "The first man was of the earth, a man of dust." And v48: As he was, so are we all: we all "bear the image of the man of dust." We are whole, unitary beings. It is the whole person that ceases at death.

So – what? "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"? Except that *Christ has been raised from the dead*. God, champion of truth and right, is real after all. And, after all, there is an alternative to death. Yes (v 44), there is a physical – *psuchikon* – body: But there is also a spiritual body. Yes (v 47), the first man "is from the earth, a man of dust"; but there is now another man, Christ, and he is from "heaven". And although we now bear the image of the man of dust, we shall – if we belong to Christ – we shall – at His coming – bear the image of this man from heaven (49, 23).

There really is hope of immortality: not the fantasy born of anxiety and pride called the immortality of the soul; but the reality of God's act and promise in Jesus Christ: the "living hope" of "the resurrection from the dead" (1Pet.1:3). Resurrection life is not phantom, disembodied life, but the full-orbed life of God's new creation. And the sufferings of this present time bear no comparison with this glory to come (Rom 8:18). It makes life worth living. Not only that, it makes suffering and dying for truth and right worth doing. But it is conditional. The condition is that we belong to Christ by

faith (I Cor 15:23). It's "life only in Christ".

Paul knows that "this mortal nature will put on immortality" (v 53). Death will be "swallowed up in victory" (54). That's why he's willing to suffer even the loss of all things for Christ (Phil.3:8): to lose his life now, for Christ's sake and for the Gospel, to save it in the end (Mark 8:35). And he says to us: "Therefore, my dear friends – don't be fooled into looking anywhere else except to Jesus Christ; and don't be fooled, either, into a life of careless indifference and self-indulgence. Instead be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; knowing that our labour – our labour of love and truth for God – our labour is not in vain after all, in the Lord" (v58)



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Fire and Flood

How the New Testament Uses the First Testament to Teach on Final Punishment (part four-final) **G. Andrew Peoples**

Revelation 20:10

And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

It scarcely needs explaining why those who believe in eternal torment would use this text. Here we have the necessary elements for the traditional doctrine – the lake of fire, conscious suffering, and an eternal duration. The devil is thrown in to suffer along with the beast and the false prophet, and only verses later we read that “whoever’s name was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (v.15).

Jürgen Roloff holds back from offering any explicit comment as to the nature of the lake of fire in verse 10, saying that like the Beast and the false prophet, the devil “is thrown into the lake of fire – considered an inaccessible place beyond the world. The power of the evil one is thereby ultimately eliminated.”¹ He does however use verse 14 to give meaning to the image: Death

and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire; the powers of death themselves are ultimately killed. God deals with them as with Satan and his other associates (cf. v10; 19:20). At issue here is not punishment but, as John observes in a clarifying postscript,

eternal destruction – the lake of fire is the “second” (i.e., eternal and final) death.²

When Death is thrown into the lake of fire, it is “killed.” This raises questions over the meaning of the lake of fire. If an entity like *death* can be thrown into it, then does this not make it difficult to conceive of it as a place or state of conscious suffering? It seems clear, as Roloff notes, that the point of depicting Death being cast into the lake of fire is to show that death itself will one day be done away with altogether. This in itself seems to suggest that the lake of fire itself signifies an end, a “death.” Mounce affirms this understanding, connecting death’s fate in the lake of fire with Isaiah 25:8, which declares that our God will “swallow up death forever.” Mounce notes the final annihilation of death, followed by the explanation of the lake

of fire as being “the second death” (20:14). “It is the second death, that is, the destiny of those whose temporary resurrection results only in a return to death and its punishment.”³

It is obviously important to do this kind of analysis, comparing one part of the vision with another and ensuring that we do not interpret one part in a way that is inconsistent with how we interpret another. At the same time however we need to remember where this imagery came from. It is not original with the book of Revelation, but is taken directly from the earlier books of Scripture – in this case largely from the book of Daniel, chapter 7. Here Daniel has a vision of four beasts (vv. 1-14), and then, unlike the vision in the book of Revelation, Daniel’s vision is explicitly interpreted for us (vv. 15-28). Even a cursory reading of Daniel 7 and the book of Revelation reveals that the beasts are clearly representative of the very same entities in both cases. We cannot possibly hope to do justice to a study of the beasts of Daniel and Revelation in the space

allowed here, but we can make some general observations. The beasts are *kingdoms* that exist on earth, with one kingdom being distinguished as more terrible than the ones preceding it (the fourth beast in Daniel, or the second beast in Revelation). This interpretation is not expressly given in John's Revelation, but it is made clear in Daniel 7:17, 23, "The four great beasts are four kingdoms that will rise from the earth... The fourth beast is a fourth kingdom that will appear on earth. It will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth, trampling it down and crushing it." It appears to be this fourth Beast that is given the infamous number 666 in Revelation 13:18.

Interpreters right across the theological/eschatological spectrum, while they do not agree on much about eschatological matters, appear to be agreed that the Beast of Revelation represents, not one single individual, but a kingdom, a "system." Reformed preterist Kenneth Gentry sees the image as representing Rome, with Nero Caesar in particular as its representative.⁴ Dispensationalist/ futurist John Walvoord sees it as the revived Roman Empire in the last days.⁵ Idealist Sam Hamstra sees the beast representing "the spirit and empires of the world."⁶ While all these views of the beast clearly differ from one another, they demonstrate

the consensus that the beast is not a personal entity, but rather a symbol for an abstract or corporate entity of some sort. This much at least seems unavoidable given the divine interpretation of Daniel's vision. This, however, throws a spanner in the works for the traditional interpretation of Revelation 20:10. The difficulty is spelled out briefly by Fudge, who notes that "According to many Bible scholars these [i.e. the beast and the false prophet] are not actual people but represent governments which persecute believers and false religions which support those governments. Neither institution will be perpetuated forever, *nor could they suffer conscious, sensible pain*" (emphasis added).⁷

Whatever the lake of fire signifies, it must be a fate that can be applied to both personal entities *as well as* impersonal entities

Peterson has a comeback: However, Fudge fails to mention the devil, who, along with the beast and the false prophet, is cast into the lake

of fire. I understand the beast and the false prophet to be individuals capable of suffering pain, but I'll put that to one side for a moment. What about Satan? Fudge, as an evangelical Christian, refuses to depersonalize the devil. So here is one personal being who will suffer in everlasting torment. Revelation 20:10 tells us that the devil will be thrown into the lake of fire. Five verses later we read that human beings will be cast into the same lake of fire. Wouldn't normal hermeneutics dictate the understanding that human beings will be heading for eternal torment too?

Peterson has not grasped the point of the argument. The observation that Fudge makes does not deny that some humans will share the fate of the devil and the beast. Rather, Fudge's comments are set in the context of his discussing the nature of the *lake of fire*. If it depicts a fate that will be suffered by an impersonal or corporate entity (the beast), then clearly whatever it is, it is not conscious suffering, since this cannot *be* applied to such an entity. In other words, whatever the lake of fire signifies, it must be a fate that can be applied to both personal entities (such as the devil or lost human beings) *as well as* impersonal entities (such as the beast). Destruction would certainly be a possible interpretation, but conscious suffering would not. Presumably, Peterson's reply would be that the beast

is a person, and it *will* be consciously tormented. It is bewildering then that this is the very aspect of the argument that he chose to “put to one side for a moment,” since this was the whole point of Fudge’s observation – this fact demands an annihilationist interpretation rather than the traditionalist one.⁸

The scriptural background to this passage creates problems for the traditional interpretation in at least one other way as well. Like the book of Revelation, Daniel 7 records the fate of the beast, in Daniel’s dream and in the interpretation of that dream. In Daniel’s vision, “I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire.” When this part of the dream is interpreted, we learn that in historical terms it refers to a godless kingdom that will oppose the saints of God, but a time will come when “the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever” (v. 26). In Revelation 20, the fate of the beast is described as being “tormented day and night forever and ever” in a lake of fire. If the traditionalist were to apply the same method of interpretation to both Revelation and Daniel, we would end up with a glaring contradiction, because if one is *slain* then one cannot *also* be kept alive and tormented day and night forever and ever (quite apart from the fact that the beast is not a

“someone” who *can* suffer such a fate). If, however, we accept that the same point is being made in both apocalyptic passages, using a variation in similar imagery, then the point in each case is that the kingdoms that oppose the kingdom of God will be overthrown forever, they will come to an end. A question may then be asked: *Why* does the author of the apocalypse use the terms “tormented day and night forever and ever,” over and above the language that he has borrowed from Daniel?⁹ We can first note that whatever the answer to this question is, it will not be a threat to the position advanced here, since as we saw in Daniel, what happens to the beast in the vision is *symbolic* of what happens to the kingdom in history. I would also note that nowhere else in Scripture is a picture of the eternal torment of anyone pictured, including the devil, the “man of lawlessness” (2 Thess 2:3), or the coming “Antichrist” (1 Jn 2:18), and certainly not an earthly kingdom. The only kind of suggestions I would make are somewhat speculative, but they might involve the desire to paint a truly frightening and spectacular picture of the end of this persecutor of the saints who were to read this letter, one that portrays a lasting tribute to the punishment of those who so cruelly treated the people of God on earth.

The same then must also apply to the devil and all those who follow him, since they too suffer the fate of the beast in Revelation 20. If the beasts represent kingdoms or systems, then the message of Revelation is the same as that of Daniel 7, which is essentially a recurrence of the message of Daniel 2, in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream about the statue, which Daniel interprets. The parts of the statue represent various kingdoms, which are obliterated by a rock (representing God’s kingdom) that grows to fill the earth. The interpretation is given in verses 44-45: In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces.

If traditionalists are not prepared to seriously tackle this point then F.F. Bruce’s claim can be regarded as unchallenged, “Since the beast and the false prophet are figures for systems rather than individual persons, the permanent destruction of evil is evidently meant.”¹⁰ Clark Pinnock’s observation rings true: “I take John’s primary point to be that everything that has rebelled against God

will be overcome and come to an end.”¹¹

Summary and Conclusion

There are other texts that theologians use to bolster the doctrine of eternal torment, but a survey of the texts examined here reveals that most of the significant texts used by traditionalists have been covered.¹² There are many different kinds of argument involved in the debate on final punishment. Such arguments would include the dispute as to whether or not God’s infinite holiness might demand that His enemies suffer infinite pain, whether sins committed in a finite lifetime might warrant a punishment that is never completed throughout all of eternity, or whether the somewhat dualistic vision of an eternal heaven *and* an eternal hell might clash with the biblical vision of eternity where creation is brought into harmony under Christ. These arguments are, doubtless, worth exploring (although one might be forgiving for believing that at times some such arguments might be verging on territory where angels fear to tread), but they are not what we have been concerned with here. We have been concerned with biblical texts that meet three criteria: 1.) They are in the New Testament 2.) They draw on earlier Scripture and 3.) They have implications for the doctrine of final punishment. It may be possible to ferret out still more texts that meet these criteria, but given the available

space, we have treated the most important such texts.

We think that two conclusions have been justified. Firstly, these texts, although they concern final punishment, do not teach eternal torment. If we were to treat them as definitive on final punishment, then they teach that the unsaved will finally be destroyed. This message is presented in various ways: The slain enemies of the Lord will be consumed with worms and fire. They will be suddenly taken in destruction like those who perished in the flood. They will be annihilated like the wicked men of Sodom, whose fate was an example of what would happen to the unsaved. They will come to nothing like Edom. They, like the kingdoms of this world that are set up against the kingdom of God, will be overthrown and brought to an end, as the eschatological reality of God’s Kingdom swallows all of creation.

Secondly, traditional readings of these New Testament passages seem to have treated them apart from the context that the writers gave them by linking them to earlier Scripture. It appears (to this writer at least) that the only way to conclude that any of these passages clearly teach that the unsaved will suffer for eternity is to (consciously or not) maintain that whatever connections they might have with earlier Scripture must not be allowed to significantly contribute to their meaning.

(Footnotes)

¹ Jürgen Roloff, *Revelation*, Continental Commentary (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 229.

² *Ibid.*, 232.

³ Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 367.

⁴ Gentry devotes an entire work to establishing this thesis, *The Beast of Revelation* (Tyler: Institute for Christian Economics, 1989).

⁵ John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody press, 1966), 199.

⁶ Sam Hamstra, “An Idealist View of Revelation,” 118.

⁷ Fudge, “The Case for Conditionalism,” 78.

⁸ We might also observe that Peterson has subtly begged the question with respect to the nature of the beast in the above quotation. He says that Fudge “refuses to depersonalise” the Devil. Implicit here is the suggestion that Fudge has depersonalised the beast. However, it is only possible to depersonalise the beast if the beast is a person, and this is what Fudge’s comment was calling into question to begin with.

⁹ This question was suggested to me by Dr Christopher Marshall, who supervised this work.

¹⁰ F.F. Bruce, “Revelation,” in G.C.D. Howley, F.F. Bruce, H.C. Elison (eds.), *The New Layman’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 1708.

¹¹ Clark Pinnock, “The Conditional View,” in *Four Views on Hell*, 157.

¹² The list of significant proof texts for eternal torment surveyed here only really lacks two: Matthew 25:41-46 and Luke 16:19-31.

The Intermediate State

in Paul

Part Twelve

by Carl Josephson

Continuing 2 Corinthians 5

Verse 2 “Indeed for in this we groan, greatly desiring to put on our heavenly dwelling”

Whereas in v1 the emphasis is on change (the replacement of the old, which is destroyed, with the new), in this verse Paul introduces the aspect of continuity, with the verb ‘to put on’. Both continuity and change are present in 1 Corinthians 15 as discussed in earlier issues and indicate a consistency in Paul’s understanding.

Neither the NIV nor NRSV translate *kai* at the beginning but if it is translated as “indeed” (as Marshall does in the opening translation above, and the NRSV does in verse 3) then Paul is emphasizing even more the tension between this life and the next, with the emphasis being on the sustaining hope of receiving the heavenly dwelling. In fact it is fair to suggest again that this tension between the two ages is what the passage is about, rather than dealing with the intermediate state at all. Paul is dealing with dualism, but not the anthropological dualism (soul/ body) that has

traditionally been read into this passage, rather, an eschatological dualism (this life/ next life) that creates a deep irony between appearance and reality. This verse clearly places the fulfillment of redemption into the future, as against those who might claim it in the present, by indicating it is something we are looking forward to but have not yet attained. A similar thought is expressed in Philippians 3:10-12 where Paul writes of somehow attaining the resurrection.¹

The NIV doesn’t translate ‘this’ in verse 2, whereas the NRSV correctly links it with ‘tent’ in verse 1 rendering the beginning of this verse as “For in this tent we groan.”² This firmly ties the subject of v2 to that of v1a so it is reasonable to also link ‘our heavenly dwelling’ (v2) with the ‘building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (v1b).

Paul’s use of ‘we groan’ is mirrored in his subsequent letter to the Romans (8:23³). The groaning in both passages has a “positive side,”⁴ the desire to put on the heavenly dwelling in 2 Corinthians 5, and the desire for the redemption of

our bodies, in Romans 8. Because in Romans 8 Paul links the fulfillment of his desire to the final consummation at the *parousia* it is fair to suggest, in light of there being no evidence to the contrary, that here in v2 he also has the *parousia* in mind.

The object of the ‘great desiring’ is ‘to put on over’ the heavenly dwelling. This verb only occurs here and in verse 4 in the New Testament but brings to mind 1 Corinthians 15:53⁵ where Paul, although he doesn’t use the prefix *επι* (upon), does indicate that the ‘putting on’ is not a replacement of, but rather an addition to, the perishable or mortal body. This, once more, is firmly linked with the final consummation in 1 Corinthians 15:52 with the sound of the last trumpet.

Glasson argues, with support from C.F.D. Moule’s *Idiom Book* (88), that *επι* prefixed to a verb often has a “perfective connotation” so that ‘put on over’ “should be taken as an intensive form.”⁶ This further suggests Paul is not changing what he has

previously written; only emphasizing the point. The reason for this emphasis may well be to contrast his opponents hope of non-bodily existence with his own hope.

However **if** 1 Corinthians 15:53 is referring only to those who survive until the *parousia* (15:51 'we will not all die') then it is feasible that in our present passage Paul has two possibilities in mind. In verse 1 he may be dealing with the prospect of death before the *parousia* (if this earthly-tent is destroyed) and then in verse 2 he could be considering, or longing for, survival until the *parousia* and the immediate transformation of putting on immortality over this present mortal body. But it is a big 'if'. In 1 Cor. 15:51 Paul goes on to say 'we all will be changed' so it is equally possible that he is including both those who 'sleep' and those who are alive at the *parousia* in his description of 'putting on' imperishability and immortality in 1 Cor. 15:53. In that case this verse would simply be expressing his desire for the final consummation, as he does in 1 Corinthians 16:22, regardless of whether Paul himself is alive at the time.

Clearly both the starting point (our earthly-tent) and the final outcome (the house not made with hands/ the heavenly dwelling) are the same, whether Paul is writing about death before, or survival until, the *parousia*. This again is the thought of 1

Corinthians 15:51-53 where "in the twinkling of an eye... the dead will be raised imperishable" (v52) and those who survive will "put on imperishability" v53). In 1 Corinthians 15:52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 the timing of the two events is linked together with the sound of the (last) trumpet. So thus far in the passage there appears to be no change in Paul's understanding, other than perhaps now entertaining the possibility that he personally might not survive until the *parousia*.

Verse 3 "...if indeed, being clothed we will not be found naked."

Bultmann sees this verse as being "a side glance at those who are of another opinion."⁷

There is some textual variation here. The preferred variant is 'being clothed' but the NRSV uses 'taken off' following the UBS Gk. N.T. (3rd ed.). We will explore both possibilities.

There is also some variation in the translation of the opening phrase.

The NRSV translates it as a conditional "if indeed" whereas the NIV uses "because". Lillie supports the latter suggesting it expresses "assurance rather than doubt".⁸ These two possibilities are each supported by a number of other translations⁹ and offer substantially different alternatives for understanding

Paul here.¹⁰ Bultmann opts for a middle ground, paraphrasing it as "naturally on condition (assumed as obvious) that ...".¹¹ We are comfortable with either Lillie or Bultmann's suggestions, the important point being that Paul is not entertaining the possibility of disembodied (naked) existence.

The third question needing to be addressed in this verse concerns 'naked'. Again there are two lines of interpretation. The majority opinion is that it is referring to the soul without the body, as do some Greek writers.¹² The minority view is that it is speaking of a state of shame before God.¹³ Cassidy suggests that the main objection to the latter is that "it is difficult to associate with Paul the fear of being found guilty before God."¹⁴ We suggest that Paul does not 'fear' the possibility; he rejects it (see later). Philippians 3:10-12 (cited earlier) shows that although Paul has complete confidence in Christ he does not have the same confidence in his own perseverance, so he must continue to work out his salvation with fear and trembling – Philippians 2:12.

Although acknowledging the strength of the majority view we would express some hesitations and one other possibility. The first hesitation is this: If 'naked' is referring to the disembodied state this would be the only such usage in Scripture. Yates has rightly

noted that “there is a wealth of evidence that intertestamental and contemporary Judaism, both Palestinian and Hellenistic, could embrace the notion of a separated soul”¹⁵ but he fails in his attempt to show that Paul entertained the possibility himself. Yates cites 2 Corinthians 12:2 (in [the] body’ ...or... ‘out of the body’) as evidence, but fails to acknowledge the possibility that Paul may merely be distinguishing between a vision and a physical transportation into ‘paradise’. We stay with our contention that Paul does not part from the First Testament understanding.

Our second hesitation is this: although there are Greek writers who refer to the naked soul they do so in contexts where they specifically mention ‘soul’.¹⁶ Paul does not, and in fact, as discussed earlier, offers little or no indication elsewhere that he seriously entertains this option of viewing the composition of a human being as consisting of body and soul/spirit in the Hellenistic sense. Bruce’s comment, quoted earlier, that “our traditional thinking about the ‘never-dying soul’, which owes so much to our Graeco-Roman heritage, makes it difficult for us to appreciate Paul’s point of view”¹⁷ is very pertinent here as it is tempting to read into

the passage something that just isn’t there.

The other possibility is that Paul may have left this concept of nakedness deliberately ambiguous. Perhaps his Greek readers would have interpreted it as the naked soul and his Jewish readers as shame. Certainly the latter view involving humiliation and shame before God does fit the broader context of judgment (5:10) and signs of true ministry (4:7 – 5:10) and we think that this understanding, which attempts to more fully acknowledge the ‘Jewishness’ of Paul’s theology, should not be dismissed too lightly.

However, whereas both Ellis¹⁸ and Belleville¹⁹ see the naked state as referring to unbelievers, ashamed before God, we would suggest that Paul may be referring to believers²⁰ and if nakedness is a state of shame it is possibly referring to those mentioned in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 who build on the right foundation but their ‘work will be consumed’. This would also tie in with in 2 Corinthians 5:10 which we understand as ‘worthless’ or ‘of no value’ (see later). Belleville points out that the passive is “frequently used to denote the result of a judicial investigation ... (so) ... to be found *naked* would be to experience God’s judgment.”²¹

All of these variations leave us with a wide variety of possibilities for this verse that we will now outline.

- 1) If indeed when we take off (our earthly dwelling) we will not be disembodied.
- 2) Because when we take off (our earthly dwelling) we will not be disembodied
- 3) If indeed when we put on (our heavenly dwelling) we will not be disembodied
- 4) Because when we put on (our heavenly dwelling) we will not be disembodied
- 5) If indeed when we take off (our earthly dwelling) we will not be ashamed
- 6) Because when we take off (our earthly dwelling) we will not be ashamed
- 7) If indeed when we put on (our heavenly dwelling) we will not be ashamed
- 8) Because when we put on (our heavenly dwelling) we will not be ashamed

Once again we call upon Pauline anthropology testified to elsewhere to reject possibilities 1 and 3 (and agree that it expresses assurance rather than doubt). So we suggest that because Paul does not entertain this possibility of a ‘naked soul’ elsewhere it would seem rather arbitrary to suggest it here.²² Instead, still going with the majority view of ‘naked’, we understand Paul as **rejecting** the idea of a disembodied soul²³ because his hope is in the ‘spiritual body’ of 1 Cor. 15:44. Harris agrees, citing

Romans 8:23²⁴ as indicative of “the divine goal for human creation” and stating that “in Jewish thought true existence or a full life either on earth or beyond the grave was inconceivable apart from embodiment.”²⁵ So we prefer options 2 or 4 and the remaining textual variation is now less significant as both lead to the same outcome.

(Footnotes)

¹ As cited earlier.

² Cf. Lincoln, 65.

³ Romans 8:23 - and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

⁴ Lincoln, 65. Cf. Furnish, 266, who describes it as coming “from a hopeful longing for something.”

⁵ 1 Cor 15:53 - For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

⁶ Glasson, 150. He also writes, “From another angle it could be urged that a

man is not fully clothed until he has put on his evpendu,thj

⁷ Bultmann, 134.

⁸ Lillie, 63 citing M.E. Thrall, *Greek Particles in the New Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1962), 82-95.

⁹ Eg. KJV, ASV If so be that; NKJ if indeed, NASB inasmuch as; RSV so that.

¹⁰ Belleville, 2 *Corinthians*, 134, translates this phrase as “but even if” but does so without comment. This would give yet a further variation that would fit in well with this thesis but without further support we must put it to one side.

¹¹ Bultmann, 135. Cf. Furnish, 267, who writes that ei; ge kai. “introduces a point the apostle believes ought to be (even though it may not always be) presupposed.”

¹² Eg Philo, *De Virtutibus* 76, and Plato, *Cratylus* 403 B. As cited in Joseph Osei-Bonsu, “The Intermediate State in the New Testament” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 44 (1991) 169-194, at 182.

¹³ So Ellis, 219ff; Belleville, 2 *Corinthians*, 135; and Murphy-O'Connor, *Theology*, 52.

¹⁴ Cassidy, 215.

¹⁵ Yates, 314.

¹⁶ Eg Philo, *De Virtutibus* 76, and Plato, *Cratylus* 403 B, as mentioned above.

¹⁷ Bruce, “Paul on Immortality,” 469.

¹⁸ Ellis, 219.

¹⁹ Belleville, 2 *Corinthians*, 135.

²⁰ We do acknowledge that 2 *Corinthians* is concerned with unbelievers as well. Eg. ‘those perishing’ – 2:15; and those whose mind ‘the god of this age has darkened’ – 4:4).

²¹ Belleville, 2 *Corinthians*, 135, drawing on Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich.

²² Although a number of scholars do. Eg. Lincoln, 67, “While Paul held a state of nakedness to be undesirable, he nevertheless reckoned with its possibility.”

²³ Cf. Glasson, 155.

²⁴ Romans 8:23 ‘and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies’.

²⁵ Harris, *Raised Immortal*, 139.

Apology

I'd like to apologize for the lateness of this issue. It was ready to go to press nearly a month ago but photocopier problems followed almost immediately by serious computer problems delayed it.

Carl Josephson

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Editorial

In the 1960's American Protest Singer Barry McGuire had a hit song with his single 'Eve of Destruction'. At the time there were plenty of reasons for the basic theme of the song – the war in Vietnam was raging; the Cold War with the Soviet Union always seemed to be threatening to break out into 'real' war; and relations with China were shaky, at best. All in all it did seem we were on the eve of destruction.

Then in the eighties and nineties the Berlin Wall came down, Communism in the Soviet Union crumbled and China began to open its doors. Although there were still some countries posing a threat to peace, and of course a number of countries still at war, the immediate threat of global destruction had faded somewhat.

Even after 9/11 with all the changes that brought to lifestyles and expectations the threat of global catastrophe in the form of nuclear war doesn't seem as imminent as it once was.

But as I look back at the one example of global destruction already witnessed - the Flood in the time of Noah - and read Jesus' warning in the New Testament, I realise that for many people it is not necessarily going to 'feel' like we are on the brink of disaster (or at least not 'physical' disaster) when Christ returns.

Luke 17:26-27 says, "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking, and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed all of them."

As I reflect on the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden; the corruption and wickedness leading to the Flood (Genesis 6:5); and the apparent advanced technology and ability at the time of the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-6) I cannot help but wonder at the difference between knowledge and wisdom.

Adam and Eve gained knowledge, but showed little wisdom; the longevity of the pre-Flood patriarchs combined with God's explicit summation of their moral condition ("that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually") indicates a similar lack of wisdom; and the advanced technology of Babel, yet the determination to stand in defiance of God, suggests the same thing. And what of today? 'Information Technology' and 'the Knowledge Wave' are common banter – but where is the wisdom? The push in many circles is for younger men and women to lead, in politics, business, and often in the church, but where is the place for wisdom? We can clone, tinker with genetics, cross species and defy nature, but human history has shown time and time again that knowledge and ability need to be checked and controlled by wisdom – and there are precious few examples of it actually happening. Wisdom needs a voice.

It is just such conditions that seem to have preceded the Flood and the judgment on Babel. Knowledge may be advancing rapidly, but unless it is accompanied by morality and wisdom then we do indeed head for 'the eve of destruction'.

How close are we? No one knows the hour or the day, but maybe we can read the signs. Not in trying to second guess which world leader may or may not be the antichrist; nor in surmising which country or organization might be the beast or the false prophet (such speculations have always proved wrong in the past and understandably cause many to be skeptical about this sort of 'fortune-telling') but perhaps we can read something in this headlong rush towards greater knowledge with the ever present human tendency to decide for ourselves what is right and wrong with only token, if any, acknowledgement of our Creator and Sustainer.

I don't know how close we are, only God does. But any delay in His return is not due to God's slowness in responding to the cries of His people. Rather it is due to His grace in not wanting any to perish. Each day we have; each person we meet is an opportunity to work with God in bringing His grace to the world. It is not time for Christians to closet themselves in their churches and wait for the end. It is time for us to live as Jesus did as He approached the cross – weeping for the people, teaching in the Temple, challenging the religious leaders, forgiving those who persecuted Him, and encouraging His disciples to persevere in their faith.

God knows exactly what Christ's return will mean for millions of people – judgment and destruction. He is not looking forward to it. His great desire is that 'all to come to repentance'. May we continue to work with Him to that end.

Carl Josephson

Prayer Request from Kenya

Pastors Simeon & Adriano report that the Lord is at work in the Advent Christian Church in Kenya.

Seminars, outreaches and church services are all opening up opportunities for the Holy Spirit to bring about repentance and change, followed by baptisms. Praise God!



As the people listen and respond, and as the church grows, they are ever mindful of the need for God's presence and sustenance in the work of helping the people grow in faith and service.

Please pray with and for them as they seek to faithfully serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

The photos show (clockwise from top left) the conference attendees at Riouso; a baptism; Simeon speaking at a service at Nyakeyo; and some of the young people marching to the conference (the front two are Simeon's daughters, while the young man standing fifth in line is his eldest son).

