

Richmond Hill Baptist Church
March 14, 2010
Raised (1C15): Part 1 - What Do You Believe?
Questions & Answers about Death and the Afterlife

Prelude

Call to Worship: *Beholding Your Glory* (Choir)

Pray & Welcome: Welcome to Richmond Hill Baptist Church on this Time Change Sunday. Stretch and take a deep breath. You made it on time! If you are a guest please take a Connect Card and fill it out and drop it in the offering plate when it comes by. Let's take a moment and greet one another!

Sing: *Lord Most High, My Saviour My God, Shout to the Lord, There is a Fountain*

Children's Corner: (Alyssa Baker)

Offering: Jess (process of graduating, parents, accepted into a 2 year program)

Offertory: *Wonderful Maker*

Sing: *Jesus Paid it All*

Sermon: In preparation for Easter we are starting today a new series entitled:

Raised (1C15): Part 1 - What Do You Believe?

Questions & Answers about Death and the Afterlife

There are lots of questions and ideas regarding death and the afterlife. So what happens after you die? Let do a quick survey of the options:

Survey of the Options

1. **Mormons:** Eventually nearly everyone goes to one of three separate heavenly "kingdoms," with some achieving godhood. Apostates and murderers go to "outer darkness."
2. **Jehovah's Witness:** The 144,000 live as spirits in heaven. The rest of the righteous, "the great crowd," live on earth, and must obey God perfectly for 1000 years or be annihilated.
3. **Unification Church:** After death one goes to the spirit world. There is no resurrection. Members advance by convincing others to follow Sun Myung Moon. Everyone will be saved, including Satan.

4. **Christian Science:** Death is not real. Heaven and Hell are states of mind. The way to reach Heaven is by attaining harmony (oneness) with God.
5. **Scientology:** Hell is a myth. People who get clear of engrams (past painful events) become operating thetans (souls). Some believe in reincarnation.
6. **New Age:** Human reincarnations occur until a person reaches oneness with God. There is no literal heaven or hell. There is no eternal life as a resurrected person.
7. **Judaism:** There will be a physical resurrection. The obedient will live forever with God, and the unrighteous will suffer. Some Jews do not believe in a conscious life after death.
8. **Hinduism:** Reincarnation into a better status (good karma) if a person has behaved well. If one has been bad, he/she can be reborn and pay for past sins (bad karma) by suffering.
9. **Hare Krishna:** Those who are unenlightened continue into endless reincarnation (rebirth on earth) based on the sinful acts of a person's previous life.
10. **Buddhism:** People do not have a soul or spirit. However, one's desires and feelings may be reincarnated into another person. There is no heaven or hell.
11. **Islam:** The body will be resurrected. There is a final day of reckoning and rewards. Eternal paradise is reserved for those who believe in Islam. Eternal hell is reserved for infidels and those who reject Islam.
12. **Spiritism:** Life continues in the spirit world where one's spirit may progress from one level to another. Some believe in reincarnation.
13. **Atheism:** When the body dies, the brain ceases to function. At that moment, all of your thoughts, feelings, memories and emotions cease to exist, and eventually your body will decay. There is no soul or spirit that survives beyond the moment of death.

You Tube Clip: "Afterlife" by James Auger & Jimmy Loizeau (June 12, 2009)

I have a video clip that will give a good atheist perspective. I do not endorse this perspective. I have lots of issues with it. I simply want you to see what many in this world believe.

There are many perspectives and beliefs on what happens to us after our lives in this planet come to an end.

When faced with our own mortality or that of a loved one, notions of what the afterlife may hold; whether it be in a spirit world such as heaven or reincarnated into another body or form, spiritual faith can offer great comfort and reassurance.

Science and reason though have started to undermine these traditional belief systems as we strive to find logic and meaning in our existence.

This scientific research has yet to offer any tangible proof of continued existence, after death.

So in terms of comfort and reassurance what then is there for the grieving atheist?

Technology has had its attempt at creating life after death with cryonics - freezing the body of the recently deceased in the hope of later restoring it to life with the help of future technological advances. But as religion demands unquestioned faith in its believers, cryonics demands a similar faith in the progression of technology.

With this in mind, Afterlife offers a technologically mediated service providing a tangible expression of life after death.

13.7 billion years before the Earth existed, the blue print and elemental makeup for this planet and all its contents were formed. The big bang is widely accepted as the event responsible for the creation of everything - The universe, its stars, it's planets; it's trees, animals, silicon, I-pods and humanity. Nothing, including the human body, exists that cannot be created from these basic building blocks.

Under normal circumstances after death, the human body would be assimilated back into this natural system.

The Afterlife device intervenes during this process to harness the chemical potential and convert it into usable electrical energy via a microbial fuel cell - a device that uses an electrochemical reaction to generate electricity from organic matter.

This electricity is contained within a familiar dry cell battery.

About the only thing I agree with in this video clip is the opening statement: As some point everybody will die. Next week we will expand on this.

Reducing the Afterlife to a battery - If this is all the comfort and assurance you can provide for the grieving atheist or anyone else then we are in trouble.

You gotta hate it when your battery goes Dead! I think there is a better option.

14. Christianity: Following death all people will continue living in an intermediary disembodied conscious state where the righteous will be with Christ in Paradise and the wicked will be in Hades apart from Christ. When Christ returns everyone will experience the final resurrection, when the mortal will be clothed with immortality and given new bodies, and then will come the judgement. Believers will spend eternity in Heaven with God and unbelievers will spend eternity in Hell apart from God.

Summary of the Options

1. Nothing
2. Something (reincarnation, spirit world, resurrection)

There is one chapter in the Bible that is almost entirely devoted to the topic of the Resurrection. It is 1 Corinthians 15. That is the 1C15 in the title. In this chapter the word "raised" is used 15 times.

Please read along with me!

1 Corinthians 15:1-14

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,⁵ and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,⁸ and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.⁹ For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.¹¹ Whether, then, it was I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.¹² But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

3 Reasons we Believe in the Resurrection of the Dead

1. Christ's death and resurrection were a fulfillment of prophecy.

Verses 3-4: *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*

Jesus life, death, and resurrection are a fulfillment of over 300 OT prophecies.

2. Christ's death and resurrection were witnessed by many.

Verses 5-8: *and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,⁸ and last of all he appeared to me*

Acts 1:3: *After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.*

3. Christ's death and resurrection changed Paul from a persecutor of the church to a preacher of the Gospel.

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2. Christ's death and resurrection were witnessed by many.
3. Christ's death and resurrection changed Paul from a persecutor of the church to a preacher of the Gospel.

Verses 9-10: *For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*

Paul: Persecutor, Legalist, Zealous, Saw the Risen Lord, Saved, Changed by Grace

Summary of World Religions: Do vs. Done

Do: world religions: earn your salvation

Done: Christianity: salvation was achieved at the Cross

Paul: We believe in the resurrection:

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Everything hinges on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! If he wasn't raised then we are wasting our time, however, if he was raised – it makes all the difference.

What do you believe?

I believe the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the eternal life that He offers is the most validated and reasonable explanation for the afterlife.

John 11:25: Jesus speaking to Martha before he raised Lazarus said:

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

What do you believe?

Prayer: Romans 10:9: *If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him for the dead then you will be saved!*

Response: *He Is Lord!*

Announcements: Ambassadors (Thursday: David McNab re: Mt Everest)
FNL (Friday: Inglewood Pool)
Youth: Scrambled Eggs Video Scavenger Hunt, Sleep Over)
Easter Schedule of Events
RMMoG: Family Ski Day, Sunshine, April 10, Sign Up

Postlude: *Hallelujah*