

MARTHA 5

Consideration of the Question of the Afterlife

Lu. 13: 22-30

Whether we study it philosophically or religiously no question can have a greater effect on the way we live our lives than our view of the afterlife -

it will have a hearing on everything we do in this life

In the Mag.

Psychology Today - ²⁰¹¹ says 70% of the U.S. population do believe in an afterlife. Freud said it's hard to believe there is no afterlife (and he was an atheist)

In Life after Life by Moody he lists the visions people had as they neared death & then came back - they say their life is permanently changed by their near-death experience.

There are only a few ways to look at the afterlife options - 3 general categories outside of the Christian view

I Atheistic view - believes that there is no afterlife - at the moment you die you are non-existent. This view should have a significant effect on how you live your life.

e.g. The way to bring this view into focus is to imagine that this room is the world and we are the world's population. We have 3 hrs. to enjoy this party ^{from 9-12 P.M.} we can do anything we want for 3h

② This is a death party - Will this have an effect on how we will enjoy the party?
~~It's hard to enjoy a death party, isn't it?~~
~~we don't have many such parties & they are unpopular~~

But to the atheist life can really be viewed
this way - sure it's not 3 hrs, it's 60-80 yrs.
but it's still a finite time - your life is
over - you never know what you did -
+ this raises the real question: what does
it matter what you do?

Existentialist
Atheist Jean Paul Sartre says life is absurd -
nothing is meaningful - relationships or
accomplishments are meaningless so he
wrote a book called Nausea to describe life

Why sit for the full 3 hr. party trying to fill up
the time (often suffering) why not go out now & call it quits?
Atheist Albert Camus - says the deepest philosophical
question one can ask "why not commit suicide?"

But even atheists have a hard time living
according to their belief of nothingness after
death - they want meaning & fulfillment
just like we all do. We cannot live as though
we are just a fortuitous conglomeration of protoplasm
we want significance - both now & after life

What's the real difference between the Christian
& the atheist? Is it that we believe in hell
& the atheist does not. No! We both
believe in hell - the atheist just doesn't
believe in heaven, he believes this life is
hell - he lives, his life is meaningless & at
death he goes off into oblivion

But we as Christians believe in heaven & that...

WOMAN SUICIDES

3) So there's nothing great about being an atheist
He has no answers for this ^{life} or the afterlife

II Eastern Mysticism

What if you are sort of religious
& are one of the 90% who are into Eastern
mysticism. Most of these ^{people} don't know what
they believe - they just believe in the FORCE
and reincarnation - maybe they'll come
back as a whale - or an eagle in flight

Like most religions eastern religion
has been simplified & served up McDonald's style
for Westerners, they don't grasp it at all

→ (e.g.) reincarnation in eastern religion
is the transmigration of souls - evolving
to a state of nirvana - unconsciousness
It's a system of retribution - this world
is a cruel sick joke - to be re-incarnated
is to stay on the wheel of maïya -
the objective is to get off the wheel to
nirvana, the "snuffing out of consciousness"
you as an individual ceases exist - you
blend into the universal all it is
extinction - annihilation

This is very similar to atheism -
to ultimately reach non-existence is the
goal. The atheist gets there quickly, by
death, maybe even suicide.

II But the eastern mystic has to be re-incarnated
until he evolves to that condition of non-existence

This is a 'works' way to live - harsh.
Law is inflexible & impersonal - like gravity. There is
no hell here - only hell here on earth

④ Then there is
III Universalism - believe in a real God -
a real heaven - which everyone goes to -
there's no hell. ~~It is not a religion~~
~~that is based on~~

Q → Why did mankind make up this religion?
There's a philosophical/theological reason
They are trying to devise a God who they
believe is good. A god who is loving - a god
who would never send anyone to hell
But here is the real irony: The universalist
tries to devise a good & loving God - but they
wind up with an evil, sadistic God.

Q → How is this true? Follow along with me
I'll state it 2 different ways:

① If God is going to send everyone to heaven
to live in eternal bliss why does He first
make us live 70 or so years in pain, terrible
circumstances, agony - the ravages of starvation
war, illness. God has made this world, He
decrees that we live in this terrible state
and then come into eternal bliss. Why
the 70 yrs. first? There's no point to it if we're
all going to the same place anyway. Why
does God let this go on for milleia -

② Or to put it another way - Adolph Hitler
will be with us in heaven. How is this possible?
It is only possible if Hitler was somehow not
responsible for what he did - he must have been sent down
or pre-determined to do what he did. So God will bless
him along with the most +R man who ever lived