

One Minute After Death (radio transcript)

The Other Side of Life

Do you believe in life after death?[{1}](#)

Picture the operating room of a large hospital. A man is dying. As the doctors frantically try to save him, here is what he perceives and thinks:

"I am dying. I hear the doctor pronounce me dead. As I lie on the operating table, a loud, harsh buzzing reverberates in my head. At the same time, I sense myself moving very rapidly through a long, dark tunnel. Suddenly, I find myself outside of my own physical body. Like a spectator, I watch the doctor's desperate attempts to revive my corpse.

"Soon I encounter a 'being' of light, a loving, warm spirit who shows me an instant replay of my life and helps me evaluate my past deeds.

"Eventually, I learn I must return to my body. I resist, for my afterlife experience has been quite pleasant. Somehow, though, I am reunited with my physical body and live."[{2}](#)

This composite account of a near-death experience or "NDE" is adapted from the best selling book, *Life After Life*, by Dr. Raymond Moody, who brought these experiences to wide public awareness. Often the episodes involve out-of-body experiences or "OBEs."

While writing a book on this subject, I interviewed people with some fascinating stories. A Kansas woman developed complications after major surgery. She sensed herself rising out of her body, soaring through space, and hearing heavenly

voices before returning to her body. An Arizona man in a coma for five months after a motorcycle accident said he saw his deceased father, who spoke to him.

Actress Sharon Stone has described her own close call with death. She was hospitalized with bleeding from an artery at her skull's base. "I feel that I did die," she relates. She tells of "a giant vortex of white light" and says "I kind of poof sort of took off... into this glorious bright...white light. I started to see and be met by some of my friends. people who were very dear to me. It was very, very fast, and suddenly I was back. I was in my body and I was in the room." Stone says the experience affected her "profoundly" and that she "will never be the same."[{3}](#)

What do these near-death experiences mean? How should we interpret them? This article offers a biblical perspective.

Interpreting Near-Death Experiences

What are some possible explanations for the NDEs? Hundreds of people claim that they have died and lived to tell about it. Are their near-death and out-of-body experiences genuine previews of the afterlife? Hallucinations caused by traumatic events? Or something else?

Some patients have been pronounced clinically dead and later are resuscitated. Others have had close calls with death, but were never really thought dead (such as survivors of automobile accidents). Still others did die permanently but described what they saw before they expired.

Determination of the point of death is a hotly debated issue. In the past, doctors relied merely on the ceasing of the heartbeat and respiration. More recently they have used the EEG or brainwave test. Whatever one considers the point of death, most would agree that these folks have come much closer to it than the majority of people living today.

A number of possible explanations for the OBEs have been offered. Different ones may apply in different situations.

The physiological explanations suggest that a “physical” condition may have caused some of the out-of-body experiences. For instance, cerebral anoxia (a shortage of oxygen in the brain) occurs when the heart stops. The brain can survive for a short while (usually only a few minutes) without receiving oxygen from the blood. Anoxia can produce abnormal mental states.[{4}](#) Patients who recover from heart failure and report OBEs may be merely reporting details of an “altered state of consciousness,” some say.[{5}](#)

Electronic brain stimulation can produce out-of-body sensations. Researchers at the Universities of Geneva and Lausanne in Switzerland placed electrodes in the brain of a woman suffering from epilepsy. As they stimulated her brain’s right angular gyrus, she reported sensing she was floating about six feet above her body.[{6}](#)

The pharmacological explanations say that drugs or anesthetics may induce some of the near-death experiences. Some primitive societies use drugs to induce OBEs in their religious ceremonies.[{7}](#) LSD and marijuana sometimes generate similar sensations.[{8}](#) Even many medically accepted drugs have produced mental states akin to those reported by the dying. Ketamine is an anesthetic that is administered intravenously[{9}](#) and produces hallucinatory reactions.[{10}](#)

Psychological and Spiritual Explanations

How should we interpret near-death experiences? What do they mean? So far this we have examined physiological and pharmacological explanations, that is, causes involving the body or drugs. Consider two other categories: psychological and spiritual explanations. The psychological explanations suggest that the individual’s mind may generate the unusual

mental experience. Sigmund Freud, writing about the difficulty of coping with the thought of death, said it would be more comfortable in our minds to picture ourselves as detached observers.[{11}](#) Some modern psychiatrists theorize that the OBE is merely a defense mechanism against the anxiety of death. That is, since the thought of one's own death is so frightening, the patient's mind invents the OBE to make it seem as if only the body is dying while the soul or spirit lives on.

Other psychologists wonder if the patient may be confusing his or her *interpretation* of the experience with what actually happened.[{12}](#) The conscious mind needs an explanation for an unusual vision; therefore, it interprets the event in familiar terms. Thus, say these psychologists, resuscitated patients report conversations with deceased relatives or religious figures common to their culture.

The spiritual explanations view many of the OBEs as real manifestations of the spiritual.

Many have noted that earlier reports of NDEs seemed to contradict some traditional Christian beliefs about the afterlife. All of the patients Christian and non-Christian reported feelings of bliss and ecstasy with no mention of unpleasantness, hell, or judgment.

However, further research uncovered negative experiences. For instance, Raymond Moody wrote of one woman who was supposedly "dead" for 15 minutes and said she saw spirits who appeared "bewildered." "They seemed to shuffle," she reported, "as someone would on a chain gang not knowing where they were going. they all had the most woebegone expressions. It was quite depressing."[{13}](#)

Dr. Moody observed, "Nothing I have encountered precludes the possibility of a hell."[{14}](#)

Some have felt that OBEs are inconsistent with the biblical

concept of a final judgment at the world's end. No one reports standing before God and being judged for eternity. Dr. Moody responds that "the end of the world has not yet taken place," so there is no inconsistency. "There may well be a final judgment," he says. "Near-death experiences in no way imply the contrary."[{15}](#)

So, is there a life after death?

Is There Life After Death?

The spring of my sophomore year in college, the student living in the room next to me was struck and killed by lightning. For some time after Mike's death, our fraternity was in a state of shock. My friends were asking questions like, "Is there a life after death?" and "How can we experience it?"

Is it possible to know whether there is an afterlife? What method would you use to find out?

Some suggest using the *experimental method* of science and applying it to the near-death experiences. However, these events normally are not controlled, clinical situations. They're medical emergencies. Even if scientists could establish controls, we have no mind-reading machines to verify mental/spiritual experiences. And think about recruiting subjects. Would you volunteer to undergo clinical death for research purposes?

Some suggest relying on personal *experience* to answer the question. But the experiential method has its drawbacks, too. NDEs can provide useful information, but the mind can trick us. Dreams, fantasies, hallucinations, drug trips, drunkenness, states of shock all can evoke mental images that seem real but aren't.

What if we could find a *spiritual authority*, someone with trustworthy credentials, to tell us the truth about afterlife

issues?

Following Mike's death, I encouraged my friends to consider Jesus of Nazareth as a trustworthy spiritual authority. As somewhat of a skeptic myself, I'd found the resurrection of Christ to be one of the best-attested facts of history.[{16}](#) If Jesus died and came back from the dead, He could accurately tell us what death and the afterlife are like. The fact that He successfully predicted His own resurrection[{17}](#) helps us believe that He will tell us the truth about the afterlife.

Jesus and His early followers indicated that the afterlife would be personal, that human personalities would continue to exist.[{18}](#) Eternal life would be relational, involving warm, personal relationships with God and with each other.[{19}](#) Eternal life would be enjoyable, defying our description and exceeding our imagination. "No mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him," wrote one early believer.[{20}](#) And eternal life would be eternal. It would never end. "God has given us eternal life," wrote one of Jesus' closest friends, "and this life is in His Son."[{21}](#)

The sad thing is that some people don't want to take advantage of eternal life.

How to Be Sure You'll Live Forever

Maurice Rawlings, M.D., a cardiologist, tells of a patient who had a cardiac arrest in Dr. Rawlings' office. During the attempted resuscitation, the patient screamed, "I am in hell!" "Don't stop!" he begged in terror. "Each time you quit I go back to hell!"[{22}](#)

The biblical hell, or Hades, is the current home of those who do not accept God's forgiveness. The final abode of those who refuse forgiveness is called the "lake of fire."[{23}](#)

Not a pleasant subject. But remember, God loves you and wants

you to spend eternity with Him.[{24}](#) He sent Jesus, His Son, to die and pay the penalty for our sins (attitudes and actions that fall short of God's perfection). We simply need to receive His free gift of forgiveness we can never earn it to be guaranteed eternal life. "Whoever hears my word," Jesus says, "and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."[{25}](#)

How should we interpret the near-death experiences? Here's my perspective as one who believes the evidence supports Jesus' and biblical reliability.[{26}](#) If a given NDE contradicts biblical statements or principles, I do not accept it as being completely from God. If the experience does not contradict biblical statements or principles, then it *could* be from God. (Body, drug or mind could also influence it.)

A given NDE could be completely spiritual and yet not be from God. Jesus spoke of an evil spiritual being, Satan. We are told that Satan "disguises himself as an angel of light,"[{27}](#) but Jesus called him "a liar and the father of lies."[{28}](#) I'm not accusing all near-death experiencers of being in league with the devil. Just a friendly word of caution that some may be being deceived.

Once a nightclub near Cincinnati was packed to the brim. Suddenly, a busboy stepped onto the stage, interrupted the program and announced that the building was on fire. Perhaps because they saw no smoke, many of the guests remained seated. Maybe they thought it was a joke, a part of the program, and felt comfortable with that explanation. When they finally saw the smoke, it was too late. More than 150 people died as the nightclub burned.[{29}](#)

Are you believing what you want to believe, or what the evidence shows is true? Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies."[{30}](#) I encourage you to place your faith in Jesus if you haven't yet. Then you, too, will live, even if you die.

Notes

1. This article is adapted from Rusty Wright, "One Minute After Death," *Pursuit* magazine, Vol. V, No. 2, 1996; Rusty Wright, "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the End, *Collegiate Challenge*, Vol. 17, 1978, pp. 2-5; and Rusty Wright, *The Other Side of Life* (Singapore: Campus Crusade Asia Limited, 1979, 1994).
2. Adapted and paraphrased from Raymond A. Moody, Jr., M.D., *Life After Life* (New York: Bantam, 1976), 21-22.
3. Carolyne Zinko, "When Stone saw the light, *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 28, 2002, The Features Page. The article relates Stone's description of her experience to NBC TV's Katie Couric.
4. Stanislav Grof, M. D., and Joan Halifax-Grof, "Psychedelics and the Experience of Death," in Toynbee, Koestler, and others, *Life After Death* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976), 196.
5. Daniel Goleman, "Back from the Brink," *Psychology Today*, April 1977, p. 59.
6. Olaf Blanke, et al., "Stimulating illusory own-body perceptions," *Nature*, Vol. 419, 19 September 2002, p. 269.
7. Michael Grosso, "Some Varieties of Out-of-Body Experience," *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, April, 1976, 185,186.
8. Grof and Halifax Grof, op. cit., pp. 193-195; Stanislav Grof, "Varieties of Transpersonal Experiences: Observations from LSD Psychotherapy," *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 4:1, 1972, p. 67; Russell Noyes, Jr., M.D., and Roy Kletti, "Depersonalization in the Face of Life-Threatening Danger: An Interpretation," *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 7:2, 1976, p. 108.
9. Moody, *Life After Life*, p. 157.
10. Louis Jolyon West, M. D., "A Clinical and Theoretical Overview of Hallucinatory Phenomena" in R. K. Siegel and

- L.J. West (eds.), *Hallucinations: Behavior, Experience, and Theory* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1975), 292.
11. Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" (1915), *Collected Papers*, Vol. 4, Basic Books, 1959; quoted in Russell Noyes, Jr., M.D., "The Experience of Dying," *Psychiatry*, May 1972, p. 178.
 12. Dr. Charles Tart in Robert A. Monroe, *Journeys Out of the Body* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1971), 6,7.
 13. Raymond A. Moody, Jr., *Reflections on Life After Life* (New York and Covington, Georgia: Bantam/Mockingbird, 1977), 19-21.
 14. Ibid., 36.
 15. Ibid., 36, 37.
 16. See, for instance, Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence That Demands A Verdict* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers), 1999.
 17. See, for example, Jesus' resurrection predictions in Luke 9:22 and 18:31-33; their fulfillment in Luke 24.
 18. See for example Luke 23:42-43; Matthew 8:11; 2 Samuel 12:23; Matthew 17:1-8.
 19. John 14:2-3; Philippians 1:23; John 17:3.
 20. 1 Corinthians 2:9 NIV. See also Revelation 21:4; Hebrews 12:2.
 21. 1 John 5:11 NASB.
 22. Maurice Rawlings, M.D., *Beyond Death's Door* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978), 19-20.
 23. Revelation 20:11-15.
 24. John 3:16.
 25. John 5:24 NIV.
 26. See, for example, McDowell, op. cit.
 27. 2 Corinthians 11:14 NASB.
 28. John 8:44 NASB.
 29. "They Didn't Believe It," *The New York Times*, May 30, 1977, p. 16; Hal Bruno, "The Fire Next Time," *Newsweek*, June 13, 1977, pp. 24, 27.
 30. John 11:25 NASB.

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the End

Hundreds of cases have been recorded of people who returned from the brink of death to report on "the other side." But are out-of-body experiences really encounters with the afterlife ... or something more deceptive?

A man is dying.

As he lies on the operating table of a large hospital, he hears his doctor pronounce him dead. A loud, harsh buzzing reverberates in his head. At the same time, he senses himself moving quickly through a long, dark tunnel. Then, suddenly, he finds he is outside of his own physical body. Like a spectator, he watches the doctor's desperate attempts to revive his corpse. Soon, he sees the spirits of relatives and friends who have already died. He encounters a "being of light." This being shows him an instant replay of his life and has him evaluate his past deeds. Finally, the man learns that his time to die has not yet come and that he must return to his body. He resists, for he has found his afterlife experience to be quite pleasant. Yet, somehow, he is reunited with his physical body and lives. [\[1\]](#)

You may be one of the many who have read this account of a near-death experience in the best-selling book, *Life After Life*, by Dr. Raymond A. Moody, Jr. Dr. Moody is a psychiatrist who pieced together this picture from the reports of numerous patients he had studied. He notes that not all dying patients have these "out-of-body experiences" (OBE's) and stresses that

this is a *composite account* from some who have. Not every element appears in every experience, but the picture is fairly representative, he says.

The last few years have seen a flurry of books and articles on these OBE's as an increasing number of doctors report similar findings. My own curiosity led me to several fascinating interviews with surviving patients.

One interview was with a woman in Kansas, who developed complications after major surgery. She told me that she sensed herself rising out of her body, soaring through space and hearing heavenly voices before she returned to her body.

A man in Arizona was in a coma for five months following a severe motorcycle accident. He said that during that time he saw his deceased father, who spoke to him.

Interpreting the OBE's

How should we interpret these out-of-body experiences? Are they genuine previews of the afterlife? Hallucinations caused by traumatic events? Or something else?

Let's evaluate.

First, the people who have death-related OBE's fall into different categories. Some have been pronounced clinically dead and later are resuscitated. Others have had close calls with death, but were never really thought dead (such as survivors of automobile accidents). Still others did die—permanently—but described what they saw before they expired.

Second, the determination of the point of death is a hotly debated issue. In the past, doctors relied merely on the ceasing of the heartbeat and respiration. More recently they have used the EEG or brainwave test. Some argue that death must be an *irreversible* loss of all vital signs and functions.

These would say that patients who were resuscitated did not really die because they were resuscitated. But whatever one considers the point of death, most would agree that these folks have come much closer to it than the majority of people living today.

A number of possible explanations for the OBE's have been offered. Different ones may apply in different situations. Here are a few of the main theories:

The physiological explanations suggest that a “physical” condition may have caused some of the out-of-body experiences. For instance, cerebral anoxia (a shortage of oxygen in the brain) occurs when the heart stops. The brain can survive for a short while (usually only a few minutes) without receiving oxygen from the blood. Anoxia can produce abnormal mental states.[{2}](#) Thus, patients who recover from heart failure and report OBE's may be merely reporting details of an “altered state of consciousness,” some say.[{3}](#)

The pharmacological explanations say that drugs or anesthetics may induce some of the near-death experiences. Some primitive societies use drugs to induce OBE's in their religious ceremonies.[{4}](#)

LSD and marijuana sometimes generate similar sensations. [{5}](#) Even many medically accepted drugs have produced mental states akin to those reported by the dying. Ether, a gaseous anesthetic, can cause the patient to experience “sensations like that of being drawn down a dark tunnel.”[{6}](#)

The drug ketamine is an anesthetic that is injected into the veins.[{7}](#) It is used widely and produces hallucinatory reactions 10% to 15% of the time.” UCLA pharmacologists Siegel and Jarvik report the reactions of two subjects who took this drug:

“I'm moving through some kind of train tunnel. There are all sorts of lights and colors, mostly in the center, far, far

away; way, far away, and little people and stuff running around the walks of the tube, like little cartoon nebbishes; they're pretty close."

"Everything's changing really fast, like pictures in a film, or television, just right in front of me. I am watching it happen right there."[{9}](#) The tunnel, lights, people and film scenes in these accounts bear some resemblance to the OBE images.

The psychological explanations suggest that the individual's mind may generate the unusual mental experience. Sigmund Freud, writing about the difficulty of coping with the thought of death, said it would be more comfortable in our minds to picture ourselves as detached observers.[{10}](#) Some modern psychiatrists, following this theme, theorize that the OBE is merely a defense mechanism against the anxiety of death. That is, since the thought of one's own death is so frightening, the patient's mind invents the OBE to make it seem as if only the body is dying while the soul or spirit lives on.

Dr. Russell Noyes, University of Iowa psychiatrist, has done extensive research into the experiences of people in life threatening situations. He says that the OBE is "an emergency mechanism . . . a reflex action, if you like."[{11}](#)

Noyes and his associate, Roy Kletti, write, "In the face of mortal danger we find individuals becoming observers of that which is taking place, effectively removing themselves from danger."[{12}](#)

Other psychologists wonder if the patient may be confusing his or her *interpretation* of the experience with what actually happened.[{13}](#) The conscious mind seems to need an explanation for an unusual vision; therefore, it interprets the event in familiar terms. Thus, say these psychologists, the resuscitated patient reports conversations with deceased relatives or religious figures common to his culture.

It is possible that an OBE could be completely spiritual and yet not be from God.

Spiritual Theories

The spiritual explanations grant the existence of the spiritual realm. They view many of the OBE's as real manifestations of this realm. Dr. Moody, while admitting his inability to prove his belief, feels that the OBE's represent genuine previews of the afterlife.[{14}](#) The famous Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, well-known writer on death and dying, says she became convinced of the afterlife through her study of OBE's and related phenomena.[{15}](#)

Many have noted that the experiences in Dr. Moody's first book, *Life After Life*, seem to contradict some of the traditional Christian beliefs about the afterlife. All of the patients—Christian and non-Christian—report feelings of bliss and ecstasy with no mention of unpleasantness, hell or judgment.

However, Dr. Moody's first book was based on limited observation. Further research yielded new information that he presents in a second book, *Reflections on Life After Life*, which came out in 1977 (two years later).

He has now talked with numerous patients who refer to a “city of light” and describe scenes that are reminiscent of biblical material.[{16}](#) Some of his other patients report seeing “beings who seemed to be ‘trapped’ in an apparently most unfortunate state of existence.”[{17}](#)

One woman who was supposedly “dead” for 15 minutes said she saw spirits who appeared confused. “They seemed to shuffle,”

she reports, "as someone would on a chain gang . . . not knowing where they were going. They all had the most woebegone expressions. It was quite depressing."[{18}](#)

Dr. Moody now states, "Nothing I have encountered precludes the possibility of a hell."[{19}](#) Some have felt that the OBE's are inconsistent with the biblical concept of a final judgment at the world's end. No one reports standing before God and being judged for eternity. Dr. Moody responds in his second book by pointing out that "the end of the world has not yet taken place, "so there is no inconsistency." There may well be a final judgment," he says. "Near-death experiences in no way imply the contrary."[{20}](#)

Life After Death?

How should one view the OBE's and their relationship to the issue of life after death? Scientific or experimental methods are currently unable to solve the riddle (as a number of scientists will admit).[{21}](#) Not only is it difficult to provide controlled situations during medical emergencies; the scientist has no instruments to determine the *content* of events in the spiritual or mental realms.

Personal testimony alone is insufficient as a test of truth in these cases. Subjective mental experiences can be deceptive and are susceptible to influence by injury, drugs, psychological trauma, etc., as stated previously. Also, what would we conclude when the experiences differ?

Another approach involves the spiritual realm. Presumably, a qualified spiritual authority could accurately inform us about the afterlife. But with so many differing authorities on today's spiritual scene, whom should we believe?

An increasing number of educated men and women are concluding that Jesus of Nazareth is a trustworthy spiritual leader. A major reason for this conclusion is that He successfully

predicted His own out-of-body experience—that is, His own death and resurrection. Consider the evidence:[{22}](#)

Jesus was executed on the cross and declared dead. His body was wrapped like a mummy and then placed in a tomb. An extremely large stone was rolled against the entrance. A unit of superior Roman soldiers was placed out front to guard against grave robbers. On the third day, the stone had been rolled away and the tomb was empty, but the grave clothes were still in place. The Roman guards came out with the feeble story that the disciples had stolen the body while they were sleeping. But how could they know who had done it if they were asleep?

Meanwhile, hundreds of people were saying they saw Jesus alive and were believing in Him because His prediction had come true. Both the Romans and the Jews would have loved to have produced the body to squelch the movement. No one did. The tomb remained empty and Christianity spread like wildfire. Jesus' disciples were so convinced that He had risen that they endured torture and even martyrdom for their faith.

Jesus Christ successfully predicted His own resurrection. This was not a mere resuscitation after His heart had stopped beating for a few minutes. It was a dramatic physical resurrection after several days in the grave.

Why is this incident so important? The resurrection shows that Jesus has power over death. It establishes Him as a spiritual authority. Because He remains consistent on statements we can test (such as His resurrection prediction), we seemingly have solid grounds for trusting Him on statements we *cannot* test (such as those He made about life after death).

One statement Jesus made was that all who believe in Him will have everlasting life, an eternity of joy. As one early Christian wrote: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Jesus also explained that God loves us and desires our happiness both now and after we die.[{24}](#) However, we all initially exist in a condition of separation or alienation from God. This condition is called sin, and it prevents us from achieving maximum fulfillment in this life and from spending eternity with God.[{25}](#)

Jesus claimed to be the solution to our sin problem. By His death on the cross He paid the penalty for our sins so that we might be forgiven and live forever with God.[{26}](#) The Bible explains, “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son (Jesus). He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.”[{27}](#) If we refuse this free gift in Jesus, we are choosing to exclude ourselves from God, opting instead for an eternity of suffering. [{28}](#)

OBE Interpretation

In light of the above, how should one interpret the OBE'S? Here are some guidelines I use.

Because I have concluded that historical evidence supports both the authority of Jesus and the accuracy of the biblical documents, accept them as a standard.

If a given OBE contradicts biblical statements or principles, I do not accept it as being completely from God. If the experience does not contradict biblical statements or principles, then it *could* be from God. (I say “could” because there is always a possibility of influence from one of the other factors—body, drug or mind.)

It is also possible that a given OBE could be completely spiritual and yet not be from God.

Jesus clearly taught the existence of an evil spiritual being, Satan.

We are told that Satan “disguises himself as an angel of light,”[{30}](#) but Jesus said that he is “a liar, and the father of lies.”[{31}](#)

One of Satan’s favorite deceptions is convincing people that they can achieve eternal life by doing good. That way, they don’t see their need for receiving Christ’s pardon.

Could this be the reason that sometimes the “being of light” in the OBE’s tells the patient to go back and live a good life, but makes no mention of a commitment to Christ? (I’m not accusing everyone connected with OBE’s of deliberately being in league with the devil. Rather, I’m offering a word of caution, a suggestion to consider satanic influence as one of several possible alternatives in individual cases.)

Obviously death is a common denominator of the human race. Some seek to avoid the issue or to insulate themselves from it through possessions and pursuits, popularity or power. Many feel that whatever belief makes you comfortable is okay. Do any of these descriptions fit you?

In the spring of 1977, a nightclub near Cincinnati was packed to the brim. Suddenly, a busboy stepped onto the stage, interrupted the program and announced that the building was on fire. Perhaps because they saw no smoke, many of the guests remained seated. Maybe they thought it was a joke, a part of the program, and felt comfortable with that explanation. When they finally saw the smoke, it was too late. More than 150 people died as the nightclub burned.[{32}](#)

As you consider death, are you believing what you want to believe, or what the evidence shows is true? Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall

live, even if he dies.”[{33}](#)

I encourage you to place your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior. Then you, too, will live, even if you die.

Notes

1. Paraphrased from Raymond A. Moody, Jr., M. D., *Life After Life*, Bantam, New York, 1976 (first published by Mockingbird Books in 1975), pp. 21, 22.
2. Stanislav Grof, M. D., and Joan Halifax-Grof, “Psychedelics and the Experience of Death,” in Toynbee, Koestler, and others, *Life After Death*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1976, p. 196.
3. Daniel Goleman, “Back from the Brink,” *Psychology Today*, April, 1977, p. 59.
4. Michael Grosso, “Some Varieties of Out-of-Body Experience,” *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, April, 1976, pp. 185, 186.
5. Grof and Halifax Grof, pp. 193-195; Stanislav Grof, “Varieties of Transpersonal Experiences: Observations from LSD Psychotherapy,” *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 4: 1, 1972, p.67; Russell Noyes, Jr., M.D., and Roy Kletti, “Depersonalization in the Face of Life-Threatening Danger: An Interpretation,” *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 7: 2, 1976, p. 108.
6. Raymond A. Moody, Jr., *Reflections on Life After Life*, Bantam/ Mockingbird, New York and Covington, Georgia, 1977, p. 108.
7. Moody, *Life After Life*, p. 157.
8. Louis Jolyon West, M.D., “A Clinical and Theoretical Overview of Hallucinatory Phenomena” in R. K. Siegel and L. J. West (eds.), *Hallucinations Behavior, Experience, and Theory*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1975, p. 292.
9. Ronald K. Siegel, Ph. D. and Murray E. Jarvik, M.D., Ph.D., “Drug-Induced Hallucinations in Animals and Man,” in Siegel and West, pp. 116-118.
10. Sigmund Freud, “Thoughts for the Times on War and Death” (1915), *Collected Papers*, Vol. 4, Basic Books, 1959; quoted in

- Russell Noyes, Jr., M.D., "The Experience of Dying," *Psychiatry*, May 1972, p. 178.
11. Joan Kron, "The Out-of-Body Trip: What a Way to Go!" *New York Magazine*, December 27, 1976-January 3, 1977, p. 72.
 12. Noyes and Kietti (1976), loc. cit.
 13. Dr. Charles Tart in Robert A. Monroe, *Journeys Out of the Body*, Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1971, pp. 6, 7.
 14. Moody, *Reflections on Life After Life*, p. 111.
 15. James Pearre *Chicago Tribune*, "Ghost Story: How a long dead patient talked doctor into continuing work with the dying," *San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle*, November 14, 1976, section B, p. 7.
 16. Moody, *Reflections on Life After Life*, pp. 15-18.
 17. Ibid, pp. 18-22.
 18. Ibid., pp. 19-21.
 19. Ibid., p. 36.
 20. Ibid., pp. 36, 37.
 21. Ibid., pp. 132-135; A. Susan Mennear, "Life After Death?" *Good Housekeeping*, September, 1976, pp. 187, 188; J. B. Rhine, Ph. D., "Parapsychology and Psychology: The Shifting Relationship Today," *The Journal of Parapsychology*, June, 1976, pp. 131-133.
 22. For a more thorough documentation of resurrection evidences, see Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Campus Crusade for Christ International, 1972, pp. 185-273; see also pp. 15-79 for evidences for the reliability of the biblical documents.
 23. 1 Corinthians 2: 9, NIV.
 24. John 3: 16; John 10:10.
 25. Romans 1:23; 6:23.
 26. Luke 19:10; Mark 10:45; 1 Peter 2:24; John 3:16.
 27. 1 John 5: 11,12.
 28. John 3:36; Revelation 20:15.
 29. McDowell, loc. cit.
 30. 11 Corinthians 11:14.
 31. John 8:44.
 32. "They Didn't Believe It," *The New York Times*, May 30,

1977, p. 16; Hal Bruno, "The Fire Next Time," *Newsweek*, June 13, 1977, pp. 24, 27.

33. John 11:25.

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