

## Reason 1: The Injustices of Life

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One of the oldest questions asked about death is recorded in the Bible. A man named Job, seeking relief from unbearable suffering and longing for hope, asked, “If a man dies, will he live again?” (Job 14:14 NIV). Men and women throughout history have wondered, *Is the grave one’s final resting place? Or is death the beginning of another dimension?* Many believe the question is unanswerable. Others say there are multiple lines of evidence to believe that death fulfills the wish of everyone—either to spend eternity with God or apart from Him.

From the beginning of time, men and women have sought answers to the question, “Is there life after death?” Even in our modern culture, there is a profound interest in the afterlife.

**Dr. Doug Groothuis:** Our culture is very interested in life after death. You think of the interest in near-death experiences, in attempting to communicate with spirit guides or higher beings, or I think some of the interest in extraterrestrial life is really rooted in a desire to transcend the limitations of this life. Maybe there’s a civilization somewhere that is evolved so far that they’ve conquered death.

So I see people yearning for something beyond the material world and a rejection of materialism. Most Americans believe in God. Most Americans believe in a spiritual realm. But that’s not enough. Just the hope of immortality is not enough to ensure that you’re going to spend eternity in the right place.

**Dr. Bob Pyne:** I think people want to believe in a life after death, but they want to believe in a life after death in which everything is democratic, in which we all have the same access, in which we all have basically the same opportunity, in which we all have equal rewards. It’s a pluralistic hope. It’s a hope that life afterward will be for everyone the same.

**Dr. Vernon Grounds:** In the reading and teaching I've done, especially in the field of psychotherapy, I've had to deal with this question. Take the founder of contemporary psychotherapy, Sigmund Freud, who was described by one of his very objective students as being death haunted, because he talked so much about death, and because he had a number of tragedies in his own life—the death of people who were very close and dear to him—and yet he ends thinking that nothing awaits us except extinction. Then along comes later a man like Ernest Becker, who is not fascinated or obsessed but who is also gripped by the reality of our human finitude: We're going to die. He explores the ways in which we as humans try to push out of our awareness the fact that, at any moment, we may be plunged, as they would say, out of existence into nonexistence. And yet, hoping against hope, that there is something except oblivion awaiting us.

**Dr. Dallas Willard:** Death is avoided in common discussions by human beings, because it is the ultimate failure. At death you face the fact: You are not God; you do not run the universe. Death is the ultimate vulnerability.

**J. P. Moreland:** The most important thing to keep in mind about the question of life after death is that believing something doesn't make it true. Believing that there's life after death doesn't make there be life after death. Disbelieving it doesn't make it unreal. The same is true with heaven and hell. There either is a heaven and hell, or there isn't. And just believing that there isn't a hell doesn't make it go away if it's real. So I think when people approach the question of life after death, we have to be very careful to try to find what the truth of this question really is.

It is in search of evidence for a reasoned belief in life after death that we explore ten converging lines of evidence, or reasons to believe in life after death.

While some people seem destined for happiness, others are born into terrible relationships and circumstances. If we knew there was nothing beyond the grave to compensate for problems of inequality and unfairness, it would be difficult to believe that life is worth living.

**Gerry E. Breshears:** When I study the history of philosophy, one of the things that intrigues me is Immanuel Kant, a very, very learned and intelligent man. Not a Christian in any sense of the word, but he believed there had to be life after death simply

because that's the only way you can live in a moral universe. This universe has so much injustice going on after it, that he posited, completely apart from Christianity, that there must be a life after death to make right the evils of this world. Otherwise this world couldn't exist the way it is and we couldn't live in it.

**Luis Palau:** Yes, I think there's a great argument for eternity, for justice after death, for a righteous judge that metes out justice as needed. Naturally the most common argument today is Hitler and many of his followers who were so cruel during World War II, and who were so unjust, so vicious, so evil, that there has to be a God who is a judge. And most people will say, "I hope there's a judge there, there has to be justice in the universe or else then there is no God."

**Dr. Bob Pyne:** If somebody doesn't believe in resurrection or even in any of the broader concepts of life after death, it may be that there's some desire there to avoid the implications of such a belief.

The fact is—any notion of life after death implies some concept of justice. And if this life is all there is, then there are less moral implications.

If we could be sure there was nothing beyond the grave to offset the injustices of life, many would have reason to curse the day of their birth. And so a first reason to believe in life after death is that the injustices of this life demand justice in the afterlife.