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About

A discussion relating to the historical development of a belief in the [Conditional Immortality](#) of the [Soul](#) (as opposed to [Universal Immortality](#)).

Individuals

[Justin Martyr \(100-165 A.D.\)](#)

Justin Martyr

First Apology, 21: "We have been taught that ONLY THEY MAY AIM AT IMMORTALITY WHO HAVE LIVED A HOLY AND VIRTUOUS LIFE NEAR TO GOD. We believe that they who live wickedly and do not repent will be punished in everlasting fire." [93]

First Apology, 52: "(Jesus) shall come from the heavens in glory with His angelic host, when He shall raise the bodies of all the men who ever lived. THEN HE WILL CLOTHE THE WORTHY IN IMMORTALITY; but the wicked, clothed in eternal sensibility, He will commit to the eternal fire, along with the evil demons." [93]

"Trypho, I am called; and I am a Hebrew of the circumcision. They affirm that the same things shall always happen; and, further, that I and you shall again live in like manner, having become neither better men nor worse. But THERE ARE SOME OTHERS, WHO, HAVING SUPPOSED THE SOUL TO BE IMMORTAL AND IMMATERIAL, BELIEVE THAT THOUGH THEY HAVE COMMITTED EVIL THEY WILL NOT SUFFER PUNISHMENT (FOR THAT WHICH IS IMMATERIAL IS INSENSIBLE), AND THAT THE SOUL, IN CONSEQUENCE OF ITS IMMORTALITY, NEEDS NOTHING FROM GOD." [94]

[Theophilus \(died ±183-185 A.D.\)](#)

Early forms of conditionalism can be found in the writings of Theophilus of Antioch. [92]

[Arnobius \(died 330 A.D.\)](#)

Less than a hundred years later, Arnobius of Sicca writes of the soul that it "is NOT IMMORTAL BY NATURE, but capable of putting on immortality as a grace." [1]

[Pietro Pomponazzi \(1462-1525\)](#)

The Italian philosopher, and leader amongst the Averroists, Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525) of Mantua, also known by his Latin name, Petrus Pomponatus^[2] - denied the immortality of the soul, issuing a book in opposition to the Papal Bull of Pope Leo X, titled, "Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul" (1516). The book was widely read, especially in Italian Universities.

[3][4]

[William Tyndale \(1494-1536\)](#)

The British Bible translator, William Tyndale, also defended [Conditional Immortality](#). This, as well as other teachings brought him in direct conflict with the papal champion, Thomas More, who strongly objected against both, Tyndale and Luther, who, in the words of More, said, "all souls lie and sleep till doomsday". In 1530 Tyndale responded vigorously saying:

"And ye, in putting them (the departed souls) in heaven, hell, and purgatory, destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection ... And again, if the souls be in heaven, tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be? And then what cause is there of the resurrection?" [39]

Tyndale pressed his contention even further showing that the papal teaching on the subject is in conflict with that of the apostle Paul: "Nay, Paul, thou art unlearned; go to Master More, and learn a new way. We be not most miserable, though we rise not again; for our souls go to heaven as soon as we be dead, and are there in a great joy as Christ that is risen again. And I marvel that Paul had not comforted the Thessalonians with that doctrine, if he had wist it, that the souls of their dead should rise again. If the souls be in heaven, in as great glory as the angels, after your doctrine, shew me what cause should be of the resurrection." [39]

[Martin Luther \(1483-1546\)](#)

Martin posted his 95 Thesis on October 31, 1517 in Wittenberg. In his 1520 published defense of 41 of his propositions, Luther cited the pope's immortality declaration, as among "those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals".^{[3]5} The 27th Proposition read:

"However, I permit the Pope establish articles of faith for himself and for his own faithful - such are: a) That the bread and wine are transubstantiated in the sacrament; b) that the essence of God neither generates nor is generated; c) that the soul is the substantial form of the human body; d) that he (the pope) is emperor of the world and king of heaven, and earthly god; e) THAT THE SOUL IS IMMORTAL; and ALL THESE ENDLESS MONSTROSITIES IN THE ROMAN DUNGHILL OF DECRETALS - in order that such as his faith is, such may be his gospel, such also his faithful, and such his church, and that the lips may have suitable lettuce and the lid may be worthy of the dish." [3]5]

[John Frith \(1503-1533\)](#)

The English Protestant priest, writer, and martyr, John Frith, an associate of William Tyndale, similarly, stated his views as:

"Notwithstanding, let me grant it him that some are already in hell and some in heaven, which thing he shall never be able to prove by the Scriptures, yea, and which plainly destroy the resurrection, and taketh away the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul do prove that we shall rise; ... and as touching this point where they rest, I dare be bold to say that they are in the hand of God." [3]10]

[George Wishart \(1513-1546\)](#)

The Greek scholar George Wishart (1500-1546), a friend of Hugh Latimer, and tutor to John Knox, was charged with attacking auricular confession, transubstantiation, extreme unction, holy water, the invocation of saints (who couldn't hear their supplications anyway), and purgatory. Charge XVI stated:

"Thou false heretic has preached openly saying, that the soul of man sleep to the latter day of judgment and SHALL NOT OBTAIN LIFE IMMORTAL UNTIL THAT DAY." [3]6]

[George Wither \(1588-1667\)](#)

The Puritan, George Wither, contended for Conditional Immortality in which the soul is asleep in death. [3]11]

[John Canne \(1590-1667\)](#)

John Canne was the pastor of Broadmead Baptist Church in Bristol and printer of Robert Overton's works, holding essentially the same view as Overton. [3]13]

[John Milton \(1608-1674\)](#)

As illustrated in Milton's "Paradise Lost", he subscribed to mortalism, the belief that the soul dies with the body. [96]97]

[Major-General Robert Overton \(1609-1678\)](#)

Soldier, Scholar, and pamphletier, Robert Overton, published in 1643, "Man's Mortality", in which the title page reads:

"A treatise wherein 'T is proved, both theological and philosophically. That as whole man sinned, so whole man died; contrary to the common distinction of Soul and Body: And that the present going of the Soul into heaven or hell, is a meer Fiction. And that AT THE RESURRECTION IS THE BEGINNING OF OUR IMMORTALITY; and then actual Condemnation and Salvation, and not before." [3]12]

[Samuel Richardson \(1633-1658\)](#)

Samuel Richardson, pastor of the First Particular Baptist Church of London also wrote on this subject. [3]14]

[Prof. Dr. Isaac Barrow \(1630-1677\)](#)

Isaac Barrow, Professor of Greek at Cambridge University maintained that eternal life is conditional and believed in the final destruction of the wicked. [3]15]

[John Tillotson \(1630-1694\)](#)

Archbishop of Canterbury, John Tillotson, states:

"I DO NOT FIND THAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL IS ANYWHERE EXPRESSLY DELIVERED IN SCRIPTURE, but taken for granted." [3]16]

[Prof. Dr. Henry Dodwell \(1641-1711\)](#)

The Classical Scholar and Professor at Oxford, Henry Dodwell, set out to "PROVE FROM THE SCRIPTURES AND THE FIRST FATHERS, THAT THE SOUL IS IN PRINCIPLE NATURALLY MORTAL, but IMMORTALIZED BY THE PLEASURE OF GOD." [3]17|18]

[Henry Layton \(1670-1706\)](#)

Henry Layton was a member of the Anglican Faith and the author of 12 books on conditionalism in which he contends that:

"... during life, we live and move in Christ; and when we die we rest and sleep in Him, in expectation of being raised at His Second Coming." [3]19|20]

Dr. William Coward (1657-1725)

William Coward was a practicing physician in London, who stated:

"Second thoughts concerning the human soul, DEMONSTRATING THE NOTION OF HUMAN SOUL, AS BELIEVED TO BE SPIRITUAL AND IMMORTAL SUBSTANCE. UNITED TO A HUMAN BODY, TO BE PLAIN HEATHENISH INVENTION, and NOT CONSONANT TO THE PRINCIPLES OF PHILOSOPHY, REASON OR RELIGION." [3|21]

Prof. Dr. William Whiston (1667-1752)

William Whiston

Whiston was a Baptist theologian and Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University, who "denied the doctrine of eternal torment and held THAT THE WICKED WOULD BE TOTALLY DESTROYED." [3|22]

John Jackson (1686-1763)

Rector of Rossington School, John Jackson, wrote several titles in which he confutes and condemns the doctrine of eternal torment. [3|23|24|25]

Bishop William Warburton (1698-1779)

Bishop of Gloucester and theological controversialist, William Warburton, "styled militant believers in everlasting torment as the 'unmerciful doctors'." [3|26]

Joseph Nicol Scott (1703-1769)

Joseph Nicol Scott M.D., a minister who maintained that "... LIFE IS FOR THE RIGHTEOUS ONLY, with destruction for the wicked." [3|27]

Archdeacon Dr. John Tottie

John Tottie, the Canon of Christ Church in Oxford, and Archdeacon of Worcester also "OPPOSED THE DOCTRINE OF THE NATURAL IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL". [3|28]

Archbishop Francis Blackburne (1705-1787)

In support, many years later, Francis Blackburne, would write that "Luther espoused the doctrine of the sleep of the soul, upon a Scripture foundation, and then he made use of it as a confutation of purgatory, and saint worship, and continued in that belief to the last moment of his life." [3|6]

Samuel Bourne (1714-1796)

Samuel Bourne of Rivington, Lancashire - a dissenter - "stresses 'total destruction, or annihilation or ceasing to exist' for the incorrigibly wicked." [3|29]

Peter Pecard (1718-1797)

Master of Magdalen College in Cambridge, England, and Dean of Peterborough, Peter Pecard, believed "IMMORTALITY NOT TO BE INNATE, but was a gift through Christ." [3|30]

Joseph Priestley (1733-1804)

After observing that many of the early reformers held to 'soul-sleep', he said:

"Had it not been for the authority of Calvin, Joseph Priestley who wrote expressly against soul sleep, the doctrine of an intermediate conscious state would, in all probability, have been as effectually exploded as the doctrine of purgatory itself" [3|95]

Timothy Kendrick

Bishop Timothy Kendrick states in a sermon from 1805:

"The soul of man dies with the body, and is restored to life at the resurrection and second advent." [3|31]

Richard Whately (1787-1863)

The Archbishop of Dublin, Ireland, and Principal and Professor at Oxford, Richard Whately

(1787-1863), taught the final destruction of the wicked, believing that "THE WICKED ARE NEVER SPOKEN OF AS BEING KEPT ALIVE, BUT AS FORFEITING LIFE." [3|32]

Herman Olshausen (1796-1839)

Professor of Theology at Königsberg, Ostpreussen, Prof. Herman Olshausen (1796-1839), wrote:

"The doctrine of the immortality of the soul and the name are alike unknown in the entire Bible." [3|33]

John Thomas (1805-1871)

Dr. John Thomas (1805-1871) as Editor to the Apostolic Advocate and the Founder of the

Christadelphians, he believed in the "final extinction of the wicked and in immortality as a gift through Christ." [3|34]

Edward Beecher (1803-1895)

The Congregational Theologian, and President of Illinois College, Dr. Edward Beecher (1803-1895), stated:

"If [the Bible] does not recognize, nay, it expressly denies the natural and inherent immortality of the soul. It assures us that God only hath immortality (1 Timothy 6:16). By this we understand that He has immortality in the highest sense - that is, inherent immortality. All existence besides Himself He created, and He upholds. Men are not, as Plato taught, self-existent, eternal beings, immortal in their very nature ... There is no inherent immortality of the soul as such. What God created He sustains in being, and can annihilate at will." [3|35]

Dr. Amos Phelps (1805-1874)

The Methodist-Congregationalist clergyman, and Professor of Yale University, Amos Phelps, wrote:

"This doctrine [of natural immortality] can be traced through the muddy channels of a corrupted Christianity, a perverted Judaism, and pagan philosophy, and a superstitious idolatry, to the great instigator of mischief in the garden of Eden. The Protestants borrow it from the Catholics, the Catholics from the Pharisees, the Pharisees from the pagans, and the pagans from the old serpent who first preached the doctrine amid the lowly bowels of Paradise to an audience all too willing to hear and heed the new and fascinating theology: 'Ye shall not surely die.'" [3|36]

H.H. Dobney (1809-1883)

H.H. Dobney, a Baptist pastor in Maidstone, England, expressed the same view. [3|37]

Dean Henry Alford (1810-1871)

The Biblical Scholar, Henry Alford of Canterbury, believed: "Eternal fixity and duration belong only to those who are in accordance with God." [3|38]

Franz Delitzsch (1813-1890)

Prof. Dr. Franz Delitzsch (1813-1890), Hebraist and Professor at Rostock, Erlangen and Leipzig, Germany; in commenting on Genesis chapter 3 verse 22 and Numbers chapter 23 verse 10, concluded:

"There is nothing in the Bible which implies a native immortality ... From the Biblical point of view the soul can be put to death." [3|39]

William E. Gladstone (1809-1898)

British Prime Minister and Theologian, William E. Gladstone (1809-1898), in a searching criticism of Bishop Butler's "Analogy" and its defense of innate immortality, Gladstone contended: "[It is only] from the time of Origen that we are to regard the idea of natural, as opposed to that of Christian, immortality as beginning to gain a firm foothold in the Christian Church." [3|40]

"The doctrine of natural, as distinguished from Christian, immortality had not been subjected to the severer tests of wide publicity and resolute controversy, but had crept into the church, by a back door as it were; by a silent though effective process; and was in course of obtaining a title by tacit prescription." [3|40]

"Another consideration of the highest importance is that the natural immortality of the soul is a doctrine wholly unknown to the Holy Scriptures, and standing on no higher plane than that of an ingeniously sustained, but gravely and formidably contested, philosophical opinion." [3|40]

"The character of the Almighty is rendered liable to charges which cannot be repelled as long as the idea remains that there may by His ordinance be such a thing as never-ending punishment, but that it will have been sufficiently vindicated at the bar of human judgment, so soon as it had been established and allowed that punishment, whatever else it may be, cannot be never-ending." [3|40]

William Thomson (1819-1890)

The Archbishop of York, Dr. William Thomson (1819-1890), wrote: "Life to the godless must be the beginning of destruction since nothing but God and that which pleases Him can permanently exist." [3|41]

J. H. Pettingell (1815-1887)

The District Secretary of the Congregational Board of Foreign Missions, J.H. Pettingell, once remarked:

"It is worthy of remark, that the doctrine of eternal torment is found neither in the Apostle's Creed, nor the Nicene Creed, nor in two of the principal Confessions of Faith of the 16th century, viz., the otherwise rigid Creed of the French Reformed Church and the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church. And we believe that if this dogma has been handed down throughout the Protestant Churches, it is simply as an inheritance from the errors of the middle ages and from the speculative theories of Platonism. If we examine the writings of the earlier Fathers - Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarb, Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenaeus, and Clement of Alexandria - we find them all faithful to the apostolic doctrine of the final destruction of the wicked. The dogma of everlasting torment did not creep into the Church until she yielded to the influence of Platonic philosophy." [3|42|43|44|45|46|47]

Dr. Edward White (1819-1887)

Edward White, a Congregational Pastor at St. Paul's Chapel and Chairman of the Congregational Union, for over forty years was the leading advocate of conditional immortality. [3|48]

"I steadfastly maintain, after 40 years of study of the matter, that it is the notion of the infliction of a torment in body and soul that shall be absolutely endless, which alone gives a foot of standing ground to Ingersol in America, or Bradlaugh in England. I believe more firmly than ever that it is a doctrine as contrary to every line of the Bible as it is contrary to every moral instinct of humanity." [3|42]

The following year he added:

"The Old Testament is consistent throughout with the belief of eternal life of the servants of God, and of the eternal destruction of the wicked. And it is consistent, when taken in its simple sense with no other belief... The Gospels and Epistles with equal pertinacity adhere almost uniformly to language respecting the doom of the unsaved which taken in its simple sense, teaches, as does the Old Testament, that they shall die, perish, be destroyed, not see life, but suffer destruction, everlasting destruction, 'destruction' says Christ, 'of body and soul in Gehenna.'" [3|43]

George G. Stokes (1819-1903)

Prof. Sir. George G. Stokes M.P. (1819-1903), Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, and President of the Royal Society, wrote: "It was natural that, after the forfeiture of immortality through transgression, man should seek to satisfy his craving for immortality by imagining that he had something immortal in his nature. It is, then, to revelation that we must look, if we are to find out something about man's condition in the intermediate state." [3|49]

"Man's whole being was forfeited by the Fall, and the future life is not his birthright, but depends on a supernatural dispensation of grace. To look to man's bodily frame for indications of immortality, to look even to his lofty mental powers - lofty, indeed, but sadly misused - is to seek the living among the dead. Man must look not into himself, but out of himself for assurance of immortality." [3|49]

Charles F. Hudson (1821-1867)

The Greek Scholar and Congregational Minister, Charles F. Hudson (1821-1867) believed the same. [3|50|51]

James Panton Ham (around 1849)

James Panton Ham (around 1849) was a Congregationalist Minister in Bristol, who believed similarly. [3|52]

Henry Constable (-1894)

Canon and Prebendary of Cork in Ireland, Henry Constable (-1894), believed:

"The immortality of the soul, and the name, are alike unknown in the entire Bible." [3|53]

John J.S. Perowne (1823-1904)

The Anglican Bishop of Worcester, England; and Hebrew Scholar, John J.S. Perowne (1823-1904), wrote:

"The immortality of the soul is neither argued nor affirmed in the Old Testament... The immortality of the soul is a phantom which eludes your eager grasp." [3|54]

Charles J. Ellicott (1820-1905)

Bishop of Bristol, and Chairman of the English Revision Committee, Charles J. Ellicott (1820-1905), stated:

"It seems inconceivable that when God is all in all, there should be some dark spot, where amid endless self-inflicted suffering, or in the enhancement of ever-enduring hate, rebel hands should be forever raised against the Eternal Father and God of Everlasting Love." [3|55]

Dr. Robert William Dale (1829-1895)

R.W. Dale was a Congregational pastor of Carr's Lane Church in Birmingham. He was Editor of "The Congregationalist" magazine; Chairman of the "Congregational Union of England and Wales"; and President of the "First International Council of Congregational Churches" in 1891. Dale announced his acceptance of conditionalism in a paper before the Congregational Union of 1874. "Eternal Life, as I believe, is the inheritance of those who are in Christ. Those who are not in Him will die the Second Death from which there will be no resurrection... I am not conscious that they [the positions of conditionalism] have at all impaired the authority in my teaching of any of the great central doctrines of the Christian faith. The doctrine of the Trinity remains untouched; and the doctrine of the Incarnation, and the doctrine of the Atonement in its evangelical sense, and the doctrine of justification by faith, and the doctrine of judgment by works, and the doctrine of regeneration have received, I believe, from these conclusions a new and intenser illustration." [3|56]

Richard Francis Weymouth (1822-1902)

The headmaster of "Mill Hill School" and translator of "The New Testament in Modern Speech" [77], Dr. Richard Francis Weymouth (1822-1902), said:

"My mind fails to conceive a grosser misrepresentation of language than when five or six of the strongest words which the Greek tongue possesses, signifying to destroy or destruction, are explained to mean 'maintaining an everlasting but wretched existence'. To translate black as white is nothing to this." [3|58]

In commenting on 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses 18, he says:

"By 'perish' the Apostle here apparently means 'pass out of existence.'" [3|57] Of Hebrews chapter 9 verse 28, he says:

"The use in the N.T. of such words as 'death', 'destruction', 'fire', 'perish', to describe Future Retribution, point to the likelihood of fearful anguish, followed by extinction of being, as the doom which awaits those who by persistent rejection of the Saviour prove themselves utterly, and therefore irremediably bad." [3|57]

Of Revelation chapter 14 verse 11, he says:

"There is nothing in this verse that necessarily implies an eternity of suffering. In a similar way the word 'punishment' or 'correction' in Matthew 25:46 gives itself no indication of time." [3|57]

Of Revelation chapter 20 verse 10, he says: "The lake of fire implying awful pain and complete, irremediable ruin and destruction." [3|57]

Joseph Parker (1830-1902)

Congregationalist Pastor, Joseph Parker (1830-1902), of the "City Temple of London", once stated:

"Glorious to me is the idea of asking men whether he will accept life and be like God, or whether he will choose death and darkness for ever. God does not say to man, 'I will make you immortal and indestructible whether you will or not; live for ever you shall.' No; He makes him capable of living; He constitutes him with a view to immortality; He urges, beseeches, implores him to work out this grand purpose, assuring him, with infinite pathos, that He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but would rather that he should live. A doctrine this which in my view simplifies and glorifies human history as related in the Bible. Life and death is not set before any beast; but life and death are distinctly set before man - he can live, he was meant to live, he is besought to live; the whole scheme of Providence and redemption is arranged to help him to live - why, then, will ye die?" [3|60]

Discussing the ultimate banishment of sin from the universe, Parker adds:

"By destroying evil I do not mean locking it up by itself in a moral prison, which shall be enlarged through the ages and generations until it shall become the abode of countless millions of rebels, but its utter, final, everlasting extinction, so that at last the universe shall be 'without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing' - the pure home of a pure creation." [3|60]

Commenting on the "Destruction of Sodom", Parker denies that "in giving life God has put it absolutely out of His own power to reclaim or withdraw it", by implication.

"Having once given you life you are as immortal as He Himself is, and you can defy Him to interfere with His own work! The doctrine seems to me to involve a palpable absurdity, and hardly to escape the charge of blasphemy. Throughout the whole Bible, God has reserved to Himself the right to take back whatever He has given, because all His gifts have been offered upon conditions about which there can be no mistake." [3|60]

"In this case [of Sodom] we have an instance of utter and everlasting destruction. We see here what is meant by 'everlasting punishment', for we are told in the New Testament that 'Sodom suffered the vengeance of eternal fire', that is offire, which made an utter end of its existence and perfectly accomplished the purpose of God. The 'fire' was 'eternal', yet Sodom is not literally burning still; the smoke of its torment, being the smoke of an eternal fire, ascended up for ever and ever, yet no smoke now rises from the plain, - 'eternal fire' does not involve the element of what we call 'time': it means thorough, absolute, complete, final: that which is done or given once for all." [3|60]

Dr. George Dana Boardman (1828-1903)

"Not a single passage of Holy Writ, from Genesis to Revelation, teaches, so far as I am aware, the doctrine of Man's natural immortality. On the other hand, Holy Writ emphatically declares that God only hath immortality (1 Tim. 6:16): that is to say: God alone is naturally, inherently, in His own essence and nature, immortal." [3|61]

"If, then, Man is immortal, it is because immortality has been bestowed on him. He is immortal, not because he was created so, but because he has become so, deriving his deathlessness from Him Who alone has immortality. And of this fact the 'Tree of Life' in the midst of the Garden seems to have been the appointed symbol and pledge. That this is the meaning of the 'Tree of Life' is evident from the closing words of the Archive of the Fall: Jehovah God said: 'Behold, the Man hath become as one of Us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he stretch forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: therefore Jehovah God drove the man forth from Eden, and stationed on the East of the Garden the Cherubim, and the Flaming Sword which turned away every way, to guard the way to the tree of life. Genesis 3:22-24. If Man is inherently immortal, what need was there of any 'Tree of Life' at all? This much, then, seems to be clear: Immortality was somehow parabolically conditioned on the eating of this mysterious Tree, and the Immortality was for the entire Man - spirit and soul and body." [3|61]

Frederick W. Farrar (1831-1903)

Frederick W. Farrar (1831-1903), the Canon of Westminster Abbey and Dean of Canterbury, denounced the "dogma of endless, conscious suffering and could not find a single text in all Scripture that, when fairly interpreted, teaches the common views about endless torment." [3|62|63]

Emmanuel Petavel-Olliff (1836-1910)

Swiss Theologian, and lecturer at the University of Geneva, Dr. Emmanuel Petavel-Olliff (1836-1910), commenting on Genesis chapter 3 verse 22 and Numbers chapter 23 verse 10, said:

"There is nothing in all the Bible which implies a native immortality ... From the Biblical point of view the soul can be put to death, it is mortal." [3|64]

Dr. Lyman Abbott (1835-1922)

Lyman Abbott

The Congregational Pastor, and Editor of "The Outlook" and "Christian Union", Dr. Lyman Abbott, wrote:

"Outside of the walls of Jerusalem, in the valley of Gehenna, was kept perpetually burning a fire, on which the offal of the city was thrown to be destroyed. This is the hellfire of the New Testament. Christ warns his auditors that persistence in sin will make them offal to be cast out from the holy city, to be destroyed. The worm that dieth not was the worm devouring the carcasses, and is equally clearly a symbol not of torture but of destruction." [3|65]

"The notion that the final punishment of sin is continuance in sin and suffering is also based in part on, what seems to me, a false philosophy of man. This philosophy is that man is by nature immortal. The conviction has grown on me, that according to the teaching of both of Science and Scripture, man is by nature an animal, and like all other animals mortal; that immortality belongs only to the spiritual life; and that spiritual life is possible only in communion and contact with God; that, in short, immortality was not conferred upon the race in creation whether it would or not, but is conferred in redemption, upon all those of the race who choose life and immortality through Jesus Christ our Lord." [3|65]

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920)

Dutch Reformed Theologian and Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) pointed out that "the concept of dependence in human existence (i.e., man's creatureliness) cannot be combined with the concept of the immortality of the soul". [8]

Agar Beet (1840-1924)

Wesleyan Professor, Prof. Dr. Agar Beet (1840-1924), stated:

"The following pages are ... a protest against a doctrine which, during long centuries, has been almost universally accepted as divine truth taught in the Bible, but which seems to me altogether alien to it in both phrase and thought, and derived only from Greek Philosophy. Until recent times, this alien doctrine has been comparatively harmless. But, as I have here shown, it is now producing more serious results ... It will of course be said, of this as of some other doctrines, that, if not explicitly taught in the Bible, it is implied and assumed there... They who claim for their teaching the authority of God must prove that it comes from Him. Such proof in this case, I have never seen." [3|66]

William M. Hay Aitken (1841-1927)

The Anglican Missions organizer, Canon William M. Hay Aitken (1841-1927):

"The doctrine of Eternal Torment has lost its hold on the common sense and moral sensibilities of mankind. People do not and will not believe that an infinitely good and merciful God can consign his own offspring (Acts 17:28-29) to measureless aeons of torture in retribution for the sins and weaknesses of a few swiftly passing years here on earth." [3]

Prof. Dr. Adolf Paul Johannes Althaus (1861-1925)

Associate Professor of Practical and Systematic Theology at the University of Gottingen,

Paul Althaus plainly declared that "the Christian faith knows nothing of an 'immortality of the soul'." [7|8]

He also affirmed "that Luther attacked the idea of the immortality of the soul as unchristian" [7|8]

Dr. W.A. Brown (1865-1943)

W.A. Brown of the Union Seminary in New York, believed:

"From Israel came the doctrine of resurrection, and of the advent; from Greece, the doctrine of natural immortality." [3|67]

William Temple (1881-1944)

The Archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of Great Britain, Dr. William Temple (1881-1944):

"[The] doctrine of the future life [will] involve our first disentangling the authentic teaching of the classic Scriptures from accretions which very quickly began to obscure this." [3|68|69|70]

"Man is not immortal by nature or right; but he is capable of immortality and there is offered to him resurrection from the dead and eternal life if he will receive it from God and on God's terms." [3|68|69|70]

"Are there not, however, many passages which speak of the endless torment of the lost? No; as far as my knowledge goes, there is none at all." [3|68|69|70]

"After all, annihilation is an everlasting punishment though it is not unending torment." [3|68|69|70]

"One thing we can say with confidence: everlasting torment is to be ruled out. If men had not imported the Greek and unbiblical notion of the natural indestruction of the individual soul, and then read the New Testament with that already in their minds, they would have drawn from it a belief, not in everlasting torment, but in annihilation. It is the fire that is called aeonian, not the life cast into it." [3|68|69|70]

"How can there be the Paradise for any while there is Hell, conceived as unending torment, for some? Each supposedly damned soul was born into the world as a mother's child, and Paradise cannot be Paradise for her if her child is in such a Hell." [3|68|69|70]

Eric Lewis (1864-1948)

Eric Lewis (1864-1948) of Cambridge University, who worked as a Missionary to Sudan and India, established the following:

That man is immortal. That immortality is not his by nature, but a gift of God to him in Christ, conditioned on faith and obedience, the earnest of which immortality, is the indwelling Spirit of God. And His immortality is put on at the Resurrection. That at death, man's soul, his physical organism, dies, and that man returns to dust.

That at death, his spirit, which is not a personal entity apart from his body, returns to God who gave it, while the man himself passes into unconscious sleep until the resurrection.

That at resurrection, God calls the dead man back to life, breathing into him again His Spirit ... The resurrection body, given to the righteous at the coming of Christ, will be a spiritual body, a glorified body, like His own after His resurrection.

There will be a Resurrection unto judgment, as well as unto life. Those whose names are not found written in the book of life, will be cast into the lake of fire, there to perish ultimately, burned up like the chaff. How long their suffering will last, is known to God alone; His judgment will be according to the deeds of each. This is 'the second death', from which there will be no resurrection. [3/71/72]

Prof. Dr. Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890-1950)

Gerardus van der Leeuw of [The University of Groningen](#), Netherlands, in commenting on Ecclesiastes chapter 3 verses 19 to 21, stated:

"[Innate] immortality is a conception which fits into the philosophy of pantheism. With death belongs not immortality, but Resurrection." [3/73]

"The church has - no matter how much Hellenized it may be in doctrine and practice - always maintained the resurrection of the body ... The body dies, death is not being denied at all. Even the Spirit, the soul that I am, will not exist. The soul will also die. But the whole life of man will be renewed by God. God will raise me up 'in the latter days'." [3/73]

"Many preachers of recent times are rather hesitant to preach about immortality. But in former days, when preaching about eternal life, it was without effort that they dwelt upon imaginations of a corruptible body and an immortal soul. The older devotional books and church hymnals are full of it. Even now people in the house of bereavement and on the graveyards are being comforted from the same source - yet these representations are not in any respect Christian, but purely Grecian and contrary to the essence of Christian faith." [3/73]

Emil Brunner (1889-1966)

Prof. Dr. Emil Brunner (1889-1966) was Professor of Systematic and Practical Theology at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, and guest Professor at Princeton and the International Christian University of Tokyo, Japan.

After discussing the widespread, historic concept of the "survival of the soul after death" as "the separation of soul from body", he states:

"For the history of Western thought, the Platonic teaching of the immortality of the soul became of special significance. It penetrated so deeply into the thought of Western man because, although with certain modifications, it was assimilated by Christian theology and Church teaching, was even declared by the Lateran Council of 1512/13 to be a dogma, to contradict which was heresy." [3/74]

He then added:

"Only recently, as a result of a deepened understanding of the New Testament, have strong doubts arisen as to its compatibility with the Christian conception of the relation between God and man." [3/74]

According to Platonism:

"The body is mortal, the soul immortal. The mortal husk conceals this eternal essence which in death is freed from its outer shell." [3/74]

After observing that "this dualistic conception of man does not correspond to the Christian outlook", he comments:

"Since this mode of robbing evil of its sting runs necessarily parallel with the rendering innocuous of death through the teaching about immortality, this solution of the problem of death stands in irreconcilable opposition to Christian thought." [3/74]

Commenting on the "doctrine of the immortality of the soul", which medieval Christianity "took over from Greek philosophy", he observes that it was "utterly foreign to its [Christianity's] own essential teaching", adding:

"The opinion that we men are immortal because our soul is of an indestructible, because divine, essence is, once for all, irreconcilable with the Biblical view of God and man." [3/74]

"The philosophical belief in immortality is like an echo, both reproducing and falsifying the primal Word of this Divine Creator. It is false because it does not take into account the real loss of this original destiny through sin." [3/74]

David R. Davies (1889-?)

David R. Davies (1889-?), Rector of St. Mary Magdalen in Britain, once stated:

"The soul of man is not necessarily automatically immortal. It is capable of being destroyed. The Bible offers no ground whatsoever for believing that the soul is immune from death and destruction. The soul can be destroyed. The immortality of the soul is not a Biblical doctrine, but Greek philosophy. The Biblical doctrine about the soul is the Resurrection from the dead.

Man is a created being. God created him out of nothing. Man was created for immortality, but by his own rebellion against God he made himself mortal." [3/75]

"The Hebrew view of man was entirely different. In the Bible man is regarded as a unity of 'life' or spirit, which manifests itself as both soul and body. Since man has made himself mortal, his soul, in consequence, also partakes of mortality. Man is not a compound of two different entities, matter and spirit, but a unity of spirit functioning as matter and soul. It is this unity that is mortal." [3/75]

Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971)

Reinhold Niebuhr was a Professor at [Union Theological Seminary](#). After contrasting the "classical" view of man, of Graeco-Roman antiquity, and the "Biblical" view, Niebuhr states that the two "were actually merged in the thought of medieval Catholicism". The classical view that the "mind" or "spirit" is "immortal" was inseparably tied to the dualistic concept of man. But amongst the Hebrews, he observed:

"The concept of an immortal mind in a mortal body remains unknown to the end." [3|76] "Origen's Platonism completely destroys the Biblical sense of the unity of man." [3|76]

"Gregory's [of Nyssa] thoroughly Platonic conception of the relation of the soul to the body is vividly expressed in his metaphor of the gold and the alloy." [3|76]

"The idea of the resurrection of the body is a Biblical symbol in which modern minds take the greatest offense and which has long since been displaced in most modern versions of the Christian faith by the idea of the immortality of the soul. The latter idea is regarded as a more plausible expression of the hope of everlasting life." [3|77]

"The resurrection is not a human possibility in the sense that the immortality of the soul is thought to be so. All the plausible and implausible proofs for the immortality of the soul are efforts on the part of the human mind to master and to control the consummation of life. They all try to prove in one way or another that an eternal element in the nature of man is worthy and capable of survival beyond death." [3|77]

"The Christian hope of the consummation of life and history is less absurd than alternate doctrines which seeks to comprehend and to effect the completion of life by some power or capacity inherent in man and his history." [3|77]

Dirk Hendrik Theodoor Vollenhoven (1892-1978)

The Reformational Philosopher and first full-time Professor of Philosophy at the Free University of Amsterdam, Prof. Dr. Dirk Hendrik Theodoor Vollenhoven (1892-1978) also "joined the attack on the immortality of the soul". [7|8]

Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977)

Prof. Dr. Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) also "joined the attack on the immortality of the soul". [7|8]

Basil F.C. Atkinson (1895-?)

Dr. Basil F.C. Atkinson (1895-?) was the Under-Librarian of Cambridge University Library. In commenting on Genesis chapter 2 verses 7, Atkinson says:

"It has sometimes been thought that the impartation of the life principle, as it is brought before us in this verse, entailed immortality of the spirit or soul. It has been said that to be made in the image of God involves immortality. The Bible never says so. If it involves immortality, why does it not also involve omniscience or omnipresence, or any other quality or attribute of the Infinite? Why should one alone be singled out? The breath of life was not breathed into man's heart, but into his nostrils. It involved physical life. Throughout the Bible man, apart from Christ, is conceived of as made of dust and ashes, a physical creature, to whom is lent by God a principle of life. The Greek thinkers tended to think of man as an immortal soul imprisoned in a body. This emphasis is the opposite to that of the Bible, but has found a wide place in Christian thought." [3|78]

D. R. G. Owen (?-1961)

Prof. Dr. D.R.G. Owen (?-1961), Professor of Religious Knowledge at Trinity College, was also a lecturer and teacher on Philosophy and Religion at Wycliffe College in Toronto, Canada.

"The points at issue revolve around the concepts of 'body' and 'soul'. The 'religious' anthropology [in contradistinction to the Biblical] adopts an extreme dualism, asserting that the body and the soul are two different and distinct substances. It claims that the soul is divine in origin and immortal by nature and that the corruptible body is the source of all sin and wickedness. It recommends the cultivation of the soul in detachment from the body, and advocates the suppression of all physical appetites and natural impulses. It regards the body as the tomb or prison of the soul from which it longs to get free. Finally, it tends to suppose that the soul, even in its earth-bound existence, is entirely independent of the body and so enjoys a freedom of choice and action untrammelled by the laws that reign in the physical realm." [3|79]

"If we turn to the Bible, however, as we shall later, we find that a quite different view of man is assumed throughout. Here there is no dualism and scarcely any idea of the immortality of a detached and independent soul." [3|79]

"Plato remains to the end an antiphysical dualist. It is he, and his followers, who most of all are responsible for imposing the 'religious' anthropology on Western thought." [3|79]

"This latter belief especially - the idea that the soul can exist apart from the body - obviously implies some form of body - soul dualism ... This body-soul dualism was a necessary implicate of the Greek doctrine of the immortality of the soul." [3|79]

"Now there are a few isolated Scriptural passages that may suggest the idea of the immortality of the soul in the Greek sense, but the normal Biblical point of view is quite different: in the New Testament it is the resurrection of the body that is stressed, and this doctrine is almost a direct contradiction of the 'Orphic' eschatology. Why, then, did the Fathers lead toward this largely un-Biblical notion?" [3|79]

"The fact is that the Fathers' adoption of the 'religious' idea of the immortality of the detachable soul forced them into the doctrine of body-soul dualism." [3|79]

"The Fathers were no doubt impressed by the force of the arguments advanced by Greek philosophy to prove the immortality of the soul. And, finally, of course, the idea of an intermediate state gave the human being another chance to be purged of his sins before the

last judgment. It was the development of this notion that led to the doctrine of purgatory, with all the superstitions and objectionable practices that eventually made up the purgatorial system and, in the end, furnished part of the immediate cause of the Reformation." [3|79]

"The 'religious' anthropology, as far as Western thought is concerned, is Greek and not Biblical in origin. It is also typical of Eastern religions in general, such as Hinduism and Buddhism. It seems to be characteristically 'religious', and for this and other reasons has tended to creep into and corrupt the Christian view of man. This happened, as we saw, in the patristic and medieval periods, and modern Catholicism and Protestantism have tended to perpetuate this early mistake." [3|79]

"The Hebrews had no idea of the immortality of the soul in the Greek sense ... It was impossible for them even to conceive of disembodied human existence." [3|79]

"The idea of the immortality of the soul in the Greek sense may be suggested in some passages in the wisdom literature and is definitely found in places in the Apocrypha. This line of thought was later developed in the Hellenistic Judaism of the Alexandrine School, in the inter-Testamental period, of which the religious philosopher Philo is the outstanding example." [3|79]

The 1976 London Conference on Conditional Immortality

Convened under the chairmanship of Lieutenant-General Goodwyn, the attendees included such prominent figures as Henry Constable, Edward White, Minton, Heard, Howard, Leask, Tinling, and Barrett; with messages from Dr. Petavel of Switzerland, Dr. Weymouth of Mill Hill School, and others. The gist of the conference report, as stated on page 28, was that:

"The Bible nowhere teaches an inherent immortality; but teaches that it is the object of redemption to impart it ... The communication of it requires a regeneration of man, by the Holy Spirit, and a resurrection of the dead." [3]

The conference declared that the enjoyment of immortality is conditional; and that those who will not return to God will die and perish for all eternity. "Out of Christ there is no life eternal" [3]

It was Dr. White who declared, at the conference:

"These are the ideas which have brought us together this morning. They are now firmly held by an immense multitude of thoughtful people of all lands, for although we are but a little company here assembled, we represent an immense army in Europe and America. These views are spreading every day amongst the churches; and number among their adherents some of the foremost men of science, theologians, missionaries, philologists, philosophers, preachers, and statesmen." [3|80]

Aubrey R. Vine (1900-?)

Prof. Dr. Aubrey R. Vine (1900-?) was editor to "The Congregational Quarterly", and Professor at Yorkshire United Independent College, stated:

"The natural immortality of the spirit is a Greek rather than a Christian concept." [3|81]

"Against the idea of the natural immortality of the spirit we must set the fact that God is the only self-existent and that nothing exists or continues to exist except by His grace and will, within this schema or within any other. God only is exoschematic. When we use the word 'immortal', therefore, of anything but God, we must always realize that none but God is immortal by His own nature and without qualifications." [3|81]

"'Immortal' should not be applied to a human spirit if we clearly recognize that it is only immortal at God's grace and pleasure. Only God is immortal by His own nature and without qualification." [3|81]

T. A. Kantonen (1900-?)

Prof. Dr. T.A. Kantonen (1900-?) a Lutheran Professor at Hamma Divinity School, and American Member of the Lutheran World Federation Commission on Theology states:

"The influence of Hellenic philosophy, represented by the Alexandrian fathers in particular, tended to spiritualize eschatology into a continuing inner purification and immortality of the soul." [3|82]

"Primitive animism with its notion of a detachable ghost-soul which continues after death to lead a shadowy existence and to enter interaction with the living still underlies much of popular religious thinking on the subject. More important and influential from the theological point of view is the Greek idea of the immortality which found its classical formulation in Platos' dialogues four centuries before Christ. Since Platonism furnished the sublimest thought forms for the formative period of Christian theology, it is not surprising that many of the Fathers identified the Christian doctrine of eternal life with Platonic immortality and that finally the Fifth Lateran Council (1512-17) adopted it as a dogma of the church." [3|82]

"It has been characteristic of Western thought ever since Plato to distinguish sharply between the soul and the body. The body is supposed to be composed of matter, and the soul of spirit. The body is a prison from which the soul is liberated at death to carry on its own proper nonphysical existence. Because of its immaterial spiritual nature the soul has been considered indestructible. Hence the question of life after death has been the question of demonstrating the immortality, the death-defying capacity, of the soul. The body is of little consequence. This way of thinking is entirely foreign to the Bible. True to Scripture and definitely rejecting the Greek view, the Christian creed says, not 'I believe in the immortality of the soul', but 'I believe in the resurrection of the body'." [3|82]

"The soul is not a separate part of man, constituting a substance of its own." [3|82]

"The Christian faith knows nothing about an immortality of the person. That would mean a denial of death, not recognizing it as judgment of God. It knows only an awakening from real death through the power of God. There is existence after death only by way of awakening, resurrection." [3|83]

"There is no immortality of the soul but a resurrection of the whole person, body and soul, from death. The only immortality which the Bible recognizes is the immortality of a personal relationship with God in Christ." [3|82]

"The Bible does not distinguish between man and the beasts on the ground that man has an immortal soul while the beasts do not. Men, beasts, even plants, are alike in death. We do not need to concern ourselves about spiritualism or hypotheses of any kind concerning future existence. The whole matter of death and life after death is simplified when our only concern is faith in God who can destroy and who can resurrect. Life makes no sense and holds no hope except in terms of Christ's victory of death and the assurance that we share in that victory. There is considerable support in Scripture for the view that the soul as well as the body is destructible. This evidence has been obscured because the Greek conception of the inherent immortality of the soul has supplanted the teaching of Scripture." [3|82]

"The hope of the individual Christian at death does not lie in man's power to defy death but in God's power to raise man from the dead. Death is real, and man has no inherent capacity to leap over the grave into another existence." [3|82]

[Martin J. Heineken \(1902-1998\)](#)

Prof. Dr. Martin J. Heineken (1902-1998), Professor of Systematic Theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, in speaking of man as a unit, stated:

"In the Biblical account of creation we are told that Godformed man of the dust and of the earth, and that He then breathed into his nostrils and man became a living soul. This is usually interpreted to mean that God made a soul, which is the real person, and that he then gave this soul a temporary home in a body, made of the dust of the earth. But this is a false dualism... Man must be considered a unity." [3|84]

"We are dealing with a unified being, a person, and not with something that is called a soul and which dwells in a house called the body, as though the body was just a tool for the soul to employ, but not really apart of the person." [3|84]

Then continuing on the issue of immortality, Heineken says:

"It is held by some people that there is within every man an unchanging and indestructible core, immortal in its own right. It is unaffected by time; it had no beginning, neither can it have an end. It has always been and always will be. It came into this world of changing things from the realm of eternity and will return to it." [3|84]

"The Christian view is by no means to be identified with the above belief in the immortality of the soul. The Christian belief is in the immortality of the God-relationship, and in the resurrection. The Christian dualism is not that of a soul and body, eternal mind and passing things, but the dualism of Creator and creature. Man is a person, a unified being, a center of responsibility, standing over against his Creator and Judge. He has no life or immortality within himself. He came into being through God's creative power. He spends as many years on this earth as in God's providence are allotted to him. He faces death as the wages of sin."

[3|84]

"Men has speculated like this: At death the soul is separated from the body. It appears then before God in a preliminary judgment which is mentioned nowhere in Scripture and enters into a preliminary state either of blessedness or condemnation. Then, when the last trumpet sounds, the body is resurrected and rejoined with the soul, and complete once more, the reunited body and soul appear for the final, public judgment scene, from there to enter into final bliss or final condemnation. It is no wonder that, with this view, men must have little use for a resurrection, and have finally dropped the notion altogether and have been satisfied with the redemption of only the soul." [3|84]

"To die then means to pass to the resurrection and the judgment at the end of time. Even if someone should say that all men sleep until the final trumpet sounds, what is the passage of time for those who are asleep? The transition from the moment of death to the resurrection would still be instantaneous for them. It would be no different from going to bed at night and being waked in the morning." [3|84]

[Oscar Cullmann \(1902-1999\)](#)

Oscar Cullmann was a Christian theologian in the Lutheran tradition. He writes:

"If one recognizes that death and eternal life in the New Testament are always bound up with the Christ-event, then it becomes clear that for the first Christians the soul is not intrinsically immortal, but rather became so only through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and through faith in Him. It also becomes clear that death is not intrinsically the Friend, but rather that its 'sting', its power, is taken away only through the victory of Jesus over it in His death. And lastly, it becomes clear that the resurrection already accomplished is not the state of fulfillment, for that remains in the future until the body is also resurrected, which will not occur until 'the last day'." [85]

"The answer to the question, 'Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead in the New Testament', is unequivocal. The teaching of the great philosophers Socrates and Plato can in no way be brought into consonance with that of the New Testament. That their person, their life, and their bearing in death can none the less be honored by Christians, the apologists of the second century have shown." [85]

[Helmut Thielicke \(1908-1986\)](#)

The German Theologian and Rector of the University of Hamburg, Helmut Thielicke (1908-1986) pointed out that the Roman Catholic notion of justification by an infused righteousness and the idea of an immortal soul belong together. [7|86]

[Frederick Fyvie Bruce \(1910-1990\)](#)

Dr. F.F. Bruce taught Greek at the [University of Edinburgh](#), the [University of Leeds](#), eventually becoming head of the Department of Biblical History and Literature at the [University of Sheffield](#) in 1947. Bruce believed that:

"... annihilation is certainly an acceptable interpretation of the relevant New Testament passages ... For myself, I remain agnostic. Eternal conscious torment is incompatible with the revealed character of God." [87|88]

[Anthony Andrew Hoekema \(1913-1988\)](#)

Professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary, Prof. Dr. Anthony Andrew Hoekema (1913-1988) identified the immortality of the soul with the idealistic anthropology of Plato and Aristotle. [7|89]

[John William Wenham \(1913-1996\)](#)

John Wenham was an Anglican Theologian, that "bears the distinction of being a conservative theologian, but one who hold to the position of 'conditional immortality' - or the belief that the human soul is not by default eternal in nature; ..." [90]

[John Robert Walmsley Stott \(1921-\)](#)

The British Evangelical Anglican Theologian and Author, Dr. John R.W. Stott (1921-), a leader in the worldwide evangelical movement, and Rector Emeritus of the Church of All Souls, has also "publicly considered the idea of annihilationism" [91|59]

Publications

[New Dictionary of Theology \(1988\)](#)

"From the Genesis account it seems that man was not created either immortal or mortal (see Genesis 2:17; 3:22) BUT WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF BECOMING EITHER, DEPENDING ON HIS RESPONSIVENESS TO GOD. He was created for immortality rather than with immortality. Such a view coheres with 1 Timothy 6:16. God is inherently immortal, BUT MAN IS DERIVATIVELY IMMORTAL. RECEIVING IMMORTALITY AS A GRACIOUS DIVINE GIFT. POTENTIALLY MORTAL BY NATURE MAN BECOMES IMMORTAL BY GRACE." [100]

[Eerdmans Bible Dictionary \(2000\)](#)

"The New Testament doctrine of immortality builds on the Old Testament view of God as 'life-in-himself' and as life-giver and of mankind as a unity which ultimately entails the hope of resurrection ... to be in Christ is a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:15). IMMORTALITY IS THUS NOT INHERENT IN THE OLD CREATION. BUT AS CHRIST IS THE FIRSTFRUIT OF THE NEW CREATION, SO CHRISTIANS ARE BORN ANEW OF IMPERISHABLE SEED (1 Peter 1:23) the spiritual seed of the last Adam." [98]

[Evangelical Dictionary of Theology \(2001\)](#)

"The biblical idea of immortality thus differs from all others in certain important respects. One of these is that IN NONBIBLICAL TEACHING MAN IS INHERENTLY IMMORTAL. Another is that it is the spiritual aspect of human nature only which is thought to be immortal. The human soul or spirit survives death. A corollary of these two is that the human body is usually thought of as a kind of prison house of the spirit or, at best as a very transitory part of human personality. IN BIBLICAL THOUGHT MAN IS NOT

INHERENTLY IMMORTAL; it is the whole man, body and soul, that is immortal even though the body must undergo a transformation in order to achieve immortality. In the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament man is a complete being only as his body and spirit are in union. He is then a living soul, or person. (Genesis 2:7). While some have understood the Genesis narrative as teaching that man was created immortal and that sin brought mortality, it would be better to interpret the account as teaching that MAN WOULD HAVE GAINED IMMORTALITY THROUGH A PERIOD OF TESTING IN WHICH HE WOULD BE OBEDIENT TO THE DIVINE COMMAND." [99]

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