

THE REALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CALLING AND WALK II

Question #1:

You said, "But only Christians expect what we have in this life to be made infinitely better in eternity."

This is a lie!

RESPONSE #1:

Not necessarily. There may be an argument over what "better" objectively means but no other religion or philosophy out there thinks of Eternity as a perfection of what life ought to be. All the others have some notion that either describes Eternity in terms of this world, for example, Islam is concerned with sex and food and water, or presents Eternity as some ethereal existence completely divorced from what we know about life through our experience in this world, for example, becoming or returning to being part of the Brahmin as Hinduism holds.

But Christianity teaches that this world is damaged because of a war that intimately involves human beings. When that war is over, everything will be fixed and for those who have been faithful to God, life will finally be everything it was meant to be from the beginning.

QUESTION #2

Na wa o...

Is this sophistry or what

See how you just turn this matter upside down now now.

Okay, just so I am not the one getting things wrong. What exactly is the Christian idea of the afterlife?

What do you mean by "perfection of what life ought to be?"

RESPONSE #2:

Why do you think it may be sophistry?

To your first question, I have already answered it to some extent in another response. I will add a little more to fully answer your question.

The Bible teaches that God made man and gave him rulership of the earth. Man lived in a paradise at the time. He had access to the Tree of Life which kept him revitalized all the time. But when he disobeyed God, there was a break in his otherwise perfect existence. He lost access to paradise and also to the Tree of Life and was forced to work for his food and get little in return for his hard work. Also, for the first time, man became exposed to death. He was condemned to steadily lose vitality until he dies and returns to the dust from which he was made.

Clearly, if man had never committed treason against his King, he would never have experienced death and the earth would not have become what it is today.

But, by choosing to rebel against his Overlord in agreement with the first rebel, man lost favor with God and became Satan's vassal instead. Satan, by that maneuver of deceiving man, forcibly took back control of the earth from man (he was once God's Regent over the Earth before he rebelled). Consequently, man became an agent of limited authority over the Earth and also lost all that he may have had if he had stayed true to his Sovereign.

Man is a spirit that lives in a body. So, death is not really an end to his existence. When God decreed death for him, it was to make sure that evil had an end and that man could still be saved. Otherwise, man would be hopeless in his failure against God. Death then is what happens when our bodies wear out and our spirits are released from them. When that happens, every human being receives a temporary body and is then taken to a place in keeping with their choices in life. Those who choose to return to God in repentance through faith in Jesus Christ are today taken to God's temporary Headquarters in the Third Heaven where they rest from the war on earth waiting for the Return of God's King to the earth and their own Resurrection. Those who choose to persist in rebellion against God also receive their temporary bodies but are taken to Torments in Sheol which is under the Earth. There they must suffer until the Last Resurrection when they will be consigned to the Lake of Fire after their own Judgment for eternity.

This is the first part of "after-life" in biblical cosmology. No dead person is unconscious, they are only absent from life on earth.

The second part is that after circa 6000 years of human history counting from Adam and Eve, the number required to replace the angels who rebelled against God will be reached in human believers who together are called the Church. At that time, God will begin to warn the world of the Return of His King who would be bringing God's Vengeance against rebellion against His Authority. This is what we call the Tribulation. It will be open warfare finally between God's Side and Satan's side. At that time, Satan will appoint a special man to lead the earth side of his campaign with the view to destroying the Church and the nation Israel and thus make it impossible for the King to return. God will warn the unbelieving world at that time of the serious implications of continuing to rebel against Him then with terrible judgments such as this world has not seen or heard in thousands of years. But wickedness will only increase until the Lord Jesus returns and the Church is resurrected. That is, all dead believers from Adam and Eve to the last one to die or be killed during the Great Tribulation return to life on Earth in new bodies which cannot be harmed or destroyed ever again and all living believers at the time also have their bodies changed to become these new bodies too. Then, they gather and enter final battle against Satan and his angelic and human forces. That is what we call Armageddon.

When the earth has been cleared of all the aggressive enemies both angelic and human, then the Lord Jesus will renew the Earth changing it back into the perfect state it was in before Adam sinned, only better.

But there will still be unbelievers in the world who just never chose to join Satan and his armies in aggressive rebellion against God. And there will also be new believers who only come to believe because they have finally seen Jesus Christ return to the world. These latter will mostly be Jews. These two populations will exist side by side until the thousand years is done.

That thousand years or the Millennium will be a time when Christians who stayed faithful to the end of their earthly lives or the return of the King will rule the world with Jesus Christ. So, this again is part of the "after-life" in Christian cosmology because a large population of believers will now be living on Earth again but in eternal bodies completely freed from the constraints and troubles of life in this world but they will be the rulers of this world with the Lord Jesus Christ.

After the Millennium, the unbelieving population will begin a new rebellion to try to oust the worldwide Government of Jesus Christ. The rebellion will be tolerated for a short time before it will be summarily squashed and the entire material Universe finally destroyed.

Then, the whole population of, first, believers who chose loyalty to God in Jesus Christ, and, second, unbelievers who decided to remain in rebellion against God, both from the Millennium, will be raised from the dead in Resurrection bodies each suited to their status as believers or unbelievers. Then there will be the Last Judgment after which all rebels will be consigned to the Lake of Fire for eternity and a new Universe will be created by the Lord Jesus Christ to which God the Father will return to spend eternity with His Children for all eternity in the New Earth that will be made.

Both this new Universe and the Resurrection bodies will still be material things but not in the way these current ones are because they will be perfectly suited to spiritual existence and thus will be eternal in nature incapable of ever wearing out or being destroyed. Also, unlike these current ones, they will be perfect with no trace of evil or wickedness in any form.

The Bible does not say very much about what Eternity will be like. But it does talk about beautiful forests of trees on the new earth which produce delightful foliage and fruits which the inhabitants will eat in enjoyment and large rivers of the water of life that they will probably drink and swim in. But none of these things is presented as needful at all, that is, as necessary to survival. They are just more delights that God's children will enjoy in eternity. But with bodies as powerful as the Resurrection Body is, it only stands to reason that something like sex, for example, will hold little interest to us at that time given all that we would be able and also free to do with it. We certainly won't need food or water, as I said, but we would certainly be able to enjoy both if we wished for them. But the greatest pleasure would be to finally be able to see God face to face and live with Him, never leaving His Presence for all eternity.

This is the final part of "after-life" in Christian cosmology.

I believe that in all the foregoing, your second question has been answered. Man was created to be with God eternally and enjoy the beautiful universe that God made for him and the angels. Today though, things are not so. Much is wrong with man and with the universe itself. This is because of the war I spoke of. Many things that man takes pleasure in are injurious to him, for an obvious example, you could consider heroin or meth. There are more subtle things than those but they all harm the user. In eternity, our desires will finally be purified so that we want things that are actually good for us and we will also finally possess an uninhibited ability to actually enjoy these things and in doing so please the God Who loved us so much that He paid a Sacrifice beyond our ability to fully understand in order to save us from our own selves.

QUESTION #3:

You said, "Not necessarily. There may be an argument over what "better" objectively means but no other religion or philosophy out there thinks of Eternity as a perfection of what life ought to be. All the others have some notion that either describes Eternity in terms of this world, for example, Islam is concerned with sex and food and water, or presents Eternity as some ethereal existence completely divorced from what we know about life through our experience in this world, for example, becoming or returning to being part of the Brahmin as Hinduism holds.

But Christianity teaches that this world is damaged because of a war that intimately involves human beings. When that war is over, everything will be fixed and for those who have been faithful to God, life will finally be everything it was meant to be from the beginning."

Does Christianity not have sects that believe eternity to be in terms of "this world" like Jehovah's witnesses?

RESPONSE #3:

There are many tribes, languages and skin colors in Nigeria. There are even natural-born Nigerians and naturalized Nigerians. But there is really only one thing which is called Nigeria and which each of these categories claim to possess in order to be Nigerian. This is true of all things.

In Christianity, there is one core idea that is what Christianity is. Sects, religions and denominations may claim rightly or wrongly to be associated with that core idea but it is that core idea to which one must address oneself if one wants to deal with Christianity, not with sects, religions, denominations etc.

The Bible defines what Christianity is. It is Faith in Jesus Christ, God Who also assumed humanity for Himself in order to die for human beings and thus save us from our sins and the just condemnation awaiting every sinner. This is what you should address yourself to. If any sect misrepresents this, then regardless what claims it may make for its identity, it is not Christian. If it does represent this accurately, it should still proceed to line up with the Bible's position on everything else in order to be a good exemplar for examining Christian claims.

The Bible does not say what you have here quoted the Jehovah's Witnesses as saying. It does not hold that eternity will be in terms of "this world".

But it is true that the Bible teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ will return to rule this world for a thousand years. And after that thousand years and another worldwide rebellion against His Government at the end of it, the entire universe will be destroyed and then the Last Judgment will occur at the end of which a new Universe will be created with a perfect Earth where God the Father will come down to in order to live with His Children for eternity.

That Eternity will be spent in a material reality just like this one except only Perfect is true but even the Millennium will be in a world very different than this one because of how this planet will be changed by the Second Advent. Not only will physical conditions be much different than they are now, the very principles that govern human existence now will be replaced with new and perfect ones. It is common knowledge (you find it even boldly written on the walls of the UN), for example, that during the Millennium of the Reign of Christ, there will be no war. Still, that is not eternity. It is still time in this physical earth with sinful human beings and a corrupted universe. In eternity, things will be completely different.

In the Eternal Earth that will be created after the Last Judgment, for example, there will be no oceans. Also, the Capital City of that Earth, the New Jerusalem, will be a perfect Cube and a perfectly beautiful place where all the Church will have their lodgings. But while there will be amazing trees whose fruit will be a great delight and rivers of the water of life, these things will only be delights not necessities. Food and water would no longer be necessary at that point to sustain human existence since we will be immortal at that point. Sex would be hardly important because of the far more amazing pleasures of eternity that would take up our time and thought. When you consider how powerful the Resurrection Body is and how vast the present universe is and therefore how much better the coming one will be, the pleasures of this life that exercise our imagination so much will lose at least some of their appeal.

This is what the Bible teaches irrespective of what any "Christian" sect may believe or teach.

Grace be with you.