What’s After Life?

I. Thousands and thousands of people are describing Near Death Experiences (NDEs), and what they describe is they should be dead, but they feel more alive than you could ever feel.

II. Should we be skeptical of NDEs? It’s appropriate for believers to have a healthy skepticism, but what has helped me to be more open and embracing of NDEs is examining the answers to two questions on the subject. Are they **credible**? Are they **biblical?**

A. Are they **credible**?

a. Three comments

1. This is happening in **massive numbers**.

2. Many who share their story derive **no personal benefit** from sharing.

3. This is **happening globally** across all cultures and all religions.

b. Three observations that seem to be common threads among NDE accounts.

1. People are describing things that happened **in their surroundings.**

2. People are describing things **beyond their surroundings**.

3. Blind people who have NDEs describe the same things without ever seeing anything. In other words, they’re born blind and they’ve never seen a tree or grass, but **they describe heaven’s trees and grass in the same detail as seeing people describe**.

B. Are they **biblical**? I believe the Bible is fully trustworthy. I believe God’s description of heaven is more accurate than anybody’s personal experience. But when we take thousands of testimonies, some common threads become apparent that we can see in the Bible. In fact, when we ask the question, “is this biblical?”, the apostle Paul describes an experience in 2 Corinthians that sounds a lot like a Near Death Experience.

***2 Cor. 12:2-4I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows--such a one was caught up to the third heaven.  3And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— 4how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.***

a. Out of a body and into a **new body.** What does the Bible say about the new body we will receive in heaven? Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-9; 1 Corinthians 15:35-58; Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 13:43.

***1 Cor 15:42-44 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.***

b. The God of **light** and **love.** NDEers describe God as light and love, which lines up with the following Bible verses. (1 John 1:5, 4:7-9; John 8:12; Revelation 21:23, 22:5)

***1 Jn 1:5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.***

***1Jn 4:7-9 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.***

III. Two more important factors related to NDEs.

A. A study of 500 NDEers from India and 500 NDEers from the United States revealed that religious and cultural conditioning did not shape a person’s NDEs.

B. Not all NDEers describe going to a good place. For example, Professor Howard Storm of Northern Kentucky University describes a place of torment. On pages 60-63 of the booklet entitled What’s After Life, by John Burke, we read a horrific account of what he experienced.

MY APPLICATION

Use the following questions this week to reflect on what it would mean to align yourself with the truths taught in Scripture. Each question is meant for both personal reflection and as a catalyst for discussion with your family, friends, or small group.

1. What is your impression of near death experiences (NDEs)? Have you, or someone you know, had one?

2. As you think about the number of people who have had an NDE and the scientific studies done, are you inclined to give some validity to NDEs? Why or why not?

3. What does the Bible say about the new body we will receive in heaven? (Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-9; 1 Corinthians 15:35-58; Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 13:43) What will our new bodies be like?

4. How do the common descriptions of God in the Bible, light and love, come through in NDEs? (Read 1 John 1:5, 4:7-9; John 8:12; Revelation 21:23, 22:5)