

Fort Bend Christian Academy – Honors Apologetics

**Physicalism-Part II**

A Thesis Submitted to the  
Teacher and Students of the Honors Apologetics Class

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May 16, 2016

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## **Introduction**

Physicalism has already been detailed for its Scientific and Philosophical credibility, but now it is time to move on to its Theological merit, and that is what will be discussed in this second part to the thesis on Physicalism. The major idea that needs to be driven home to the reader in this section of the thesis is the fact that the greatest hope for salvation for humanity is the physical resurrection of the dead into the new Heaven and new Earth. It is understood that the science and philosophy of Physicalism stand firm for the topic over its counterpart Dualism, however, this can now be used in this thesis by the Physicalism idea going into the theology of it. What needs to be accomplished with this part of the argument is first to show that the words that are interpreted as soul do not mean anything nonphysical within the Bible. Second, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is in every way Physical, and this means that when humanity is resurrected then they will also be resurrected physically just as Jesus was. Then for the last part, there will be a short discussion on how the idea of humans going to some nonphysical heaven after death is not the only eschatological idea mentioned in the Bible, and it is the incorrect view held within the Bible, with the correct view being Annihilationism. However, all of these points together will be used to prove that the greatest hope for salvation for the creation is the physical resurrection that they will hopefully attain if they put their full faith in God.

There is no need for humanity to put the subject of going to heaven at the forefront of their beliefs because this is not the greatest thing they achieve if they put their full faith in the Lord. They will reach a new resurrected body whenever Christ returns to earth, and this body will be resurrected physically in every regard. This point is incredibly important because it is already understood that people within the realms of science and philosophy champion the idea of

Physicalism. For this reason, they will disagree with Christianity because they just assume that Christians all defend the idea of Dualism, because of the whole idea of humanity going to heaven after their deaths. However, this is completely false and based off of false beliefs interpreted from the Bible, and the Bible teaches about the topic of Physicalism due to the points that will be discussed in this paper. Thanks to the new interpretations based off of no bias in the scriptures, it can now be understood that the Bible teaches Physicalism, and how each and every human is physical, and how they should strive for salvation so that they can be physically resurrected into the new world once that time comes. This idea is monumental because it now means that Science and Philosophy will no longer fundamentally disagree with Christian Theology on the mind-body debate, and they can now actually agree on something no other religion believes. There does not need to be this instant disagreement between the Scientist and the Theologian anymore thanks to this thesis which strives to reinterpret the biggest points in the Bible that have been seen as preaching Dualism. Dualism can now be proven to not be the answer to the mind-body debate anymore within the Bible, thanks to the new understanding of how the verses should be interpreted.

## Historical Review: Part II

For centuries, Christian theists have been on the popular side of Dualism, whenever this debate topic is brought up. They will say that, because of the fact that God created humanity, and interacts with them, therefore, they would have to have a soul. This soul would give them that non-physical connection that they supposedly need in order to be thoroughly connected to God. However, the belief that Christians have to be dualist to be a christian is starting to diminish thanks to scientific and philosophical proofs on the topic of Physicalism. This opens up the discussion for whether or not Christian Theology coincides with today's beliefs in Physicalism. In order to accomplish this, there must first be a look into the history of Dualism within the Church and within the Biblical text. In modern translations of the Bible, such as the English Standard Version, the King James Version, and the New International Version, there is a heavy usage of the word Soul, and this is exactly what this debate hinges off of. That word soul that is used some 700 times total in the Bible has driven most Christians to believe something that may not have truly been the authors' intention, or the beliefs of the first believers in the resurrection. Dualism became a popular topic to discuss long after the resurrection and long after the last text of the Bible was written. It is something that few believers actually thought was possible in these times. To say that humans would have something that would literally connect them to God was absolutely absurd in those times. They would not think that there was anything that made them like God, for that would be heresy, and that would give them some power not reserved for normal physical human beings. However, the belief in Dualism did emerge, and the question that needs to be asked is why. The major reason that these Christians thought of the belief in dualism has to do entirely with the fact that the words in the original translation were translated to mean

something non-physical. This would mean that each human, after the Catholic and Protestant churches translated the original text, would believe that something that made them has to be nonphysical, because it is stated that it cannot be destroyed, or because it is said to be their mind and thoughts. Dualism entirely came about because of selfish human belief that they must be something more than the animals around them. They are conscious and, therefore, there is something nonphysical about them because consciousness can never be physical. However, after reading Part I of this thesis it is evident that consciousness might just be physical, and therefore the discussion in Theology can begin.

Dualism can now be thoroughly looked at for its Theological merit because of the new Scientific and Philosophical proofs, and because of the misinterpretation of the words behind the original interpretation of soul. First, there must be a look into the history behind dualism in the Bible, which will give insight into the false beginnings of a topic that has been around for centuries. Then after that, there must be a look into the beginnings of physicalism in Christian Theological circles, which will give a look into the history of the topic being discussed in this paper. Both of these insights together will help the normal person realize which topic seems more historically valid and better for the topic being discussed.

### **Dualism in Christianity**

There must first be a definitive view of Dualism that is being looked at in this thesis, and that would be the form that Christian Dualist normally agree upon. This is the form that agrees with body-soul dualism, which states that there is a physical body and there is a nonphysical soul that is transitory in respect to the physical body. Christians most normally add to this that the nonphysical soul that is present in each humans life actuality is superior to their body and

therefore controls it.<sup>1</sup> This goes against the other popular nonphysical Dualism which is property Dualism, which states that there are physical properties and then there are mental properties. This is where Hylomorphic dualism comes into the discussion which is where Aristotle's famous dualism came about. Aristotle is one of the most influential believers in Dualism and is a major figure Christians will bring up, that is outside Christianity, that still believed in Dualism.

However, Hylomorphic dualism believes in everything still being physical, both the mental and the body being completely physical, yet still being separate. The mental is still controlling the physical body, but it in itself is not something that is beyond the physical body in how it is made up. Christians will say that what they believe is actually held within Atheistic philosophies, however, the philosophers that they are looking at still believe that everything is still inherently physical, and that does not match up at all with a non-physical soul that body-soul dualism postulates. There are three major philosophers that Christians look to to actually formulate their views in a philosophical view that is not fundamentally founded on Theology. These Philosophers are Plato, St. Augustine of Hippo, and the most important, Rene Descartes. The first is the beginner of the idea, and that would be Plato, who "taught that the world available to our senses was only a reflection-a mere shadow-of the real world of eternal forms".<sup>2</sup> This is basically saying that every single physical thing within this world is just a physical manifestation of something held within the eternal world. This doesn't really coincide with anything in Christianity, and would have to mean that a nonphysical heaven would hold everyone eternally.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, W. S., & Strawn, B. D. (2021). *The Physical Nature of Christian Life*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Robinson, Howard. "Dualism." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Spring 2016. Accessed September 13, 2016. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dualism/>.

The question here is how this actually connects to Christianity in any way besides starting the belief of the Dualist mindset in how the body interacts with the world. This points out a fundamental flaw in using Platonic Dualism as a belief in Christianity, there really is no connection between the Eternal form hypothesis and the new earth and new heaven resurrection of the dead. For it is said that there will be a new earth and a new heaven that will be made physically whenever the resurrection would occur. There would not be some eternal world that they would move on to after they die that would be where human souls would stay for the rest of eternity. The reason this filtered into the time of Jesus was because of the fact that Greek ideas were coming into the cultures in the Mediterranean during the reign of the Roman empire. It is known that, “Greek culture was so prominent in Palestine in the time of Jesus that the New Testament was written in Greek”.<sup>4</sup> This explains why people at this time would have been more likely to be open to the ideas of non-material worlds whenever Jesus spoke of such ideas pertaining to the afterlife. However, it can be seen that Plato’s belief in the eternal forms is nonsense when pertaining to Christian beliefs in modern times and interpretations of the Bible.

Next would then be St. Augustine of Hippo, who is most well known for the fact that he continued the philosophical look into how the body and the soul would be connected, and how the soul would deal with spirituality. He was the first to really “link the two-part view of human nature (body-soul) with a reformulation of Christian spirituality that turns attention inward toward the status of the soul”.<sup>5</sup> What is so important about this new belief is that it is the first belief to say that who humans are is actually held within their individual soul. Whenever Jesus

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<sup>4</sup> Brown, W. S., & Strawn, B. D. (2021). *The Physical Nature of Christian Life*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid



says that people should be afraid of those who can “kill the body and the soul”<sup>6</sup>, St. Augustine would say that what was meant by this is that the soul is what really contains who humans are and not anything else that is physical. There is no denying that humans are complex organisms, but what is being said by St. Augustine is that Humans are not complex enough to actually contain themselves, or their true self. The brain may contain the genetics and the knowhow to solve complex issues, but the person is the soul that is behind all of this. The reason this was so important to Christians is that it seemed to go with the beliefs of Jesus whenever he said what he said in Matthew 10:28, for humans should be more afraid of what can actually destroy the inner human being in everyone that is said to live forever, if there is belief in God the Father. The only problem with all of this is that it is based off of incorrect translations of the original text of the Bible. St. Augustine was someone who lived a few centuries after the life of Jesus, and this would mean that he was personally interpreting the writings of the Bible in a second hand way. This means that his interpretations of the word would be different when discussing words such as Psyche and Soma, and this means that instead of interpreting them as physical attributes apart of the human experience, he would say that Jesus was actually referring to the non-physical. This means that he would say that Jesus was actually saying that the self is something that can only be non-physical, and something that separates humans from the rest of the species on earth. However, the intentions of the words behind the teachings of Jesus are not pointing to something that would be non-physical, and therefore, would make humans like God, for they were actually pointing to physical attributes behind human nature and experience. This is what will be proven in the section dealing with biblical interpretation in the New Testament. Jesus in no way tries to

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<sup>6</sup> Matthew 10:28

make humans like God, for it is known that they are his creation, however, it is also known that they are not identical to him in anyway for that would give humans too much power, they are instead like him in their psychological behavior on earth. St. Augustin pioneered the incorrect belief in the difference between the physical body and the spiritual soul, and the next prominent figure, pioneered the belief in the way the soul would control the physical body.

This would be Rene Descartes, and his belief in Cartesian Dualism which believes that not only is the Soul different from the body in substance, but it also controls the body by means unknown to humans. Descartes lived in the 1500s through the 1600s and was heavily influenced by the physician Galen in the late 2nd century.<sup>7</sup> Galen of Pergamum, believed that there was not only a soul, but also a soul for every single organ in the body, which would mean that this soul would control each individual organ and, therefore, mean that something nonphysical was the reason for everything physical in the body. Descartes took this in a different way from Galen, while still holding true to the fundamental controlling aspect that was held by him. He said that there had to be some feature of humans that makes them different from the other species of the universe, and that had to be the non-physical soul, however, he then went to say that there had to be a certain biological place where this connection would happen. He stated that this must be in the Brain of human and more specifically be in the part of the brain that has no other copy on the other side, and be in the center of the brain, which would be the pineal gland.<sup>8</sup> This was groundbreaking information in the time because it stated that there is an actual place where the

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<sup>7</sup> Brown, W. S., & Strawn, B. D. (2021). *The Physical Nature of Christian Life*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>8</sup> "Everything You Wanted to Know about the Pineal Gland." Dr. Group's Healthy Living Articles. April 20, 2016. Accessed May 01, 2017. <http://www.globalhealingcenter.com/natural-health/everything-you-wanted-to-know-about-the-pineal-gland/>.

connection of the soul to the body would take place. This made the idea of the soul even more popular in the time where Protestantism was coming into being, and where the Catholic church taught about a soul that needs to be saved in order for the person to be considered by God for the afterlife. Now it was seen as a common belief for there to be a soul that people had that was their connection to God and to the afterlife. This became second nature to these believers because at this time there had already been multiple translations of the word that had been used for the word soul as the main word to be used whenever Jesus was talking about humans and the afterlife, and because the word soul at this time meant something non-physical, everyone started to believe that they had something to them that was like God. Rene Descartes took this to another level whenever he stated that it could actually be seen where this connection happened, and it was in the Pineal gland of the brain. However, what occurs whenever it is proven that there is no special connection to anything at the pineal gland? This is exactly what happened whenever it was proven that the pineal gland was just a gland that secreted hormones into the blood stream, and not some special tool that humans had that nothing else had. Also, another problem that has haunted Rene Descartes beliefs is the fact that there is no possible way known to humans as to how a nonphysical soul could interact with a physical body. Its great that humans have tried to nail it down to some specific part of the body, however, there is no way to comprehend how something non-physical connects to something physical. To take it even a step further, it is impossible to comprehend something that is non-physical. Humans have been told things about God, however, they have all been in physical ways within space and time through the Holy Spirit and through Jesus' teachings. Knowledge about the actual nonphysical God is impossible for humans to really understand until they are resurrected into the new physical earth. That is when

they will be able to understand anything about him. The belief of a soul that connects humans to God purely comes out of the fact that humans needed to feel like they were different from the rest of the creatures in the world. It truly was because of selfish human psychology that it was believed and interpreted that humans are something more than just their bodies. They never thought that the body they were given was actually how they were made in God's image, or how they can be connected to him. They never realized that they are connected to him in their personal belief in him, not in some nonphysical way.

Rene Descartes, St. Augustine, and Plato were the first major voices that tried to convince the rest of the world that every human was special in some way that was only specific to humans. Rene Descartes and St. Augustine pioneered information on this topic based off of the first teachings of Plato and Aristotle and found a way to fit Christianity into it. They did this, however, based off of their own personal beliefs on how the Bible should be interpreted, and not what the actual writers or people of the time believed.

### **The Beginning of Physicalism Biblically**

Now that Dualism has been thoroughly looked at for its historical merit, Physicalism can now be discussed in how it came about historically and how Christianity first came into contact with it. Earlier in the existence of humanity it was not uncommon to believe in humans being only a physical body, for nothing around them made them believe otherwise, and when the word soul was used, they just believed it was some certain attribute given to humans, and it made them who they are. Monism was the belief that went against Dualism and was first brought up by Christian von Wolff in his work *Logic*. Wolff believed that being conscious of oneself was what proved that they were conscious beings, and why animals were not conscious in the same way.

This is highly logical and is how he differs from the Cartesian beliefs in saying that it is just simply logical that he is who he is, and is not the cause of something more.<sup>9</sup> He even uses the word soul, however, it is not in the way that Christian philosophers would say as being nonphysical, but it is rather something that is physical, and is just his mind. Most people who believed in the singularity of mind and body used Wolff's beliefs as the foundation. Logical reasoning of humans own consciousness is where their difference from other species comes from. The person to actually coin the word Physicalism would be the great Philosopher Otto Neurath in the early 20th century.<sup>10</sup> This is rather new in comparison to all other beliefs featured in this discussion, and is why most of the people being used for information in this thesis will not be from centuries ago, but rather still living, or from not long ago.

The first real connection of Physicalism to Christianity comes in the form of Non-Reductive physicalism which states that not all mental functions can be reduced to purely biological states in the brain. This is still physical because believers in Non-Reductive still say that what cannot be reduced is still physical in its nature and not of some completely different substance that is not possible to understand. The philosopher who is championing this idea the most at the moment would be the philosopher Nancy Murphy. She is a professor of philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary, and is finding a way for the physicalist world view to work as well or even better than the normal body-soul dualistic view that is so popular among Christians in today's day and age. Nancy Murphy has one major point to get across in her book *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?* and that is that "we are our bodies" and that "we are, at our best,

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<sup>9</sup>Hetteche, Matt. "Christian Wolff." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. July 03, 2006. Accessed May 01, 2017. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/wolff-christian/>.

<sup>10</sup> "Physicalism - By Branch / Doctrine - The Basics of Philosophy." Physicalism - By Branch / Doctrine - The Basics of Philosophy. Accessed December 03, 2016. [http://www.philosophybasics.com/branch\\_physicalism.html](http://www.philosophybasics.com/branch_physicalism.html).

complex physical organisms, imbued with the legacy of thousands of years of culture, and, most importantly, blown by the Breath of God's Spirit; we are *Spirited Bodies*".<sup>11</sup> She brings up the fact that humans are truly not anything more than just themselves, however, that does not in anyway mean that they are not unbelievably complex and amazing organisms. The problem with so many believers throughout the centuries is that they have seen themselves as useless creatures in comparison to God and who he is. However, instead of believing that that means they must strive to understand him and who he is more, they have taken that to mean that they are in someway nonphysically connected to him. There is no reason for this selfish belief that humans are something more, and is a stark reminder that humanity has a deep sinful nature that they have lived with for their entire existence. Humans are a selfish and sinful species that has been given the ability to partake in complex cognitive thought from their creator and have taken it to mean that they are obviously something more than the rest of the creatures on the earth when that is just simply not true. Nancy Murphy has brought this up in her works by saying that humans are truly not any more special than the creatures of this world and the only thing different is that they have been specifically created with the logical understanding of themselves, and that is what makes them different. They have been made in his image, based off of their psychology, not of the material and immaterial makeup. Murphy states that the non-reductiveness of their physical life is what gives them the ability to move onto an afterlife like heaven that is talked about in the Bible.

There is another belief that connects Christianity to the physical world and that is through annihilationism. This is the belief that when humans die they just simply die, and therefore, they

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<sup>11</sup> Murphy, Nancey C. *Bodies and souls, or spirited bodies?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

do not go off to heaven, but simply wait to be resurrected if they believed and trusted in God, or just continue to not exist if they did not believe and trust in him. This opens the door to full Reductive physicalism which states that mental processes are fully reduced to the biological brain states. It is important to note that this means that there is no non-physical heaven and there is just waiting for the new earth to be physically created, and for humans to be physically resurrected into. This belief has been debated for centuries and with the usage of it it is a lot easier to believe in a total physical human population.

### **Biblical Interpretation**

Οι άνθρωποι είναι μόνο και πάντα το σώμα τους ότι ο Θεός τους έχει δώσει, και είναι γνωστό μέσα από τις διδασκαλίες του Κυρίου ότι η ψυχή τους είναι στην πραγματικότητα το σώμα τους και είναι σε καμία περίπτωση πιο ισχυρό από το σώμα. This is Greek for the sentence “Humans are only and forever the bodies that God has given them, and it is known through the teachings of the Lord that their soul is actually their body and is in no way more powerful than the body,” and is the fundamental backbone of this entire thesis and is exactly what is trying to be proven with its discussions. Starting the Biblical interpretation portion of this thesis with a little Greek interpretation is fitting to what will be going on in this discussion which will be written around and about the words that can be interpreted to soul from the original Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew texts of the Bible. The specific words to be discussed in this portion will be Ψυχή, or Psyche, נֶפֶשׁ, or Nephes, and soma. These words, for centuries, have been interpreted to mean soul, and therefore, interpreted to mean something that is nonphysical that all humans have. Here lies the biggest problem that Physicalism has with the original texts of the Bible, and considering that for centuries the Dualist point of view has been interpreted from the Bible there is good reason that Physicalism will have some issues with its naive teachings.

The issue that will be dealt with in this section is whether or not the interpretations of some nonphysical soul are well founded enough to disprove physicalism, or incorrect enough to go against the dualist way of thought. This will be done in one major way that is powerful enough to break down the whole discussion, and that way is by saying that the words that are used to mean soul actually meant to mean something physical in this world attributed to all human beings. This is actually possible because too often has the word soul been interpreted to



mean something that is nonphysical when really it is just some physical attribute given to the human existence. What is meant by this is not that the word soul has been misinterpreted from the bible, there is no denying that nephes, psyche, and soma are partly interpreted as soul, but what does soul mean? People from that time attributed the word soul to something nonphysical, but the problem with that is that that is not always true and it was just seen as that because of popular belief at the time, not because of what the believers of that time actually taught. Aristotle was a huge proponent of the belief in a soul, however, it was not something nonphysical that connected each human to God, but rather an attribute of humanity that other species did not actually have, and this was actually the most popular belief at the time. It was a belief that made sense in a physical world that also most people of the time solely believed in as well. It is fascinating to look at because this is the common belief held within the actual believers of the time, and not some belief in a nonphysical part to humanity. Humans of the time knew that this type of attribute was solely reserved for God and no one else in the world because no one else was like him.

It is here then that the start of this section will come, and it will be with close detail into the actual word of God with strong usage of contextual evidence to look at every phrase and word used that is supposedly meant to mean a nonphysical soul. This will lead into the other sections of this thesis as well by giving a look into the biggest sections of the bible that deal with Physicalist and Dualist type words and beliefs. This is the only way that Physicalism can be read from the Bible instead of the usual Dualist teachings, and this will be the most important part of this whole thesis because of the ramifications it brings if Physicalism can be seen as the most likely belief taught in the Bible.

### **Basic Interpretation of Soul and Spirit**

The Bible was originally translated from the ancient Hebrew and Greek texts, which means that the words used for the interpretation of soul and spirit have different underlying meanings to them. This sounds obvious, but most Christians in today's world cannot seem to point out the difference between them. The word soul is the most popular word used when talking about nonphysical deities, however, what then does that mean the spirit is useful for? Right here lies one of the biggest issues with the Dualist point of view in the Bible, and it is also one of the most basic issues with the argument.

It can be agreed upon, within the Bible, that there are two words that are usually interpreted to mean something beyond human understanding and beyond human physicality, and those two words are Soul and Spirit. In Hebrew, soul comes from the word *ne'phesh* and spirit comes from the Hebrew word *ru'ach*. In Greek the word soul comes from *psy-khe* and spirit comes from the word *pneuma*. These two words actually have quite a considerable difference in their interpretations when they are looked at from a biblical view. So many people connect them as one instead of correctly interpreting them as two different words. Soul, in the bible means either one of three things, either animals, humans, or the life that those animals and humans have.<sup>12</sup> Now if the interpreting were to stop right here then the word Spirit would never even be looked at as a plausible connection to the word soul because of the fact that they do not mean the exact same thing in this world. Spirit has been interpreted to mean the force that gives the body the ability to have life, or it is the life that a body has and cannot live without to put it in another

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<sup>12</sup> "What is a Soul? What is the Spirit?-Meaning of Bible Terms | Bible Teach." JW.ORG. Accessed 2017. <https://www.jw.org/en/publications/books/bible-teach/what-is-a-soul-spirit-meaning/>.

respect.<sup>13</sup> Now here is where the first problem lies with the words soul and spirit used to prove a Dualistic belief held within the Bible. Soul, as can be seen in the above translation does not mean what everyone already thinks it does, just by the mere fact that the Greek and Hebrew words used for its interpretation mean only physical things, i.e., humans, and animals, and the life they inevitably live. Dualism has for centuries said that the soul, interpreted from the Bible, is something of a nonphysical make up that makes humans human, and controls their entire life, and gives them the ability to go to a nonphysical heaven after their body dies. Now what might be the problem with this? The problem is that soul is already known not to mean that and, as will be seen in the rest of this section, this means that any time Jesus spoke about the soul that cannot be destroyed it would actually mean that the world cannot destroy the thought that the Lord has of all the believers in him. This means that God will not forget about every single one of the people in the physical world that believe in him, and rather he will remember them and resurrect them when it comes time for that. This seems like a radical conclusion to come to, but is it really more radical then saying that the word Soul means something completely nonphysical? It absolutely does not because the idea of God remembering the people that he has created does not sounds anywhere near as farfetched as the word soul meaning both a physical human and their nonphysical soul connected in some unbelievably amazing way.

Now then comes the problem of the other word in this section, the Spirit which is the other word that Christians, for centuries, have used to mean something other than the soul that can be seen as nonphysical. For example, the Holy Spirit is one of the times that a spirit type form has been mentioned in the Bible to accomplish some certain task, such as fulfilling God's

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<sup>13</sup> "What is a Soul? What is the Spirit?-Meaning of Bible Terms | Bible Teach." JW.ORG. Accessed 2017. <https://www.jw.org/en/publications/books/bible-teach/what-is-a-soul-spirit-meaning/>.

miracles on earth. However, right off the bat another problem occurs, and this problem is the fact that the Holy Spirit is actually the Lord's connection to the physical world to carry out the tasks he wants fulfilled. The Holy Spirit interacts in the physical world, which inherently means that it too must be a physical system or else there would be no chance of it being able to interact the way that it does everyday. Though it is true that it is something not seen, yet it has been seen in real life before, and it is also known that physical forces in this world have the ability to get things done. This means that this spirit that completes the trinity is actually of a physical beginning so that it can do what it needs to do. Well right there is the argument against the largest mentioning of the word spirit in the Bible being anything more than a physical force. Therefore, what would be the other instance of this word appearing in the text? Well that comes in two different verses, and those are the verses Psalm 104:29 and James 2:26 where it is said in both of these that the body has the ability to be killed, but the inner self will always be remembered and survived as a spirit.<sup>14</sup> Psalms 104:29 says that, "When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust."<sup>15</sup> James 2:26 is quoted as saying that, "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead."<sup>16</sup> Now these do not seem like popular instance of the idea of a spirit coming about from the body, but if deeper analysis is taken then it makes perfect sense as to why these two verses are important in this debate. Both of the verses talk about the fact that there is something to a human that makes them incredibly important and that gives them the ability to live the life that

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<sup>14</sup> "What is a Soul? What is the Spirit?-Meaning of Bible Terms | Bible Teach." JW.ORG. Accessed 2017. <https://www.jw.org/en/publications/books/bible-teach/what-is-a-soul-spirit-meaning/>.

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<sup>15</sup> Psalms 104:29

<sup>16</sup> James 2:26

they are choosing to live, and this must mean they have some sort of spirit within them that gives them this ability. However, the question then comes as to whether this is actually something nonphysical or not and here is the answer to this complex problem. The word states here that whatever this thing is, every human must have it, and every human cannot live without it. Now the Dualist will say that this means that it is something that is nonphysical and it is something that can control the body in what it does. The problem here with this argument is that nowhere does it say that, whatever this spirit is, that it has the ability to control the body that it is held within. What then makes it so special? Well the answer is that this thing that gives humans the ability to be who they are is actually the breath of God into them when he specifically designs who humans are, meaning when he makes humans DNA the way it is and creates their experiences that they will inevitably go through in their lives. Without this design then there is no human, and without the person being a thought in God's mind then there is no person at all. If God truly designs who humans are through their DNA and their experiences then this is where the Spirit connection comes from God, it comes from the idea of Imago Dei and is inherently built into who each and every single human is. Humans are built in his image, because if they were not then they would not be human, and this is where all of humanity is spiritually connected to the Lord and his creation. It is not from some sort of nonphysical control that humans have over all of them. They are created and made to grow up a certain way based off of who God designed them to be in their life.

The word Soul and Spirit mean two different things and should not be connected to each other in anyway. These two have been brought up in this section so there is an adequate starting place for the biblical interpretation portion to start, and that it can be seen that God created

Humans and those humans used a word to describe the inherent humanity that is specific to their species.

### **Why the Misinterpretations?**

It is already known that there are multiple parts of the Bible that have not really been interpreted thoroughly, however, what leads to the misinterpretations? What makes someone interpret a comma in a place not previously seen? Why are there so many different translations of the Bible? Why do these translations have verses that can be interpreted differently? This can be answered by the psychology of Biblical interpretation through the generations. The original texts were first written centuries ago, and translating started after that and has continued on for generations and continues today. Looking at the psychology of Biblical interpretation, it can be seen that the people who have interpreted the Bible for generations, and who interpret it today, may have interpreted the word with a certain level of unconscious or conscious bias. This is a bold statement considering there are only a certain amount of words that can be translated from the greek and hebrew texts, however, it does go deeper than that. For example, in the verse Luke 23:43, Jesus states to the other criminal that, “Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise”.<sup>17</sup> This seems to state that Jesus is directly referring to an intermediate state in connection to something such as Heaven. There they will both stay until they are resurrected into the new earth and new heaven together when that time comes. This brings up an issue, because it is known that the Lukan text should not be referring to any type of intermediate state, yet it seems to be stated here.<sup>18</sup> It is also known that it is translated from the Greek text as, καὶ εἶπεν

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<sup>17</sup> Luke 24:43

<sup>18</sup> Refer to the section Intermediate State

αὐτῷ ἀμὴν σοι λέγω σήμερον μετ' ἐμοῦ ἔσῃ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ,<sup>19</sup> which actually can be seen to have no commas or punctuation at all. Now, this is common to the Greek language to not have the same style of punctuation as the normal English language. However, where does the comma after “Truly” and “I tell you” come from in this English Standard Version text? If the comma after “I tell you” actually came after “today then instead of Jesus telling the criminal that today they will be in paradise, he would actually be telling him today, that they would be in paradise, and it can be assumed that they will eventually be in paradise together, not immediately. This is an incredibly small, yet incredibly important detail that seems to be left out of this Bible's explanation. What then would possess the interpreter to make this decision. They made these decisions years ago when the original texts were made easier to understand, however, this seems to be a detail that was intentionally biased to mean intermediate state because that is something the original church would have believed in. Therefore, what would actually cause this bias to come about? The opinion that will be stated here is that when the interpreters stated that there was no conscious bias whatsoever, which might still be incorrect, there still could be some sort of unconscious bias that would come about in the psyche of the interpreter. If the original interpreter had a Catholic mindset then they would be more likely to interpret a Catholic belief from the Bible. This means they would try to manipulate a certain section to mean the certain belief they actually personally believe, not what is the most plausible thing to believe. However, since there are many different beliefs in this world, there should also be a large amount of interpretations which there is known to be. This is actually true and it makes sense to say that

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<sup>19</sup> "Blue Letter Bible." Blue Letter Bible - Home Page. Accessed May 01, 2017. <http://www.blbclassic.org/index.cfm>.

these multiple translations came about from the psyche to the different interpreters that were in charge of the different translations.

There are two common unconscious decision makers in this paper that will need to be discussed and these include, Reaction Formation, and Unconscious Transference. There is also selective attention where someone might only chose to look at something because that is what they are used to understanding, this is common and does not need to be debated, however, the other two are very important for this discussion on Unconscious Bias that is taking over biblical interpretation.

The first one that needs to be brought up is Reaction Formation, and this can be explained perfectly in a quick example. Say that someone is homophobic because of various reasons stemming from their upbringing, or their own personal sexuality beliefs and hardships. This person would almost always be likely to interpret the Bible as being against the idea of homosexuality. Furthermore, if someone were not be homophobic and openly rejoice the idea of homosexuality, maybe because they are homosexual, or they have been around influential people in their lives that are homosexual, then they will be more likely to read acceptance form the Bible in the debate of homosexuality in the Bible. This is a straightforward idea, but it happens to have rather large implications into this topic. Say that someone has been taught growing up that the resurrection of Christ cannot be true, will they not be more prone to look at the resurrection in the Bible as a negative thing that cannot have happened? Say that someone has been raised in a certain church that believes in the rapture, then that person will not surprise anyone when they deny the idea of Christus Victor. They will not look at the resurrection as being the end all of theological discussion, and rather they will look to the left behind series as being more



fundamental then the text of the Bible.<sup>20</sup> A person who has ever been told anything about the Bible will almost always have a similar opinion when they read, also if they just so happened to believe the certain idea going in, then they will interpret the Bible as so. It's not a game changing idea by any means, but it makes the most sense wherever people see somethings in the Bible that they believed to be misconstrued.

The next idea is Unconscious transference and is the most important part of this unconscious bias discussion. Unconscious Transference is the idea that someone is likely to Transfer their personal experiences growing up, and the way they think, onto the subject at hand in their life. An example of this would be the someone who has a problem with authority having trouble with the authoritative nature of the Bible. Say that someone has grown up with a parent that has instinctively not tried to be an authority in the child's life, then say that this person were to grow up and start looking at the Bible in their free time, would not this person be more likely to instinctively disagree with the Bible because it seems like God is playing to much of a policeman in their life?<sup>21</sup> Another person may respond to the scripture with too much compliance because it just so happens to be the only thing they know and, "In both instances, compliance and rebellion, the real meaning of the scripture could be distorted by an unconscious transference relationship."<sup>22</sup> Every person has experienced things in their life that will affect their beliefs later on in life, this is what psychology calls the nurturing go humanity. Humans, subconsciously, will always go towards what they have experienced in life, what is normal to them. However, this in

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<sup>20</sup> Rollins, Wayne G., and D. Andrew Kille. *Psychological insight into the Bible: texts and readings*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

no way hinders the ability of the Bible, someone may be looking for something in their life to be a certain type of guide because they have never had one in their life. If this were to occur, the person would more likely tend to go toward the bible in a good way through the unconscious transference that will inevitably occur no matter what. This can be seen in the scripture Luke 23:43 which states “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise,” where Jesus is saying to the criminal that he will be with him in paradise. The Greek text had no punctuation and, therefore, needed to be put in for it to make sense in english, however, why was it in the place it was? There are many debates over why it was put where it was, and the most logical reasoning would be that it was laced there because the people who actually put commas into place back at that time would have said that commas have no syntactical bearing on the translation of the text. However, there is no possible way that there could be no actual effect from putting the comma before today. If someone were to ask another person, who is well versed in the english language, if it mattered where the comma was put and what each position it is des for the verse, they would say yes, and that it is important because “,today” means they will be there that day, and “today,” would mean he is telling him at that moment that he will be in paradise. Therefore, who is then left to make the decision of whether it goes before or after? On the website, Grace Communion, one of the columnist said that they must then go to the paradise that day because punctuation does not affect anything in the Greek language. There is something fundamentally wrong with this however, and that is that, when the verse is interpreted from the Greek text, there must punctuation put into the verse for it to make sense in the English language.<sup>23</sup> Who then decides? The answer is no specific group, but whoever just so happened to

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<sup>23</sup> "Grace Communion International." The Comma of Luke 23:43 | Grace Communion International. Accessed May 01, 2017. <https://www.gci.org/bible/luke/comma>.

interpret the text at that moment in time, and whatever personal belief that person may or may not have had. There is no definitive answer as to him answers this question and it is purely left to the one who is interpreting at that moment or the group who is interpreting at that moment. This then leaves the door wide open for the humans subconscious to come in and wreak havoc on whatever is being stated. The writer of the article even goes as far as to say that because the author of Luke, was not there for the actual saying of Jesus then it can never be known where the comma should have been placed. Well here arises another problem, this idea basically proves that whatever it is that the interpreter would say is happening, is purely based off of speculation and it can never be based off of any hard evidence. Knowing this, then that only leaves the discussion open to saying that the group of people who decided on the placing of the comma in Luke 23:43 would have no way to have decided on its placement without the use of subconscious thought. This then seems absolutely horrible, and makes no sense whatsoever when people say that they base an entire belief off of the fact that there is a comma specifically placed in a certain area in one verse. This example of Luke 23:43 is here to show how absurd some interpretation can be, and to also show just how difficult it is to actually get a good interpretation of the Bible in any way. What needs to happen then is for there to be direct Greek and Hebrew translation based off of context and Jewish and Greek beliefs of the time. There is no room for speculative punctuation placing that will inevitably be based off of the interpreters personal beliefs that are transferred to the text.

### **Hermeneutical usage of Winnicott's Squiggle Game**

The squiggle game used by Donald Winnicott is one of the most important tests ever created in Psychology, and it allowed "a model for understanding how children develop from

grandiose egocentricity into the capacity for genuine relationships with others.”<sup>24</sup> In the book, *Psychological Insight into the Bible*, Ralph Underwood, uses the Squiggle game famously thought of by Winnicott to explain how hermeneutics takes place in today's day and age. The squiggle game idea will give an idea as to how hermeneutical interpretation comes into existence, and how that interpretation will, no matter what, become an expression of the interpreter. Even if the interpreter does not want to be biased in any way it is still known that they will most likely read into the Bible with some sort or fashion of bias.

Now what may this squiggle game be and how on earth does it connect child like imagination with hermeneutical insights? The squiggle game was created and used by the psychiatrist Donald Winnicott, and his hypothesis used for making it work says that, “the squiggle intends to create a meaningful object, an object that evokes some sort of recognition from both persons.”<sup>25</sup> The squiggle game works like this, Dr. Winnicott would first draw some sort of squiggle while his eyes are closed, to ensure that the drawing is truly random. Then the child of various ages would be told to make something out of the squiggle, then the child would make a squiggle and Dr. Winnicott would add to the child's squiggle, all while talking about whatever the child wanted to talk about.<sup>26</sup> What this exercise will actually show is what this squiggle means the child's individual imagination, because they would be told on the spot to make something of this line they been given. What this will show is what they think is important in their imagination as a kid, and then it will show what the adult thinks is important in his

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<sup>24</sup> Rollins, Wayne G., and D. Andrew Kille. *Psychological insight into the Bible: texts and readings*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2007.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

imagination. It is remarkable truly, because it shows an insight into both the adult and the child doing the same task differently because of their different maturity levels. This way there can be an actual look into “ego qualities” of both the child and the adult, at the same time. How then does this connect to biblical interpretation connected to Hermeneutics? This is by the fact that through the humans natural ability to make relationships through anything, therefore, they will be likely to interpret the Bible in a meaningful way, through their own opinionated basis. Ralph Underwood says in his chapter in, *Psychological Insight into the Bible*, that,

“Hermeneutics is not simply a task of making meaning from the text that suits the needs of the readers, nor simply a task of unlocking some a priori meaning ensconced in the text. Rather, hermeneutics is a process in which a unique relationship between text and reader evolves”.<sup>27</sup>

So what then does that mean for biblical interpretation? This means that anyone who reads and tries to interpret the Bible, regardless, of how hard they try to be objective, will also interpret it like the child and adult interpret the squiggle game, through their own personal subjectivity. This means that when people say that no matter what they have read the Bible the way it needs to be read, that really means they have read the Bible through their own lens and not through the most objective lens possible.

### **Is it really a Soul Soul?**

If it has now been seen that there is possibly been a mistaker in the way scripture has been interpreted, then it is key to find out exactly if there is reason to believe that some of the most well known soul verses have had some dispute over whether soul has been said or not. How

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<sup>27</sup> Rollins, Wayne G., and D. Andrew Kille. *Psychological insight into the Bible: texts and readings*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2007.

this will then be tackled is by looking at a conglomerate of the 14 most well known Soul verses and go through them word by word each to see whether or not there is cause for speculation.

These verses range from all over the Bible, such as the verses that talk of the mystical soul, to the verses where Jesus talks about the soul in Matthew. For the convenience of the reader the verses will all be stated here first starting as a quote because these were verses were picked out largely by a Bible website called *dailyverses.net*, and the verses will be interpreted from their original text thanks to the *Blue Letter Bible*. This is important to note, because this website went through and chose the 14 verses that speak of the non-physical soul that makes a human human, or of the entirety of a human and what that is, this is not the Author going through and choosing the easiest verses to look at. These are verses that, for centuries, have been held to high regard for being the best examples of verses with the word Soul stated as being something held within the human. These verse will go as follows,

“But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Deuteronomy 4:29

“What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”

Matthew 16:26

“Truly my soul finds rest in God;  
my salvation comes from him.”

Psalms 62:1

“This is what the Lord says:  
Stand at the crossroads and look;  
ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,  
and you will find rest for your souls.  
But you said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”

Jeremiah 6:16

“Why, my soul, are you downcast?  
 Why so disturbed within me?  
 Put your hope in God,  
 for I will yet praise him,  
 my Savior and my God.”  
 Psalm 42:11

“For you created my inmost being;  
 you knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
 your works are wonderful,  
 I know that full well.”  
 Psalm 139:13-14

“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and  
 with all your mind.’”  
 Matthew 22:37

“You, God, are my God,  
 earnestly I seek you;  
 I thirst for you,  
 my whole being longs for you,  
 in a dry and parched land  
 where there is no water.”  
 Psalm 63:1

“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”  
 Jeremiah 29:13

“Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you,  
 even as your soul is getting along well.”  
 3 John 1:2

“Praise the Lord, my soul;  
 all my inmost being, praise his holy name.”  
 Psalm 103:1

“But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the  
 Lord gave you: to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to keep his  
 commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and with all your  
 soul.”  
 Joshua 22:5

“Gracious words are a honeycomb,  
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.”  
Proverbs 16:24

“Now I am about to go the way of all the earth. You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.”  
Joshua 23:14.”<sup>28</sup>

Now these are the verses at hand and they range from directly speaking of some sort of soul that humans have and need to save, to speaking about what a human is to do for the Lord, which is chase them with all of their being, and that being inevitably consists of a body and soul, because they say they wouldn't be able to chase him without it.

The first verse is Deuteronomy 4:29, which is talking about what a human must chase the Lord with, and that would be that everyone is to follow the Lord with not only their heart, or mind, and their Soul, presumably not physical. Now this is obviously a continuation of what the whole book of Deuteronomy is trending with with the “your soul” at the end.<sup>29</sup> Now the “your soul” that is stated in this verse is common to the book of Deuteronomy and is based off of the Hebrew word *nephesh*. Now from prior sections it is known that this word means more physical meanings than nonphysical. For example, it is known to mean “self, life, creature, person, appetite, mind, living being, desire, emotion, passion.”<sup>30</sup> Now, what does it mean in the biblical text of Deuteronomy? Looking at what the verse tells us, it is saying to “seek the Lord our God” with everything they have, it would be a logical interpretation to say that this exact usage of *nephesh* is saying that humanity needs to chase the Lord with all of its “desire”, “passion”, and

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<sup>28</sup> "Bible verse of the day." DailyVerses.net. Accessed May 01, 2017. <https://dailyverses.net/>.

<sup>29</sup> See Deut 4:29, 6:5, 10:12, 11:13, 13:3, 26:16, etc.

<sup>30</sup> "Blue Letter Bible." Blue Letter Bible - Home Page. Accessed May 01, 2017. <http://www.blbclassic.org/index.cfm>.



“emotion”. This is the most logical because this verse is directly speaking of the fact that the Author wants the reader to mentally believe in God and chase him physically with there mental power. He is not stating that the soul is separate from the body, because why would anyone not be chasing the Lord if their body wasn't already chasing them, considering the fact that the Brain is the controller of all bad and good thoughts.

Now the next verse is a little bit trickier because it uses the Greek word Psyche, which is stated multiple times in the New Testament, like it is here in Matthew 16:26. Now in the verse, Jesus is asking the people he is with, what would people be able to do if their soul was gone? What then could you achieve at all? If that person gained everything they could possibly imagine in the world, but lost their soul, then what would they be? Here is where interpretation of the word psyche needs to be handled accordingly, it means both life, and something given to humans and animals which makes them them. However, it is life that will be looked at here instead of the normal interpretation of soul, from this verse. Life is what every single living human has, and it is what every single human wants to keep in their lifetime. Now it is known from context that Jesus spoke of the fact that riches meant nothing to him, but why is that? Many people will say that that is because there is no way that riches can brought into the afterlife that he has created because they are of physical non-heavenly material and are useless for whatever would happen in the, presumably, intermediate state. Interpreting Soul in this verse to mean the life of a human actually makes more sense, because when looking at the Bible and Jesus’ words for what they actually preach, which is of resurrection, then it makes sense, because whoever died with riches, but no belief in God, will never have the life in the resurrection that had been given to them if they had actually believed. Therefore, it is easy to see that it is truly the life of a human that is

being discussed here because it was kept for the resurrection by belief in the Lord, not by attaining all the riches in the world that he had created.

The net verse is the verse Psalm 62:1, which I talking about how David's soul will forever last in the realm of Christ because he is with him. This verse was used in the old testament and utilized the Hebrew word Nephesh, which was utilized earlier in Deuteronomy 4:29. The meaning of the word was discussed in the earlier section.<sup>31</sup> It is known that it can mean anything from soul to the life a human uses, but what does it use in this verse? Now this one is a little different because it is known that David is speaking about he himself will forever rest with the Lord. This leads people to believe that it is actually talking about the fact that because David believes and is faithful then that means his soul will forever last with the Lord in heaven. However, the word Nephesh also means the life that breathes within a human, now this may not be the lungs being discussed here, but it is evident that what this means is that the life that David is living at that moment is forever with the Lord, because he is faithful and believes in him. This is different from the soul, because the soul presumably says that his soul will exit to heaven at this death, but really it means that his life will forever be in the hands of God, rather than in anything else. He is stating that his whole humanity is with God, not that one part of him will always stay at God's side.

Jeremiah 6:16, Psalm 42:11, Psalm 103:1, Psalm 139:13-14, Jeremiah 29:13, and Psalms 63:1, all use the same Hebrew word that other verses in the old testament use, Nephesh<sup>32</sup>. These will be grouped together because they all speak of the longing each person is taking in their life.

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<sup>31</sup> See section on the verse Deuteronomy 4:29

<sup>32</sup> See Deuteronomy 4:29 section

However, Psalms 63:1, Jeremiah 29:13, and Psalms 139:13-14 do not actually say soul in them, and they are included for a very key reason. Jeremiah 6:16, Psalm 42:11, and Psalm 103:1 speak of how their soul follows the Lord in every way imaginable and that they will continue to follow the Lord for as long as they believe. Well, in a way the other verses do as well thanks to the context. The three verses that do not say the word soul directly still speak about how their entire existence will be going towards the Lord. However, how can this be when they do not say soul, because isn't the soul their entire existence? Each human, according to the Dualist mindset, can be summed up in the eyes of God, in their soul. However, these believers in the other verses are still saying the same thing, just without the usage of the same words. They are both still the same type of believer, just using different wording, and therefore, they are meaning the exact same thing which means that the soul cannot be spoken here as being truly everlasting, because what is being spoken of here is just the fact that every believer will follow God in the ways necessary to continue in his existence through the resurrection.

The next verse is another tricky one, and that is because in Matthew 22:37, the word Psyche is stated in connection to the Soul, but there is also Heart and Mind being spoken of in this verse. Because both the words mind and heart are used, which should add up for the emotion and drive someone should have when they follow God, it makes sense at first to say that this Soul is truly a soul. This is why this verse is another verse that is regarded as one of the most important soul verses in the Bible. However, the first definition for Soul on Blue Letter Bible for this usage of the greek word Psyche, is the definition breath. Now this is intriguing in the respect of the verse to modern times. It is not uncommon to state nowadays that someone needs to chase something they truly want with all of their mind, heart, and every breath. This meaning that

every single breath should be used to achieve better faithfulness and connection with God. Could this be something that would be said back at this time? In the context of the passage it makes sense that Jesus would mean breath, the reason for this being that if he truly wants to describe how someone should believe in God, he is going to use the most vivid terms to define how someone should be for God. By saying heart, he is saying that every belief needs to be founded in God. By saying mind he is stating that every single thought needs to be used for thinking about the Lord and how to be better. Lastly, he uses the word Psyche because every single thing of the human body should be used for the Lord, and most people now sum up the bodies complete functions in the most basic thing it needs to survive, breath. Humans need to breath, and now according to Jesus, they need to believe as well. These two ideas are just as important as the other for each and every human on earth.

Joshua 23:14, Proverbs 16:24, and Joshua 22:5 all use the same type version of Nephesh from the Hebrew understanding. This means they are like the other Old Testament verses that speak of the soul, and this is key in understanding what this verse means. This one is close to the Matthew 22:37 version of Psyche, because this nephesh is referring to the fact that every human must chase the Lord with all of their might, which includes their mind, breath, heart, beliefs, and everything.

The last major verse is 3 John 1:2, and in this verse the Greek word Psyche is utilized to talk about the soul. This is a key verse because it is a direct example of the word Psyche being used to refer to someones physical life. John states that he “hopes the soul is along well” which is directly referring to the body of this person along weight their beliefs and mind. This means he is not just referring to the physical health, but also to the beliefs of the person, meaning that he is

wishing that the person keeps his strong beliefs in the Lord even in tough faith moments. This right here is one of the best examples of soul meaning exactly what a physicalist would want it to mean, entirely of self. Not just the body, brain, and breaths, but also the beliefs that each person has, which can be reduced to fundamental beliefs held within the physical brain.

## **Resurrection**

After there has been a proper look into the Biblical ramifications of a Physical look into human existence there can then be a proper look into why it is that the Bible being wholly physical is important. The first topic of discussion is the idea of the Resurrection, which actually ties into the last part of this thesis and question, which is Annihilationism. The question that needs to be asked for the Resurrection is whether or not this occurrence in the New Testament actually could happen physically, and if that's possible then how does that look and work? This question is one of the biggest falling outs that Christian Dualists have with Physicalism. There is never enough proof, they say, that would lead to a better understanding of how a physical resurrection could actually occur. How could Jesus physically beat death and raise again in a world governed by the laws of nature and physics? This is where the whole idea of faith comes into the Bible, it obviously takes a bit of faith to be able to answer these types of questions, but also Science can now be used with different hypothesis to prove how this occurrence could be pulled off, and what that means for the Resurrection of the saved later on. What is needed is biblical verses dealing with the resurrection and complex scientific information connected to those interpretations which could give answers as to how this sort of thing is possible.

The Resurrection is the most important story held within the ancient texts of God's word, and this is for good reason. In this story the people of the world throughout all of the generations to come can see the story of why there is the religion of Christianity, in the first place, and that is because God sent his perfect son down to us, in the form of a physical body, to die for everyone, even the generations to come. This occurred not because God wanted some fanciful story to be put into the bible, but rather so the people in this world can have something truly powerful to

believe in. It is put white eloquently all over the new testament what happened and why it happened, such as in Luke chapter 24 verse 7, where it says, “The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.”<sup>33</sup> Jesus, the son of God, has been sent down physically and given over to the sinners of the world to die for them and then he raised from the death that he endured to lift others, who believe in his father, from the death they have endured as well. Also, the belief of this happening was stated in Acts chapter 3 verse 15 when it is said, “You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. Humans are witnesses of this.”<sup>34</sup> The disciples did not just say they saw something they thought might have happened, and they are absolutely sure they saw the man that they all believed in without a doubt in the world. This is powerful because this gives even more of a foundation for this occurrence to actually have happened, but if it happened what exactly was it that the people on this world saw when Jesus rose from the dead, something that did not at all seem possible, and is something people could have only prayed for before. There is the story of Lazerus raising from the dead by the hand of Jesus who raised him, but how exactly would this happen in a physical world, and what would this mean for believers in a world where it is believed that every believer will at some point be raised from the dead by the hand of God.

Everyone knows the story given in the verses above, Jesus was sent as a physical being by God the father, to the virgin Mary. He lived a perfect life where he never succumbed to the temptations of sin in the world, and he performed many miracles for the people he came into contact with, and never asked for anything in return, but the love of one another and the belief in

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<sup>33</sup> Luke 24:7

<sup>34</sup> Acts 3:15

God the Father. The people who hated what he was able to do to the people branded him as heresy and forced him to face the other people in the world to see if what he was saying was actually true or not. After enough convincing, people ended up wanting him crucified on a cross for what he had spoken against the Jewish believers. He died on that cross and was buried and three days later he rose from the death he had initially succumbed to and he went back and visited many people in his new form of a resurrected body, then he ascended into heaven to be at the side of God. However, what would this look like physically? This question is important because looking at it and answering it answers how Physicalism in eschatological discussion can actually make sense. The discussion of life after death is the most important part of Physicalism that Dualist have with topic, and this is because they struggle to see how life after death can be seen as physical and how the resurrection can be seen as physical. They know that there is to be a new heaven and a new earth for the Lords believers, but they struggle to connect that back to the importance of Physicalism, and rather say that it may be physical, but before that, believers are in a non-physical state and they come back into an entirely new body. In order to prove this belief wrong, the death of Jesus Christ will be looked at for its physicalism ramifications that it inevitably brings when it is said that he actually did indeed dye and come back physically to this world.

What then needs to be looked at is first, how the body can die and be resurrected, then what it is that happens between this time, and what it looks like after it has been resurrected. This last part is meant to be a discussion into what the Bible says about the new world that believers will come to after they have been resurrected when the Lord resurrects them. All of these discussions are meant to show how Resurrection is actually not something far fetched for the



believers of this world to believe in. After all, if humans really do say they have faith in an all powerful God, and it is said that they will be resurrected in due time by him, then they should trust that somehow some way he has the power to do it. Too often do christians actually doubt the power of God by saying that it is impossible for physical existence and resurrection to work in the world that God has created. If he truly is an all powerful God then there has to be a way for him to accomplish it, and at the end of the day, humans are not themselves all powerful beings that can truly answer these questions.

### **Science and Theology Together**

The whole point of this paper and this entire topic is that everything discussed actually works better in tandem with each other then it works against each other in the form of Dualism. This is especially true within the resurrection debate when it comes to what is happening and why it is happening. What is meant by all of this is that in order to get a great discussion over the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Science as well as theology is needed above anything else, and they are used together in tandem to formulate a plan that can actually be used to prove the idea of a physical life, death, and resurrection. Too often is there a misuse of both these topics in the form of only using one and forgetting about the other, and what this causes is naiveté and presumptions.<sup>35</sup>

Science is a force to be reckoned with in all circles of discussion, especially Physicalism, and it was used in great detail to discuss how Physicalism works scientifically in Part I of this thesis. However, if there is too much of a belief in what humanity thinks they see with their own to eyes then there will be this problem of presumptions that will take place all over the world

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<sup>35</sup>Peters, Ted, Robert J. Russell, and Michael Welker. Resurrection: theological and scientific assessments. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2002.

time and time again that we'll say that if it doesn't work with science then it doesn't at all. Now granted this is a safe thing to assume when talking about the world, but what happens if the topic of discussion is quite literally out of humanities grasp to understand. Science helps take away the problems believers have with being naive all the time and believing that if the Bible states it, the nothing can come against it, not even the laws of the universe, however, the person who looks to science for all of the answers still needs to be careful that they do not fall on believing everything that it says day in and day out. Science has said many things in the past that have come to be proven wrong, and this will never end because by the definition of the very fabric of Science there is the admission that it is trying to further understanding about the world through scientific trials which might work and unlock the code, or most likely will fail and leave everyone wondering.

With theology though, there also needs to be a careful look into its beliefs and ideas to make sure that people who are saying them are not just automatically saying they believe it because theology tells them so. This is where the problem with naiveté comes into play, and it is just as harmful as the presumptions brought with quick scientific assumptions. If everyone who looked to theology for answers believed in every single thing taught from it then there would be this issue of believing everything that came from it because they just have to assume that God is never wrong, which is true, but the people interpreting what he says can very much have the wrong ideas. Therefore, there also needs to be an in-depth look at what Science has to say to take away some of this problem with believers being naive to the world's new problems that Science is trying to help and understand every single day.

With this introduction to the Resurrection there needs to be a quick briefing on what will be discussed in terms of Science and Theology. Both topics are important in their own ways and the reason the discussion on naiveté and presumptions needed to be stated first was so that readers can know what not to do when they look into the bible for its scientific merit. All this being said, it is important to note that the discussion of the resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of the most important topics to take this warning into before reading. The resurrection has been laid out in front of humanity for centuries from the texts within the Bible, and it is rarely looked at for its scientific merit, but now it can be done more thoroughly. The resurrection has been looked at for centuries as being the time all of creation got to see the non-physicality of Jesus in person, but this is an issue because the very fact that humans could see Jesus in person after he was resurrected is a testament as to just how physical his resurrection actually was. If anything the only portion of which Jesus can be seen to have gone to a world of being non-physical it would be in his ascension, but did he actually raise from the dead completely physically. The answer to this is yes, and this is important because it answers some very important questions about how humans will be resurrected physically into the new world when the Lord makes the decision for that to happen. Science and theology will help steer the believers and nonbelievers in the right direction to find that both sides can actually agree on the same idea about the resurrection, because in the end that is what is important about this discussion.

### **Paul's View of Resurrection Against the Corinthians**

First, there must be a look into the beliefs of the apostle Paul to decipher one of the main points behind why there is even a discussion into the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul, in his time preaching around the area he preached, was very adamant in his beliefs that went

against the beliefs of others. In fact it was the reason he went to the places he did, because if he disagreed with how they were practicing Gods word, and beliefs then he needed to go and set them straight. One of these groups that caused a lot of problems was the Corinthians, and Paul spoke about them in one of his letters in first and second Corinthians. The people of Corinth had a problem truly understanding the new age ideas that were coming from the Jew turned Gentile, Paul. They needed his wisdom to be set straight in what was actually right and how they needed to believe it and worship it in their own individual lives.

The problem was that the Corinthians believed in a more dualistic Greek belief in the body-soul Dichotomy. This means that they believed in not only a full separation between what it is to be a soul and a body, but also that the soul was superior to the body that it was inevitably housed in. This seems like the normal belief of Dualism and does not seem that far out of the ordinary right now. However, as it is looked at in more detail it can be seen that there is way more than meets the eye in this absurd belief in a dichotomous structure of the Human existence. The Greek view that they believed “tended to separate the body and the spirit, claiming superiority for the latter while neglecting the physical. This provided a basis for the Corinthians to create and tolerate a dichotomy between their beliefs and their conduct.”<sup>36</sup> Hear in lies the fundamental problem that a dualistic belief can bring into the world, and an example of it actually happening in real time. The problem with this is that they believed that because their soul was superior to their body, and that it would separate, they then deduced that they must be able to do whatever they so choose with their body, and leave their soul to do the talking when it came time to die. This means that they would be as sexually promiscuous as they so choose, that

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<sup>36</sup> Bergant, Dianne, and Robert J. Karris. The Collegeville Bible commentary: based on the New American Bible. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992

they could say whatever they want to, and do whatever they wanted to do, as long as they believed in God and got baptized, their soul would go off to heaven. Anyone in today's world can see what is wrong with this picture, however, why exactly is it wrong? The reason is that because of this Dualistic belief in Body-Soul relationship there has been a new belief in something so radically wrong. Try and tell someone who believes it that they are being wrong and see what they might say, they will probably say that they are not doing anything wrong because their body is not them at all, and therefore it really does not matter what they say or do because it is their body doing it. They are saying that their self lies in a non-physical soul and therefore they cannot truly do something wrong as long as they believe in a God that made them. They are not wrong, Christians today may say that they are completely and utterly incorrect because of the fundamental misunderstanding in the word, and that Dualism is not at fault, but that just simply is not true. If the Body is truly separate from the Soul, and the soul is truly superior to the body, then why does the soul have to pay for the mistakes of the body. It does not have to pay for those mistakes because it does not deal with the body. Science today has shown humanity that decision making lies in the Brain, and that a combination of instinct and choice make it happen in the brain. This means that the soul is not just controlling everything that goes on in the body, and the body controls the body, and that is that. Dualism in this case did not solve all problems like Christians like to say it does, and it in fact actually brought about new problems that had never been seen before.

Paul's answer to these fundamental issues is a thing of beauty, and is so good that Dualists today like to take credit for it because if they did not then their whole belief in Body and Soul would not be founded in anything at all. Paul takes a more holistic approach to this belief and

answers the Corinthians by saying that Salvation does not just go for the inner self, but that it goes for the entirety of the humans everyday action and their spiritual actions together.<sup>37</sup> Now right at this moment the Dualist will stop the conversation and take what Paul is saying and use it to say that since Paul talked about both inner and outer life it must still mean that he was talking about some sort of Dualistic approach to understanding the human existence. However, what is said to this is that Paul continued on with what he was saying in a way of eschatological discussion into a Physicalist world view of the afterlife. Instead of speaking about how the soul will leave the body at the end of the bodies life, or saying that the soul will go to this heaven like afterlife right after death, he uses the information he displayed against the Corinthians to speak about how there will be a resurrection of the dead into a new physical life. The resurrection is for the entire person and not just the body or the soul, and more importantly the afterlife is about the body and the soul together being resurrected as one into a physical world instead of the soul going to a special heaven like afterlife. This is why the resurrection is one of the most pivotal discussions in the Bible, because it is the most important part of the Bible, and it is the most important part of the bible that goes against the Dualist type mentality into the afterlife.

### **Proof of the Resurrection**

When looking at the proof of the resurrection there are two different methods used to look at the ideas stated about the resurrection in the New Testament. These two ideas are the subjective look into the Resurrection or the objective look into it. One of these beliefs will actually be used whenever discussing the resurrection in this thesis. These two different ideas that will be discussed are pivotal in forming a foundation for what is to be believed in the bible

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<sup>37</sup>Peters, Ted, Robert J. Russell, and Michael Welker. Resurrection: theological and scientific assessments. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2002.

and in today's world. What is meant by this is that in order for the resurrection to be proved it is important that there is a clear type of resurrection that needs to be proved. There is actually debate as to whether the resurrection is something that actually happened, or whether it is something that is just meant to make people believe in a messiah that was sent by God.

The first is subjective and is the belief that the resurrection did not actually empirically occur, but rather that it was only something said by the disciples to gather a following to continue on the teachings of Jesus. Now from the get go this can be seen to not be at all useful when trying to prove that the resurrection actually occurred. The reason for this is because when looking at the resurrection in this way it is not actually believing that it actually happened which means it won't be proving that it did, instead it will deprive that it did not happen. However, it is useful to look at the resurrection this way in order to get an idea of what the resurrection actually did for the people. When looking at the resurrection it is important to at least look at it subjectively, therefore, getting a look as to why Christians, for centuries, have had the faith they have had.

The correct way to look at the resurrection, especially for this section, is to look at it for its objective qualities and accomplishments. This means that it did happen empirically in this world, and that the disciples and others who saw it actually did the son of God raise from the dead. This now gives the work of proving the resurrection actually some foundation as to where to start. The resurrection did occur, and therefore, now it has to be seen and proved as to how that would actually happen in this world. Thanks to objective analysis of the resurrection, there can now be an in depth look at not what it did for the people, but rather if it actually occurred or not.

This will then open up the possibility as to actually seeing how this resurrection could happen in the Physical world.

The actual proof of the resurrection comes from of the most important verses that talks about its necessity to occur. This would 1 Peter 1:3 in which it is said that, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given them a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”<sup>38</sup> The resurrection is necessary in a world of people who have all sinned, and therefore, it actually occurred in that world. Now this seems simple and a little to easy when trying to actually prove or disprove something, however, this is the first logical step when starting the proof of the resurrection. It had to happen or else the world, that it is said God created, would all be doomed to hell and there would never be any hope for any of the humans on earth. Therefore, it is important that this be stated first that God needed to save the people in this world and they needed to have a way to be saved. This way came in the form of God having his son sent down to the physical world to die for the sins of others, and then defeat death by being resurrected. Therefore, it is necessary for the resurrection to occur, at least whenever it is being looked at for it’s meaning in the bible. Without it there would be no saving of the damned, and there would be less trust in a God who creates world just to die in the end.

The first proofs that the resurrection actually happened come from the historical accounts of it actually happening empirically in front of many people and many people witnessing the risen body of Christ. This includes there actually being a tomb where his body was buried, his tomb being found empty three days after his death, and the fact that many first hand accounts of

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<sup>38</sup> 1 Peter 1:3



witnessing his risen body occurred after he had risen from the dead. These are not proven just by the fact that it was said by someone that they saw him, but rather by who said that they saw him, and what their significance was in the whole story. There were more than just a few people who saw the risen body of Christ. First, there were ten disciples that actually saw his risen body that actually died for that belief that they had seen it. It is understood that this may be here say to this argument, but in all honesty it does not make sense psychologically for ten people to die for a belief they had actually made up. Humanity at some point gets to a threshold where they cannot keep that type of secret because humanity will always try to survive. They would have let the disciples off without a problem if they had said it was fake all along, but none of them did that.<sup>39</sup> Also, the idea that it was a hallucination is absolutely absurd as well, considering medical science has yet to prove that it is at all possible for more than one person to have the exact same hallucination as another human been let alone ten human beings. The way the brain is created is far to complex of a system to have someone have an exact match in their hallucination. Also, there were hundreds of people who stated first hand that they saw and experienced the risen body of Jesus, and not only that, they experienced the physicality of the risen body they saw. This is where this paper comes into place; it has come into question as to whether or not the resurrection actually occurred physically and whether or not any resurrection will occur physically in this world. The disciples specifically say that they experienced a physical body in their presence that not only could they actually touch, but that they could also eat and drink with. This seems like God has the ability to physically resurrect a body that has died from the death that it has

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<sup>39</sup> "Historical Evidence for the Resurrection." Desiring God. September 12, 2007. Accessed May 2017. <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/historical-evidence-for-the-resurrection>.

occurred. If there was actually a soul given to each and every body then why would the Lord physically resurrect Jesus Christ instead of allowing his spirit to interact with the creation.

The resurrection is incredibly important to think about because the whole idea of Christianity could not have come about without it. This is where the importance of the subjective thought of resurrection comes in. The resurrection started something that has been thousands of years in the making which is the Christian religious worldview of God sending down his son to die for the sins of his creation. However, it is known that the Jewish population of this time was not a fan of the person in their midst that was saying he was the messiah and that he was there for all creation. They certainly would be hostile towards saying that he resurrected from the dead, however, time and time again it was the Jewish people close to Jesus that said what happened happened. On top of this it was also written that the resurrection had occurred not too long after it actually happened, meaning that this story could not be a legend that was told centuries later just to get more people to follow the Christian Doctrine of salvation for sins.

With all of these facts it can be agreed upon that it is true that the Resurrection actually occurred in a historical viewpoint because of the incredible amount of proof there is for it occurring. It is important to prove this first because now it can be looked at for its merit connected to eschatology and how everyone else can be physically resurrected, and how that is actually a possible thing to happen in the physical world created by the Lord God. The evidence for it will make the idea of both physical resurrection and Annihilationsm more plausible.

### **The Doctrine of the Resurrection and the Intermediate State**

The Resurrection is one of the most important parts of the Bible, and has had research put into it ever since the day it occurred just over 2,000 years go. The Doctrine of the Resurrection is

the information put together about the resurrection and shows the importance of why it happened the way it happened. How does a body survive death? How does God resurrect Jesus and why does he do it? These two questions are the two questions that describe what will be discussed in this portion about the resurrection. The normal questions asked in today's world always refer to why God resurrected Jesus. These are the easy questions and yes, they do have quite a bit of discussion behind them, but they can usually be agreed upon by saying that Jesus was resurrected to defeat death in the way that God intended. However, how did he pull it off and why did he choose to have resurrection be the means of doing it? These are important questions that need to be answered in this section and it will be seen that their answers do not come easily within Science or the Bible. The other subject that is connected to the resurrection is the question about the intermediate states that are possible. These would include such ideas like going to heaven after death, or being put into some sort of soul sleep until the human bodies that are saved are all resurrected from their graves. Now the intermediate state is not something that is accepted within the Doctrine of Physicalism, however, it needs to be looked at and shown why it is an incorrect view for the reductive physicalist to believe. The problem is that most Christians are dualist and hold onto the heaven promises as the main reason why they continue to be dualist. They choose not to listen to the biblical interpretation that states that there is no soul, and they also choose not to think that they are only resurrected into a new world when that time comes. The reason for all of this is that they purely believe that there has to be a soul because if there was not any type of soul then there would not be any type of heaven and that is just not acceptable. Dualism is mainly founded not on the idea of all humans having some sort of soul to be human, but rather on the idea of there being a heaven that believers need to go to after their death. Most dualist will

state that because God is nonphysical, and he is in heaven awaiting for humans to be by his side, then he must also be nonphysical in order to be able to interact with the people that go there. This is not a good enough reason to be a strong believer in a soul, because if this were not agreed upon world wide then there would not even be a discussion as to whether it was even a possibility. The Doctrine of Resurrection and of the intermediate state will be looked at in closer detail to find which one makes the most sense out of bodily resurrection with no resurrection, or of humanities souls going to heaven or hell eternally after they pass away from the physical world.

The first discussion to be looked at is on the intermediate state, and will be one of the most important sections in the entirety of this thesis. The reason for this being that this section usually is the section that Dualist will look to say that it is impossible to disprove a heaven because of the strong belief in it in the Bible. However, it will be understood quite quickly that it is truly impossible to point to a definitive understanding of some sort of an after life, and it is quite more easily understood to point to some sort of absolute death, and resurrection into a new world. The two biggest areas in the NT that speak of this intermediate state are in Luke's book in the Gospels and Paul's experience in Corinth that was discussed earlier in this section. These two parts will be looked at for why people think that there is some sort of intermediate state held within them.

The first is the book of Luke, and the reason it is seen as an example of a Dualist afterlife is because of the fact that it contains the parable of the rich man and Lazarus and that it contains the exchange between Jesus and the criminal at the crucifixion.<sup>40</sup> The first is the parable of the

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<sup>40</sup> Green, Joel B. *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

rich man and Lazarus in which a rich man and a beggar named Lazarus both die and Lazarus goes to the side of “Abrahams side” and the rich man is put “In Hades, where he was in torment”.<sup>41</sup> The reason this is said to be proof of an intermediate state is because it it mainly is said that the rich man went to the place where Hades is which was popular in that time as being a place similar to hell, and thus an intermediate state, and with the part of Jesus and the criminal, it is seen as an intermediate state because of Jesus saying “Today you will be with me in Paradise”.<sup>42</sup> Both of these sections of the Lukan text seem to point towards an after life type intermediate state that God’s creation will go to after death regardless of what they believed.

In the Parable of the rich man and Lazarus there are a few issues to point out first within this story. The first is that these people are presumably still people in hell and heaven, and what this means is that they seem to not be souls but actually be “human agents with corporeal existence.”<sup>43</sup> This brings up a problem for the Dualist in how these people are still fully human by the words that are presented. Also, another problem is that there is no definitive type of existence that these men are living in, and what this means is that it is not seen as to whether this is actually an intermediate state or whether this is a place people will go for the rest of their lives. By the looks of it in the text it makes sense to say that it is moving towards this being a type of eternity instead of intermediate state, and because Jesus is giving a story as a rebuttal to the Pharisees, it makes sense to say that what he is saying is figurative. Which means that he is giving a story to explain to people that the rich man was too late to make the decision that he

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<sup>41</sup> Luke 16: 22-23

<sup>42</sup> Luke 23:42-43

<sup>43</sup> Green, Joel B. *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

inevitably made in hell, and this means that Jesus is trying to say that once someone dies they cannot go back on their decision in their lives. This is so powerful of a point to be stated that one of the biggest believers in an intermediate state, John C. Cooper, actually says that this parable and the time Jesus talks of paradise to the criminal, cannot prove an intermediate state, but rather they are just examples of what might be.<sup>44</sup>

Next is the time Jesus spoke of paradise while on the cross to the criminal who believed that Jesus was indeed someone to believe in, and not some fraud. The issue with this is that it is not definitively saying that there is a type of intermediate state being said here that is between the resurrection of the dead and their death. What needs to be looked at is the Jewish Eschatology of this time into what exactly is meant by paradise. What is said here is the word paradise and the problem with that is that it could mean the immediate “end time dwelling of the righteous with God.”<sup>45</sup> This means that it would not be an intermediate state, but rather somewhere they will be going immediately, which sounds like heaven, however, if the resurrection the dead is to be agreed upon then a place the righteous go to for eternity after their death would make no sense because they would not be resurrected at anytime to the new world. These issues of both the parable and the story of Jesus and the criminal point out flaws in the idea that there is any talk of an afterlife in these stories. It makes no sense to say that Luke definitively stated that there was an intermediate state that people went to, and in all actuality it makes the most sense to say that he actually spoke of the place for people to look forward to when the resurrection occurs.

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<sup>44</sup> Green, Joel B. *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

The next portion that will be discussed is similar to the discussion earlier about the conversation Paul had with the people of Corinth in 1 and 2 Corinthians. This conversation yields an important verse that has been said to hold a version of the intermediate state within. This verse is 2 Corinthians 5: 1-3 where Paul says, “For we know that if our earthly tent is dismantled, we have a house from God - a dwelling not made with human hands, eternal in there heavens. In view of this we sigh, longing to put on our heavenly house, assuming of course, that when we take it off we will not be found naked.”<sup>46</sup> This quote is by Paul, said to the Corinthians, is supposedly stating that whenever someone would die then they would lose their earthly home, but would have a place with God. Dr. Joel Green brings up a quote by Ben Witherington where he sates the three states that are brought up in the quote. Ben Witherington says that, “Paul speaks of three states: the present condition in the tent-like frame, the intermediate state of nakedness, which he does not find desirable, and the future condition in which a further frame will have been put on, hopefully, over the present one.”<sup>47</sup> This seems to be a dualistic position found within these verses because of the state that people will be in without a body, and then the inevitable resurrection that they will go through once the time is right. This position however is not something that Paul would stand by because it is actually a Dualistic position held within the Greeks. Paul looks at the nakedness that everyone would experience as being something that is bad. He holds the idea of this nakedness in abhorrence and he does not want anyone to go through such a thing because it is not good and it is humiliating. If the Jewish perspective is taken into account like how Paul would think then one would notice that this is something that is

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<sup>46</sup> Green, Joel B. *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid

humiliating and that no one would actually want to go through. This means that it would be unlikely for Paul to be teaching this as a good thing because of the fact that it is seen as a humiliating experience.<sup>48</sup>

Paul also states at the beginning that he is saying something everyone already knows which Dr. Green says means that Paul, “is not trail-blazing here, but calling to mind former instruction given in 1 Corinthians 15.”<sup>49</sup> This is when Paul is speaking about the resurrection that he already knows everyone should know about. Paul is not speaking of anything new for him to believe or talk about, however, it is something new for the people of Corinth to talk about and think about. At this time, talks of resurrection were merely fables that they had been told long ago, not something that they would actually think would happen. The people of Corinth, as seen in the Biblical Interpretation portion of this thesis, are actually a fan of the Dualist position because it means that they can do whatever they want on earth, such as being sexually promiscuous, and still have their soul reach heaven. The soul and the body have actually n real connection one another and they can do whatever they want in their physical body. However, it is not that difficult to see why this is something not agreed upon by Paul and his followers. This is why Paul tells of the Resurrection to them so that they know what the truth is in this debate. Therefore, it can be seen that Paul’s purpose behind this is, “To represent the resurrection-belief of early Christianity with enough sophistication to communicate effectively with those of high status while not alienating those of lower status.”<sup>50</sup> This means that at the end of the day Paul is

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<sup>48</sup> Green, Joel B. *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid

<sup>50</sup> Ibid



not trying to get them to believe in an intermediate state that is false and not agreed upon by Paul. He is trying to reach out to people who are without the right teaching and show them what is actually true and that would be the fact that the Resurrection of the dead is the most important thing to believe. When Paul is fighting for the resurrection, he does multiple things, including, affirming the future resurrection of the believers, and by saying that if one denies the resurrection of the believers then they also deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>51</sup> By saying this he also says proves that Humans will have a continuity of life after their death in the form of embodied existence, and that the human existence as is is not fit for eternal life and will deteriorate, and therefore, needs to be saved to continue the existence physically in the new earth. This is where the resurrection will come into play, there will be a continuation of the human existence, physically, through the usage of bodily resurrection. Paul specifically states the word soma, which as is already known is referring to the body, as humanity already knows, which is physical. Too often are these words misconstrued to mean something that is like a nonphysical soul, however, when looking at what the word soma means in the Greek translations, it is obvious that it means something similar to the physical body that each and every human has. Dr. Joel Green speaks of the soma pneumatikon, which is what every human has and that animals and other creatures have. However, this is not a nonphysical entity present in the life of creation, but rather, it is something that was given to each and every human after the death of Jesus Christ, because it is known that, “the last Adam [Christ] became a life-giving spirit.”<sup>52</sup> He gave humanity the ability to be sad and to live forever with Christ, and he did not give each and every

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<sup>51</sup> Green, Joel B. *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

human something that gave them the ability to live after their life nonphysically. this works well with what Joel Green says the theologian Anthony Thiselton says about the body they have and that is that, “God has provided for this age “an ordinary human body,” “a body for the human realm,” but, in the resurrection, God will provide “a body for the realm of the Spirit.”<sup>53</sup>

The body humans have been given is not suitable for eternal life, for it came from the first Adam who sinned and caused the whole existence of humanity to lose their ability to be by the side of God, however, through the new Adam, and new Christ, they have been given a new ability to continue on when humanity has been able to before. This is threw the usage of the resurrection where God will give humanity the necessary physical body to continue on in humanities existence. This is what makes humans human and sets them apart from the rest of the creatures in the world. This is a foundational perspective held and taught by Paul, and in no way opens up the door for a nonphysical soul to go onto a nonphysical heaven, for humanity has not been given that ability because they have sinned and ruined there chances. However, Paul and Luke’s teaching give humanity new hope in the belief of Jesus Christ as their Lord and savior. This is rock solid in the writings of both Paul and Luke, and their writings may seem to point to an intermediate state, but further investigation leads to something entirely different.

### **After Life**

If humans are only their bodies then how is it possible for them to have any connection with God at all? This is the most important question to be asked when physicalism is the idea being discussed, and this is why it is the last topic to be discussed in this thesis. The idea of whether or not humans are physical can be answered with science and philosophy in the first part

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<sup>53</sup>Green, Joel B. *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

of this thesis, and the fact that the Bible works more closely with the framework of physicalism can be seen in the beginning portion of this part to the thesis, but at the end of it all, the actual question of Eschatology in a physical world needs to be discussed. For resurrection has already been dealt with, and it can be seen that Jesus rose from the dead physically and how every believer will as well, but the question of death and the after life needs to be looked at to bring everything together.

Annihilationism may sound like a terrifying new age heretical idea when looked at at first, however, when looking at it more closely and seeing what it actually means, not only does it work best with a physicalism mindset, because it gets rid of the soul all together, but it is also something that makes the most sense when looked at in the old and new testament.

Annihilationism has been seen as a heretical idea because it has stated that the heaven humans think about today, after each person dies, is actually nonexistent and something that has been incorrectly interpreted from the Bible due to the presence of misinterpretations of the Bible hundreds of years after its writings. heaven is seen as something believers go to after they die, but this is an incorrect look at what was actually being taught thousands of years ago. It sounds terrible, but if the greatest payment for sin is death then aren't the people who go to heaven actually not paying for the sin that they have gone through in their lives? This is where annihilationism comes into play because of what it says, and that is that people who do not believe will die, and those that do believe will actually be resurrected when that day comes into the new earth that has been promised to every believer in the New Testament. For everyone has sinned and there is no way that they can skip out on the payment for that sin, but they can believe

in the man who saved them from that sin, and be resurrected when he comes back to save them all.

Annihilationism is not the only version of the after life that Christian Physicalist can hold to, there is also the non-reductivism route which holds to the idea of a physical after life that humans mental capacity goes off to. This idea is a belief championed by the philosopher Nancy Murphy, who holds to the non-reductivism route of physicalism, and believes that there is still a way for who humans are to survive through Science and God, after humanities death. This idea will be discussed in detail during the section on her ideas.

### **Annihilationism**

Oh how terrible this may sound, Annihilationism, talking about death and hell and terrible terrible topics, however, is it really all that bad of a topic to believe in? First, it is not as bad as it seems coming from just hearing the word itself, for annihilationism means that people die and cease to exist until they are resurrected if they believe, or eternally cease to exist because they do not believe. This seems harsh and heretical, but as will be found out thanks to Edward Fudge, in *The Fire That Consumes*, there is more to the story than is being told. This discussion will involve multiple topics such as the ideas of Sheol, the teachings of hell in the Old and New Testament, and what biblical evidence there is for the belief in annihilations. Annihilationism is an idea that does not believe in a soul, and because of this no belief in a soul, they, therefore, can no longer believe in a judgment after death. Basically, they believe in death of the body, and then waiting for the final judgment that will be decided on whenever the resurrection of the dead occurs. It is saying that the, “resurrection of the dead and the eternal judgment,” will occur in the

future, not in the here and now.<sup>54</sup> This is intriguing because new age biblical teachings have always looked at the idea of an intermediate state that humans go to, with their soul, before the resurrection of the dead, and the everlasting life that the believers will have. Also, there is going to be a judgment in the, “age to come, not merely a judgment made by man or God in the here and now.”<sup>55</sup> All of these ideas are drastic when told to the Christians of today because they have either been told of a purgatory type state, or an immediate judgement for the wicked, and immediate glorification for the righteous. This, however, is not in anyway believed by the annihilations teachings, and they will believe that judgment comes when resurrection happens, and if someone does not make the cut then they will just cease to exist.

### **Sheol**

Sheol has been one of the main reasons that Christians do not believe in any type idea that is similar to Annihilationism. Sheol is stated 63 times in the old testament, most notably in Genesis, and in the prophecies of Isaiah. What does Sheol actually mean in these verses though? Most Christians today, will say that it is the place of eternal condemnation of the wicked, however, that is not the true interpretation of sheol. That is the construed version of sheol, and according to, *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, “Sheol is uniformly depicted in the OT as the eternal, amoral abode of both the righteous and unrighteous alike.”<sup>56</sup> Sheol is actually a place that every single dead person will go to after their inevitable death, regardless if they are considered by God to be righteous or wicked. This can be agreed upon by anyone considering

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<sup>54</sup> Fudge, Edward. *The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of Final Punishment*. Houston, TX: Providential Press, 1982.

<sup>55</sup> Fudge, Edward. *The Fire That Consumes: A Biblical and Historical Study of Final Punishment*. Houston, TX: Providential Press, 1982.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

Jacob, ever so righteous, believed that, once he died he would go on to Sheol, and also Job, “longed to hide in Sheol until God’s anger passed him by.”<sup>57</sup> Sheol can be seen in these areas as a place that is not some hell that people will spend the rest of their lives, but as a place they are judged in before their eternal judgement. How this is different from the normal beliefs of hell, is how this version of Sheol, the version actually seen in the Bible, is one of judgment and then eternal life or death. It is a place that every single person will be going to after they die, and not a place where only the wrong go. If someone believes in God and performs many good works in his name, then it is believed today that he must be the one to go to heaven and then to be resurrected, however, if the normal belief of hell is incorrect considering the modern interpretations of the word normally defined as hell, Sheol, then how can heaven be seen as the same? This is where Annihilationism comes into the equation in this specific area, because there is a question that needs to be looked at whenever this topic of resurrection and annihilationism comes in, and that is, what is our greatest hope in salvation? It is not the hope that humans will go to some sort of heaven after humans die, but rather that they might have the chance of being resurrected into the new heaven and new earth which is entirely seen as physical by all accounts. God does not want to get rid of the world he has created, but to rather use what is here and make it perfect. He does not want to end what he has made, but rather he wants to make it perfect. Annihilationism does not need to be shown here for its theological proof within the Bible, but it just rather needs to be said that Annihilationsim is the only form of after life belief that actually follows the answer of the question to humanities greatest hope in salvation , which is the hope that humanity will be resurrected into the new world.

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid

### **Non-Reductivity**

There is also another way to answering the question of whether humans go to a heaven or to somewhere that is not seen as anywhere at all, but rather a waiting game for whenever Jesus comes down to resurrect them. This is the idea of non-reductivism, which is championed by the philosopher Nancy Murphy most notably. It is the idea that the entirety of humanities mental capacity cannot be brought down in full to the neural states of the brain. This idea was stated earlier in this thesis, and it can be looked into further detail, but now it will shortly be talked about for its real eschatological influence in this paper.

Nonreductivity opens up the door to a critical idea in this paper, and that is that if not everything within the brain of a human being can be brought down to the neurons, then that means there is something still to be discovered of what happened to those abilities once the body dies. However, it is known that these ideas are still seen as physical, however, if it is known that the Holy Spirit is physical then there may still be the possibility of a human being's essence going to some place after they die. This in no way takes away the idea of the resurrection being the biggest hope for humanity in salvation. That is still most important, and it opens the door to there being something else that is possible now knowing that everything to the human body is physical, it just may not be reduced to the body.

These two ideas may not be discussed in the most detail, but that is not the point of them in this paper, the biggest point is the fact that there are answers to the people that say Heaven is the most important part of the Bible and not the resurrection. Physicalism is a possibility, and according to these ideas, it is even more relevant in this discussion because it just makes the most sense within theology and thanks to the thought of Annihilationism and Non-reductivism.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusion to this final section of the paper consists of the summing up of its general points, which consists of the Bible not being a document that states any entirely non-physical type of soul. There is also the issue held within this paper that the resurrection is the greatest hope for all people in salvation, and because the resurrection in the Bible was entirely physical, it can now be said that the biggest hope in salvation is a physical resurrection into the new earth and new heaven. Then, the next point to conclude with is that other eschatological ideas come about from Biblical interpretation, and the main one being Annihilationism. These points are all summarized within this paper, and each of them helps drive home the point of a physical body being the only thing humanity has. Now that this section is added to the first section, both can now be summarized again. It is important to note that due to the scientific, philosophical, and theological proofs over the physicality of the human body, it can now be stated that there is only a physical body in this entirely physical world. There is no nonphysical soul that each and every human has because there is no need for it. Science has shown how the brain is the chief controller of everything that happens in the mind of a person, and Philosophy has proven that physicalism is the most logical conclusion to the debate of mind-body. Finally, theology has shown that the Bible consistently teaches time and time again of the human being made in the image of God without the usage of some spiritual soul. The human body is entirely physical, and this makes everyone fully human, made in Gods image, with the greatest hope of salvation being the hope for physical resurrection into the new Earth and new Heaven, and this works perfectly within the doctrine of Physicalism.



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