

Does Man Survive Death?

One of the most interesting questions that a philosopher is called on to examine is that of immortality. Do we survive our funeral? This question might be found in at least two places in a philosophy textbook. Because of the close connection of the afterlife with religious belief, it might be discussed in the Philosophy of Religion section. (However, we should note that there is a certain independence between belief in God and belief in immortality. Such openly atheistic philosophers as J. M. E. McTaggart and C. J. Ducasse both believe in immortality.) Or, because the whole question of immortality reduces quickly to a problem of the nature or constitution of man, it might be discussed in the section on Metaphysics. Is man the same person after death as before? What survives?

We will be focusing our attention almost exclusively on the metaphysical arguments for and against man's survival after death. We will first examine the most prominent arguments against immortality; then we will evaluate the arguments for immortality.

Arguments Against Immortality

In general, opponents of immortality have made an effort to show that the arguments for immortality are inadequate. The mortalists, as we may call them, have claimed that in the debate over immortality the burden of proof rests with the immortalists. Survival after death is not simply an "open question." There is, so they claim, an overwhelming presumption in favor of mortality, and this is operative in the first argument against immortality.

The Universality of Human Mortality

Exposition. The argument against immortality is an empirical one. Mortalists point out that it is a universal and indisputable fact that all men and women die. All our friends die; everyone we know will die, given sufficient passage of time. So certain is death that "all men are mortal" has become a truistic example in logic. Most people would find it contradictory indeed if, upon reading of an air crash, they were informed that a passenger had died and yet survived. Such a consequence seems logically impossible.

Criticisms. The argument from the universality of human mortality at best establishes only that the burden of proof rests with the defender of immortality. However, beyond that point the argument seems to miss the central claims of the immortalists. First, note that both mortalist and immortalist agree that if the normal course of events is followed, all humans will eventually die. The real issue is over the question of what follows death. The claim that there is universal human mortality really does not speak to this issue. The fact that "all men are mortal" is a truism does not in and of itself prove that humans do not survive their death. Or, put more strongly, the fact that all human lives terminate in this world has no logical connection to whether they continue in another world.

Perhaps one of the reasons philosophers use universal mortality as an argument against immortality is the ambiguity of the word *mortal*. “Mortal” may simply mean capable of death, as when we say, “I am a mere mortal, and cannot live forever.” On the other hand, the word can mean “final,” as in a “mortal blow” to an idea. But it begs the question to assume that the latter meaning is to be applied to death.

Second, even as an empirical or factual argument, the universality of human mortality is not a valid proof against immortality. Not all humans have died. Both Enoch (Gen. 5:24) and Elijah (II Kings 2:11) did not die. If death followed by annihilation were true, it would seem that no explanation could be given for these two clear counterexamples. Furthermore, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the central counterexample to the mortalist position. Christ survived death and returned to tell us about it. Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection is the guarantee or pledge that human beings like us will survive death (John 11:25 , 26 ; I Cor. 15:12–22). Biblical Christianity not only teaches that the dead survive but also that the living shall be translated into incorruptible bodies at Christ’s return (I Cor. 15:51–58).

The Analogy of Nature

Exposition. There are a number of arguments which have been used by mortalists against belief in immortality. These arguments are physical in nature and have come to be called arguments from the analogy of nature. A forceful statement of these arguments is to be found in Hume’s *On the Immortality of the Soul*. In this treatise Hume gives a number of forms of this argument.

First, explains Hume, when two objects are so closely connected that some change in one brings a proportionate change in the other, we ought to conclude that when the change is so great in the former that it is totally dissolved, there will be the total dissolution of the latter. The application should be clear. Our bodies and minds are related in this way. Changes in our bodies produce proportionate changes in our minds—small pains lead to minimal mental confusion while great pain leads to total mental collapse. The total dissolution of the body at death is accompanied by the total dissolution of the mind.

A second analogy from nature which Hume gives is drawn from the fact that no form in nature can survive if it is transferred from its original environment to a different environment. Trees cannot exist in water any more than fish can live in the air. As a matter of fact, a relatively slight change in our atmosphere would make life as we know it on this planet impossible. If the earth were a relatively small distance closer to the sun, all life would be burned from our planet. Since this is so, what reason is there to suppose that our soul or mind can survive such a radical change as the dissolution of our body?

The similarity in anatomy between animals and men constitutes a third analogy for Hume. From comparative anatomy we learn that animals resemble men. Is it not natural to assume that there is also a resemblance between the souls of animals and of humans? If so, then it would follow that either animals are immortal as well, a position generally unacceptable to immortalists, or both animals and human beings are not immortal.

The fourth and final analogy is found in the constant change in this world. Though the world may indeed appear to be stable, it is in constant flux. As a matter of fact, the world gives evidence of frailty and dissolution. Since this is so, Hume concludes that it is wrong to assume that one form of life, the single most fragile form at that, is immortal and indestructible.

Criticisms. The first analogy is grounded in the interrelatedness of body and soul, and the claim that a change in the one will bring about proportionate change in the other. This analogy assumes an interactionist view of the relationship of mind or soul to body, and an unusual form of the position at that. As we have seen (chap. 12), a good many philosophers would reject this solution to the mind-body problem. Moreover, this analogy presupposes that a change in either element or substance will bring about a *proportionate* change in the other. Modern physics has called into question such uniform relationships between cause and effect. Certain effects are greater than their cause, and vice versa.

Furthermore, and most importantly, Hume assumes that the proportionate response in the mind or soul to the dissolution of the body would be the corresponding dissolution of the soul. But why should this be? Is this a logical necessity? Is there empirical evidence in support of Hume's contention? To gain that kind of evidence one would have to experience death. Some would point to the findings of people like Raymond Moody and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross¹ as counterevidence. Moreover, the testimony and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the decisive answer to the claim of Hume.

The second analogy, that man's soul cannot survive an environmental change as trees cannot live in water and fishes cannot exist in the air, begs the question. Hume simply assumes what he must prove, that the soul of man is incapable of existence when the body is dissolved. Hume has no *empirical* evidence of what happens to a human being's soul after he dies, although such evidence is readily available for a submerged tree or a fish in air. Suppose that we only saw a frog when it was in the water. Observing that most animals are fit either for land or for water, we might conclude that frogs cannot exist both in the water and on the land. This, however, would in fact be false, and the only way we could know the life conditions of a frog would be through observation.

The third analogy, taken from comparative anatomy (what is true of animals will be true of human beings because they resemble one another in certain ways), is surely fallacious. Resemblance or similarity is *not* identity, and analogies are weak where there are great differences. As a matter of fact, the differences between human beings and animals cast grave doubt on Hume's analogy.

The fourth analogy is unconvincing as well. Because *some* or even *most* of what we observe about the world is in flux or change, that in no way proves the change or dissolution of *all*. One might maintain that the argument is not intended as a proof, but

¹ See Raymond A. Moody, Jr., *Life After Life* (New York: Bantam, 1976); and Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *Questions & Answers on Death & Dying* (New York: Macmillan, 1974).

only shows what is more probable or what the rational person will believe. This claim might seem plausible at first, but in the end must be rejected. The concept of change has undergone radical revision since Hume's day. Change was once viewed as decay and dissolution, but this is not the case in modern science. Matter itself is now thought to be indestructible; at best one can transform matter into energy. Thus, this last of Hume's analogies is false in light of the modern understanding of matter and change.

The Body-Mind Dependence Argument

Exposition. The most popular and impressive of the arguments against immortality is the "body-mind dependence argument." Those who advance this view claim that it has received powerful confirmation from modern brain research. Simply put the argument is as follows. The activity of the mind is dependent upon the body. We know that the brain is not immortal, ceasing to function at death. Further, all evidence points to the fact that our mental life is bound up with our brain structure and bodily energy. It is rational to conclude, then, that mental activity ceases with the cessation of bodily life, in particular the life of the brain. Bertrand Russell admitted that the argument is only one of probability, but it is as certain as most scientific conclusions.

Criticisms. Two things need to be said of this argument. First, it is true that in our present existence the functioning of our minds is somehow dependent on our bodies. We can all recall instances where we were unable to think well because of the state of our physical bodies. When we have the flu, we find ourselves below par not only physically, but also mentally. Second, the body-mind dependence of our present existence proves nothing about the conditions of a future existence. To conclude anything we would have to observe that future life. It could be that the conditions of that existence are quite different from those of this present life.

Immortality

We are now ready to examine the evidence that is given in support of immortality. We shall first discuss the kinds of immortality doctrines, and then examine the arguments for immortality.

Kinds of Immortality Doctrines

Immortality, or survival after death, has been viewed in at least three ways: the immortal-soul doctrine; the reconstruction doctrine; and the shadow-man or minimal-person doctrine. Each of these is an attempt to describe how a man might survive his funeral.

The immortal-soul doctrine. The immortal-soul doctrine is at least as old as Plato, and is clearly set forth by him. He believed that human beings are essentially *composite beings*. We are more than simply bodies. We are something else, something which is different in kind—an incorporeal soul. Plato held that for the duration of a life the soul was

imprisoned in the body. The soul was nevertheless a substance, and as such was capable of survival independent of anything else.

Another crucial point of Plato's doctrine is that the soul is the real, true, or essential person. One's body is changing and decaying. The soul, on the other hand, is the real person. Thus, since it is the soul that survives death, the real person is immortal. *We* can be said to survive our funeral.

The reconstruction doctrine. In its purest form the reconstruction doctrine is simple and clear. It is the view that after death our body will be resurrected and our person reconstructed. There are some important differences between the immortal-soul doctrine and the reconstruction doctrine. The immortal-soul doctrine holds that the real person escapes intact at death. But, the reconstruction doctrine maintains that to have a genuinely human and personal existence we must have a body. We must have human corporeal form to be a genuine person. This body is resurrected or reconstituted after death by an act of omnipotence. God calls us back into existence, and we become an immortal person.

The shadow-man or minimal-person doctrine. The shadow-man or minimal-person doctrine is an attempt to capture the best elements of the two former positions. It is interesting that this view closely approximates the understanding of orthodox Christianity. Tertullian, one of the church fathers, defends a position similar to this in *De Anima*. The theologian and philosopher Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274) defends a version of this position at length in the "Treatise of the Resurrection" in his *Summa Theologica*. And most recently a version of this doctrine has been forcefully defended by Paul Helm.

This position claims that the real person is a shadow-man or minimal-person which is sufficiently human and corporeal that the perennial problems of identification (Do we really survive?) and individuation (Can we distinguish ourselves from others after death?) can be overcome. At the same time the shadow-man or minimal-person is also sufficiently incorporeal and immaterial that it has no difficulty in escaping unharmed from the ordinary earthly body when it is buried.

Evaluation. Before turning to an examination of the arguments which immortalists have given in defense of their position, it may be well to limit the field of doctrines to which the arguments will have application. We shall defend the shadow-man or minimal-person doctrine, but discuss arguments offered in support of the immortal-soul doctrine since it has played such a central role historically in philosophical discussions of immortality. Thus, we will critique the reconstruction doctrine here.

The reconstruction doctrine seems problematic on two grounds. First, there is the problem of identification. How can we know that the resurrected or reconstituted persons are identical with the original persons? How is it possible to guarantee that the reconstituted person is not a mere replica or a brilliant forgery? Two responses have generally been offered. It might be argued that God will infallibly ensure that the torments of hell and pleasures of heaven are granted to the right people. It might also be

claimed the person himself cannot fail to know whether he is the original or a brilliant forgery. Opponents of the reconstruction doctrine reply that appeals to the cognitive and executive abilities of omnipotence or the supposed privileged status of the person in question are inadequate. The crux issue is the *possibility of* honest error. In spite of all our efforts we cannot be absolutely sure that the reconstructed person is the person he claims to be. But could God be involved in a case of mistaken identity? Granted, sheer omnipotence will not prevent the possibility of error, but God is more than mere omnipotence. He is also omniscient and truthful, and so these problems could not arise.

Second, a resurrection or reconstitution doctrine demands one of two possibilities at the death of the person. The person may cease to exist (be annihilated) until the last day, being reconstituted at that time to enjoy either the blessings of heaven or the torments of hell. Such a position seems to be precluded by what the Bible says about the present state of those who have died (Luke 16:19–31 ; II Cor. 5:8 ; Phil. 1:23). They are *now* either with the blessed or separated from God. Or, one might avoid these difficulties by claiming that immediately after death the individual receives a resurrection or reconstituted body. One thus avoids the problem of temporary non-existence or annihilation, but in the process creates another difficulty. The passages in the New Testament that speak of resurrection do so in terms of groups, and eschatologically (i.e., “on the last day”) rather than individually and periodically (Dan. 12:1 , 2 : 1 Thess. 4:13–18 ; Rev. 20:1–10). For these reasons, Christians reject the pure reconstruction doctrine.

Arguments for Immortality

The philosophical arguments for immortality go back at least to the time of Plato and Aristotle.

The argument from the simplicity of the soul. In one of Plato’s Dialogues, the *Phaedo*, Cebes, one of the leading characters, is concerned that at one’s death the soul disperses or decomposes. Socrates argues that this is not the case.

Socrates begins by declaring that only certain *sorts* of things can decompose or come apart. Here he distinguishes between things that are composite and things that are simple, or uncomposed. The composite things are always changing; they are never constant. On the other hand, things that are simple or uncomposed are, most probably, constant and unchanging. If, then, the soul is of this latter group, then it is probable that the soul does not change or come apart. This argument rests on two important assumptions. First, things which are simple are unchanging. And, second, the soul is simple.

The argument from the analogy with forms or ideas. This second argument is Platonic in origin, and closely related to the previous argument. This argument presupposes Plato’s general theory of Forms or Ideas. Plato taught that for every significant word, such as “justice,” “goodness,” “triangle,” or “man,” there is a corresponding, abstract Idea or Form. These Forms are eternal, unchanging entities, intelligible to the intellect in the same way that material objects are sensible to our senses. These Ideas stand for general

classes of things, and the particular instances of these Ideas (one just action, one good deed, one triangle, or one man) “participate in their appropriate Form.”

Plato uses this general theory in two ways to show that the soul is immortal. First, the soul is the faculty of the body that *knows*. The Forms are the real objects of knowledge. Moreover, all genuine knowledge is certain, and certainty is a property only of that which is unchanging. Since the Ideas (the things known) are eternal and unchanging, then the soul (the knower) must resemble the Ideas, and be eternal and unchanging.

Second, the soul is the principle of life, and is therefore equated with the Form of life. Life is incompatible with death, as is equality with inequality or justice with injustice. No principle admits of its opposite. Life cannot be overcome by death. Hence, Plato concludes that since the soul, as the Idea of life, is deathless and eternal, so our immortal part is not destroyed by death and will exist somewhere in another world.

The argument from reminiscence. This argument too is from Plato, who presented two quite different forms of the argument, though the conclusion is the same. In the first form of the argument Plato begins from the premise that we have some knowledge of a priori truths which we have not acquired in this life. An example of this kind of knowledge is the conclusion of the Pythagorean theorem (Meno 81-86B). The other form of the argument begins with the premise that we all possess certain ideal concepts such as perfect equality or perfect justice. These concepts cannot have been gotten from our present experience, since neither of them is fully instantiated or embodied in this life (Phaedo 73A–77A). Plato concludes that we must have been acquainted with these truths at some time in the past, prior to the embodiment of the soul. The soul inhabited the realm of the Forms. Thus Plato argues that the soul not only outlives this body, but preexisted it.

Christians reject this argument because it entails the belief in the pre-existence of the soul, a belief which finds no support in Scripture and is contrary to the Christian doctrine of the origin of the soul.

The argument from rationality. This argument is not found explicitly in the writings of Plato, but the central ideas of the argument are there. In the *Phaedo* Socrates distinguishes between the physiological explanations for human activity and the motives which an agent has for behaving in the way he does. There is, so it is argued, no necessary connection between the concepts of physiology and a man’s motives for his behavior (see p. 204).

This thesis is developed into a formal argument by the contemporary apologist C. S. Lewis. Lewis argues that rationality is more than nature (i.e., it is supernatural). Rationality cannot have arisen from purely material causes. Because of the supernatural nature of rationality, the bodily occurrences associated with rational behavior cannot be wholly explained by the natural sciences.

Objections to Arguments for Immortality

Within the Platonic dialogues themselves are criticisms of the arguments for immortality. For instance, after the argument for immortality from the simplicity of the soul is given, Cebes challenges the thesis that simplicity implies eternity. He asks why we should not view the relationship of the soul to body like that of a weaver to his coats. The weaver may make many coats and outlast them. But why is it not possible that the weaver is outlived by the *last coat*? The soul is long lasting but not eternal, according to this analogy.

Strato, another figure in the *Phaedo*, attacks the argument from simplicity more directly. He asks why the soul may not simply cease to exist. It is true that the soul cannot undergo change in its parts (it has none), but that does not preclude the possibility that someday it will wear itself out and perish.

It is not our purpose to give an exhaustive exposition of the criticism in Plato's writings. It should be clear that some of the arguments depend heavily upon Plato's theory of Forms (abstract or general terms). Others demand acceptance of views that are contrary to biblical teaching (such as the preexistence of the soul). Still another rests heavily on the thesis that the knower must resemble the thing known. Rather, we want to examine objections of a much more serious kind. The criticisms which follow claim for the most part that there is an *in principle* or *inherent* impossibility in the contention that we can survive our own death.

The problem of identification. We have discussed a version of this criticism earlier, in connection with the reconstitution doctrine. The objection, simply put, is that even if we were able to survive death, we could never be sure that what survived was *us*. Even if we grant that the soul is the "real" us and that the soul survived death, we could never preclude the possibility that what survived was a person uncannily similar to us.

We might answer the anti-immortalist that memory might serve to verify that we were the same person as the pre-mortem individual. If we remembered experiences about ourselves which happened prior to death, then there might be justification for claiming that we are the same person. This would be particularly true if the experiences that we had after death could in some way be related to those before death.

In response to this, opponents of immortality argue that memory is fallible, and we could be deceived. There are three appropriate replies. First, just because our memory is fallible does not mean that all instances of remembering are false. The fallibility of our memories only shows that we *could* be wrong, not that we *are* wrong. As mentioned above, if the experiences before and after death are related, there would be the strong probability that our memory was reliable. For example, suppose that the experiences are stages in some thought process such as telling a story or participating in a discussion. In such a case there would be strong *prima facie* evidence that these stages were the product of a single intelligence.

Second, the fallibility of memory is only a decisive argument against immortality if personal identity is defined in terms of memory. But to do so is to confuse a metaphysical and an epistemological question. Memory is necessary for us to *know* ourselves after death; this is an epistemological question. But even if memory fails and we do not *know* that we have survived death, it does not follow that we do not *in fact* survive death; this is a metaphysical issue.

Third, in the last analysis we can indeed depend upon God's memory to guarantee the correctness of the re-identification of each person. Since He is omniscient and totally truthful, we need not be concerned about the fallibilities of memories.

The problem of individuation. One of the central contentions of the immortalist is that survival is *personal*. It would not be enough if at death we were absorbed into some world soul, and lived on endlessly in a non-personal existence. We must live on *personally*. This idea of personal existence demands the ability to individuate or distinguish persons. The mortalists claim that our present principle of individuation is a body. If we are told to find out how many people are in the philosophy class, then we count bodies. If, however, we are told by a number of people that they will be at an event in spirit, we have no way of counting the spirits present!

This problem seems to have a direct and simple reply. It is true that our present principle of individuating persons is by way of bodies. But this fact does not prove that it is the *only* way of distinguishing persons. All the argument establishes is that in the post-mortem state prior to the resurrection there would have to be a different principle of individuation.

Moreover, it is helpful to note that the problem is not peculiar to human survival after death. For in Christian theology there is the belief in a whole host of spirit beings other than God: angels, demons, and Satan. Thus, if they can exist as individual spirits, then there is no reason that men cannot also do so.

The problem of rationality. This objection is directed specifically at the argument from rationality (there is such a radical difference between the physical conditions of human behavior and the motives men ascribe to their behavior that we must be dealing with different things—a physical body and an incorporeal or immaterial soul). Opponents of immortality offer two criticisms of this argument. First, they argue that even if the physiological conditions of human behavior are so diverse from the motives for that behavior, we do not have any grounds for saying that they are *not* logically related. Possibly, as we come to know more about each area, we will also find that there is a definite relationship between the two, and that one might even be reduced to the other. Second, even if we grant the argument from rationality, that does not prove that the difference between the physical and the rational is something immaterial or incorporeal and could therefore survive the dissolution of the body.

We should not, however, allow the mortalist off the hook too easily. While we do have a great deal to learn about physical behavior and the mind, there have been numerous attempts to reduce the mental to the physical, and *all* have failed. While it is always *logically possible* that a reduction could be carried out, there are good reasons for thinking that it is *empirically impossible* and in fact will never be accomplished (see our discussion of the mind-body problem in chap. 12). Furthermore, while it is true that the “something more” than the physical does not have to be mental or incorporeal, there are good reasons for thinking it is (again, see chap. 12).

The problem of the intelligibility of “surviving one’s death.” One of the common contemporary criticisms of immortality by mortalists is that the phrase “surviving one’s death” has no meaning at all. We are familiar with the words and thus think we know what is being said, but upon analysis that phrase is shown to be without any meaning.

The reasons behind this claim are twofold. First, a condition of surviving one’s death is the ability to have experiences that are at least successive if not continuous before and after death. That is, we must have some pre- and post-mortem experiences that are related to one another in such a way that they will constitute some evidence that we are dealing with the *same* person. But, so it is argued, this is impossible, because a logically necessary condition of experience is that we have sense organs. And sense organs are just the things that are possessed by someone with a body. It is argued that if we lack a body we are without sense experience. Therefore, the claim to have survived our death is unintelligible.

Second, it is said that our language about persons is language about an object that can be *met*, that we can encounter in experience. Person language then is body language. Some defenders of immortality deny corporeal existence, and thus the use of person language about postmortem experience is incoherent or unintelligible.

A number of philosophers, a prominent one being H. H. Price, have disagreed. We can conceive of non-corporeal experience. Except for materialist views of man, philosophers grant that even in his embodied, present state man has non-corporeal experience—thinking, willing, imagining. Because of the present interrelationship of the mind and the body, the body has a part in these activities, but there is reason to believe from the nature of the experience that thinking, understanding, and other mental activities could be carried on in a disembodied state. For instance, Plato would have argued that thinking could be better pursued without the encumbrance of a body. There is no reason to claim that all experience in a disembodied state is impossible, which is the claim of the mortalist.

It is also pure assumption on the part of the mortalist that we will not be able to meet the person after death. (The Christian holds that once the resurrection takes place we will have bodies, and can be met.) But even in the disembodied state there is reason to think that individuals can be met.

Throughout Scripture spirit beings confronted and were met by men. On some occasions heavenly beings appeared to human beings and were recognized as angels (Matt. 1 ; Luke 1 , 2). Thus it is false to deny that spirit beings can be met.

The problem of the intelligibility of “the next world.” The final criticism of mortalists has to do with what we mean by “the next world.” Defenders of immortality speak of “here” and “the hereafter.” What is meant by this? *Where* is the next world, strictly speaking? The critic says that if we cannot answer that question, then our claim that men arrive in the next world after death is nonsense.

The *exact* answer to this question cannot be given, however. *That* there is an afterlife and *that* it bears some resemblance to this life is abundantly clear from Scripture. The exact nature of that existence is not totally spelled out for us. For instance, even though we are given glimpses of what that life is like (Rev. 21 , 22), Bible-believing Christians do not all agree how those glimpses should be understood. Is the description literal or is it figurative language about a real place? Is heaven a material place “up there”? One cannot answer these questions with certainty, but let us again emphasize what is clear and certain for the Christian: an afterlife *really* does exist. It is not the figment of anyone’s imagination.

Moreover, from a purely philosophical perspective there is reason to think that there is space other than physical space. For instance, think now of a tiger in a cage. The tiger and the cage are spatially related, but how far is the tiger from your desk? You cannot answer that question, for the tiger is in perceptual space, not physical space. There is no *logical* reason for denying that the afterlife is in a non-physical space, although it could well be in physical space.

Conclusion

It is our judgment that there is, on purely philosophical grounds, no decisive reason for rejecting immortality. There is, in fact, positive evidence that we do survive our own death.

For the Christian the question of an afterlife is decisively answered by Jesus Christ. As God’s Son, He knows whether there is life after death. As one who has passed through death to life. He is uniquely qualified to answer the question of immortality. He clearly affirms that there is life after death (Luke 16 ; John 11).

At death there remains what Paul Helm calls a minimal person and what Peter Geach calls a surviving mental remnant of a full person. This minimal person no longer has a body but remembers things about his past, including the embodied state. The minimal person has thoughts about his rememberings, and is able to reason (see Luke 16). Nothing requiring a body is possible at this time, however. At the resurrection the minimal person is reunited with his resurrection body, and then lives on eternally in a re-embodied existence.

Suggested Readings

Geach, P. *God and the Soul*

Helm, P. "A Theory of Disembodied Survival and Re-embodied Existence," *Religious Studies* 14 (March 1978): 15–26.

Hume, David. "Of the Immortality of the Soul"

Penellum, T. *Survival and Disembodied Existence*

Plato *Phaedo*¹

¹Geisler, N. L., Feinberg, P. D., & Feinberg, P. D. (1980). *Introduction to philosophy : A Christian perspective* (Page 207). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House.