

If a Man Die, Shall He Live Again?

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Photo date and location unknown

Norman Vincent Peale wrote, "We do not try to prove immortality so that we can believe in it. We try to prove it because we cannot help believing in it." Backing Norman Vincent Peale's statement are many people who believe there is life after death whether one consults one's reason -or one's instincts. In an attempt to understand this point of view, I have gathered the major arguments that support this theory of life after death.

Dr. J.B. Rhine's careful experiments with clairvoyance and telepathy, which have been investigated by methods approved by competent mathematicians, seem to indicate that there might be an aspect of man not bounded by space or time. Such evidence also supports the insight of psychologists such as William James. "Apparently," he wrote, "there is one great universal Mind, and since man enters into this universal Mind, he is a fragment [part] of it." This intangible element is in all of us and we refer to it as our spirit or soul. And it is indestructible because it was given to us by an indestructible source, God.

In the Bible, I Corinthians 15:44, we find St. Paul's classical postulate of man's two bodies. "There are celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies... it is sown a physical body and raised a spiritual body." Restating St. Paul's statement in terms of twentieth century science, G.N.M. Tyrrell, a physicist-engineer turned psychical researcher, was a leader in world thought in psychic matters until his death in 1952. Tyrrell felt that the physical and spirit bodies were two distinctly separate entities. He wrote:

The material organism is the aspect of something belonging first and last to the finite level we now occupy, while the real human being-the personality-is by nature a stranger to that level. The strictly physical body is no more to be identified with the person when it is alive than when it is dead.... Matter is not the despotic sovereign for which we have mistaken it; the brain is not the physical correlative of consciousness, but merely a link connecting the personality with the finite level. The body left behind at death never was part of the person who used it. It was an aspect of something which essentially belongs to the finite level of our present world and which, therefore, remains on it-something that was only borrowed by the inhabiting personality and used by it as a temporary vehicle of expression.

Therefore, because of our eternal characteristic, Tyrrell states that our physical, flesh body itself is not man. It is merely a house given to us to live in while we are here on earth. Inside of our physical body is our spiritual body. Our spiritual body is considered to have the same shape and look as our physical body. But our spiritual body is made from a mysterious substance recently under scientific research called "spirit matter," not flesh.

Increase in psychic people

In recent years the number of psychically sensitive people has increased tremendously and is continuing to increase. The science of psychic research has become firmly established. There is a consensus that we understand more about the man's spirit than in all of man's history. Lucy Milburn supports the rising interest in psychic phenomena when she says, "the wave of psychism now spreading over the world will rise even higher, and spread over more places than any such wave heretofore...."

"One of man's oldest assertions concerning his own basic nature, stated in prehistory and verified by the psychically informed of our own day, is that he has two highly energized bodies. One is of tissue, bone, and blood, the other of pure psychic energy." The body of psychic energy or spirit body has been seen objectively by independent observers. There have been many such instances in human history.

Arthur Ford documents in *Unknown but Known* the existence of a spirit body through the experiences of three Vietnam veterans from Fort Bragg who had just come out of the army hospital having survived very serious injuries.

There had been six American soldiers in a Vietnam dugout when an enemy artillery shell struck. Three of the soldiers had been killed instantly, their bodies so hideously scrambled that it required only a glance to see that the survival of any one of them was utterly impossible.

The other three were so seriously wounded physically that only prompt medical attention could save them. They were stunned by the shell's concussion. In this condition, all three saw the bodies of one of their dead comrades pull itself together and stand erect. They distinctly heard his voice say, "I will die, you will be saved." The body seemed to return to its disintegrated condition.

Until later, when they could compare experiences, each of the three had assumed that he had been dazed by the explosion and was hallucinating.

Within minutes a helicopter rescue crew arrived and took the three survivors to a field hospital, swing their lives. The 'copter pilot explained how he happened to arrive so promptly: "I was cruising at about three thousand feet when I heard a loud voice at my ear: 'There are three wounded men in a dugout directly under you. Pick them up!' I am accustomed to obeying orders. I dropped straight down. When I was close to the ground I saw the men, landed, and picked them up."

Independent objective observations of the spirit body have been known to exist "in every era from the famous Greek mystic Pythagoras in the sixth century B.C. to Padre Pio, the great Italian psychic of our own day."

Direct experience

The knowledge of the existence of a spirit body, however, is claimed to come more often from direct subjective experience. There have been many people who stood at the threshold of death in injury, coma, or serious illness only to recover to report of a dimension, beyond the world of the five senses where they continue to live.

It is during times of crisis, emergency, and war that many people have out-of-body experiences. In 1917 a British soldier by the name of C.K. Jenkins was hit while fighting at Ypres. "My body," he later related, "was blasted from me so quickly I was not aware of its falling. I went on without it, feeling vitally alive and free. Then I realized I'd have to go back." After his recovery he said his experience made him realize "my body is not really me, but only a cloak or skin I wear."

Is it possible that these things happen? Many people feel that these experiences cannot be reasonably doubted since objective verification was possible in many cases. As Arthur Ford puts it, "We know it happened, not only because of the unassailable veracity of those who reported it, but because it falls solidly within a category of things that happen regularly."

In addition, spiritual journeys have been made by people sick and well, ever since there were people. These experiences, more than anything else, more than logic, more than intuition, seem to convince people of the indisputable evidence of life after death. The experiences of these people are one of the basic reasons for the wide acceptance of an existence after death.

The extensive accumulation of out-of-body experiences does not seem to be the only scientific evidence we have of the possible existence of the spirit. "Many psychical researchers are convinced that the aura so often observed and even sometimes registered on instruments is an emanation of the second or spiritual body, which in normal healthy earth-life interpenetrates and coincides with the physical body."

A very psychically gifted person, Edgar Cayce could make medical diagnoses very accurately by directly observing a patient's aura. Clairvoyants feel they are seeing the aura with their ordinary eyesight. "I see it, that's all; it's there." Arthur Ford considers people who have this gifted ability to see the aura to be fairly numerous. A patient's physical and emotional health can be read from the display of light, color, and energy emanating from the patient's aura. A former scientist with RCA is making a serious effort to determine the limits of the aura by instrument.

Sensitive clairvoyants of many centuries and cultures have associated particular aural colors with particular conditions. For example, white around the head is taken to indicate a very highly developed spiritual nature. This is most probably why medieval artists painted halos around the heads of saints.

A scientist investigates

Dr. Shafica Karagulla's newly published (1967) findings have brought new insight into the field. Dr. Karagulla's superb medical and psychiatric training enable her to separate symptoms of abnormal psychology from genuine psychic phenomena. Dr. Karagulla's primary aura-reader is a business woman referred to as "Diana."

Diana sees the aura in unusual detail with "special flurries of aural activity around the important organs, nerve center, and glands."

The validity of her ability was stated to have been proven when she diagnosed an intestinal blockage until then unknown and undetected by both the patient and his doctor. The aural diagnosis was found to be accurate by X-ray and the stoppage remedied by surgery.

On another occasion, with her ability of recognizing the activity in the aura structure that could in time bring disaster upon the person, she predicted the onset of a serious condition (Parkinson's disease) a year and a half in advance.

In 1923 Leningrad scientist, Alexander Gurwitsch measured the radiation given off by the human body for the first time. In 1934, George W. Crile demonstrated that the brain tissue gives off radiation in the visible, infrared, and ultra-violet ranges. Cornell researcher, Dr. Otto Rahn reported that the strongest human radiation emanates from the fingertips of the right hand, a fact long recognized by psychical healers.

"Some sensitives radiate to such degree that they cannot be employed in any enterprise involving undeveloped photographic film; their touch or even near approach 'exposes' it." People feel that this radiation is but another aspect of the spirit man. With refinements in photographic techniques it is a probability that we will have access to even more specific knowledge of man's spirit body, its aura, and its radiation.

Another state of consciousness

There is a theory that passing into the spirit world is like passing onto another level or state of consciousness with a more rapid and more sensitive set of vibrations in which more of the total reality can be comprehended. Dr. Maurice Burke postulated several levels of consciousness in which the average incarnate human beings habitually live.

There is the simple consciousness of the near animal, aware of immediate sense experience and animal hungers and drives, and little else. There is self-consciousness, wherein the individual is clearly aware of himself as an entity different from all the surrounding universe and interacting with it.

There is global consciousness, in which the individual is aware of events on a personal global scale and senses a responsible personal relationship with them. And finally and most exalted, there is the rare cosmic consciousness, that is achieved by great souls, to whom a sense of the meaning of the total universe is revealed. One passes not from one place to another, but from one level of consciousness to another.

If the physical and spiritual worlds do exist on different levels of consciousness, it means that the physical world and the spiritual world cohabit this universe with a basic difference that man's physical world is basically confined to the planet earth while the spiritual world expands to the far reaches of the universe. Thus, there is supposedly only one universe. Grieving survivors sometimes talk about their deceased beloved as having gone away, yet psychics claim that there is really no other place the deceased could have gone.

"There is only one universe, but our normal, earthbound sensory equipment permits us to be aware of only a minute segment of the total spectrum. Just as the vibrations of radio waves and cosmic waves continually pass through our bodies without our knowing, just as tones impinge on our ears too high or low for us to hear, and our eyes cannot see infra or ultra-light rays," so part of the spirit world could possibly exist around us without our knowing.