

## **Tasting Heaven**

What do I know about purgatory, heaven and hell? probably no more than you do; and what is known is more from real-life experience than from top-down indoctrination. If I read the last two popes correctly, there is something to learn that is different from traditional indoctrination. John Paul II famously said “heaven is not a place” (after life). Benedict XVI says “purgatory is not a place” (after life). And in effect they are saying, “hell is not a place” (after life); the consternation of trial, the bliss of happiness, and the torture of misery are all states of consciousness, psychical dispositions having personal/ social consequences. Experience tells us that psychical dispositions of trial, bliss and misery have existed in the past, exist in the present and surely will continue into the future.

These are common experiences of consciousness in evolutionary change. They are about fitness and survival, the process of evolution. They speak to us how the fit survive and how survivors become more fit. The processes of fitness and survival are a perpetual testing called purgatory. The successful gaining of happiness is called heaven; and the failed gaining of happiness and the depression of misery is hell. These dispositions of consciousness have everything to do with the personal/ social experience/ success/ failure in the perpetual here-and-now.

Intuitional consciousness is a sounding board of divine/ human dialogue. In this life we can't know what memory contribution we make to intuitional consciousness. Beyond the present life, it isn't for us to know personally our psychical state. The gain of personal intuition is a gain for social consciousness; the frustration of personal intuition is a social frustration all experience/ share. Consciousness and conscience call us to move beyond frustration. Happiness is the experience of overcome frustration. Ascendancy into deeper experiences of happiness is the sweet taste of heaven; the frustration of wellbeing is misery. Life is a purgatory, bouncing back and forth between experiences of elation and desperation. Heaven is ultimate entry into Divinity Consciousness, the Godhead experience of happiness all might experience. [www.divinicom.com](http://www.divinicom.com), <http://ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic/debunking-myth-hell>

## **Fundamentalism's "Left Behind" Fixation**

Our times are flavored with the apocalyptic novelty of a spate of “Left Behind” books and the G W Bush Administration's “No-Child-Left-Behind” teaching agendum. The joined apocalyptic obsessions of the Christian Religious Right and the Republican Party have created a political reality that leaves everyone behind. The report card on education is in: it is failing critical thinking. Education and indoctrination are not the same things, one challenges intelligence while the other dumbs down intelligence by imposing on people faith expectations of authoritarian religion/ government.

<http://globaldebateblog.blogspot.com/2011/01/usa-students-fail-to-learn-critical.html>

The fear of Apocalypse in early Christianity focused people on what they considered was the imminent Second Coming of Jesus and the end of time. This faith fixation was a problem for Paul of Tarsus because the people stopped doing their normal work-a-day activities, thinking life on Earth would soon be ending, so why bother. Repeatedly Paul insisted the people get back to work so life could go on. Focus

on Second Coming as the signal event of end-time lives on in Christianity and remains a definitive aspect of Christian belief today. And there are fundamentalists who now see end-time, Second Coming, just around the corner.

A wisdom-current of rationality called Gnosticism was present in early Christianity but was suppressed after Bishop Irenaeus and fellow bishops took exception (contra haereses) to the proliferation of Christian writings (the Apocrypha). The bishops gave themselves the liberty of determining what writings would be included in the canon of scriptures. Gnostic scriptures were excluded. Nevertheless, such concepts as Trinity Godhead include elements of Gnostic wisdom, e.g., Trimorphic Protennoia.  
www.divinicom.com

In our times the decline of critical thinking seems to be in direct proportion to the rise of the Religious Right. The convergence of “Left-Behind” theology, Rightist Republican politics and failure of critical thinking are more than coincidental — they are of a piece. What they don't appreciate is that education isn't about indoctrination; it's about critical thinking, updating collective wisdom, anticipating and providing for the common good. Failed critical thinking is a problem in public schools as much as in church schools. Christian evangelism is weighted toward faith indoctrination from its beginnings. When society fails in critical thinking it fails people, culture, common wellbeing and religion.

Failure of critical thinking has personal and social consequences. Non-critical thinking is culturally integrated when people uncritically accept the fideistic doctrine of institutions, i.e., old beliefs handed down through hierarchical succession. In cultic faith practice the same presumptions that first shaped doctrine in early times are presumed to apply for all time. The 2000-year-old presumptions of faith that worked in earlier times are presumed to work for all times, as if nothing changes; evolutionary experience to the contrary, exposes the lie of fixated cultic presumption.

Critical thinking deals with ongoing acquisitions of knowledge, and the application of knowledge to belief and behavior. The expansion of knowledge calls for adjustments to once workable belief, and requires changes of belief and behavior premised in false presumptions. Worldview determines dogma; dogma determines faith expectation. A foundationally changed worldview requires adjustment of faith and dogma. Uncritical belief in the static-centrist worldview, for example, is without credibility in light of evolving worldview understandings of nature. Modern day crises require critical thinking as never before, as well as movement from cultic faith fixation to informed faith evolution; at issue are the viability of natural ecologies and human survival.

<http://www.gather.com/viewArticle.action?articleId=281474979046910>

### **A Believer's Prayer**

Oh God, we thank you for the gift of life. All that we are, all that we have are a continuous inheritance of evolving life. Give us to anticipate life to-come as our parents, grandparents and all symbiotic ancestry have anticipated ours.

The cosmic soul of intuitional stirring deep within calls us to appreciate the wisdom graces of divinity passed down in parenthood, in Trinitarian community. Enlighten our vision with divinity consciousness so that in all we do we honor nature's graciousness attending the symbiotic codes of Sacred Memory (Sacrament).

As affirmative agents in the purgatory of life, give us the sanity to sense the wisdom of common inheritance, the vision to catch the intuition of the moment, and the judgment to respond authentically to love's call, moment by moment.

In our deliberations give us to recognize that in our choices we add to or detract from the treasury of conscious life; give us to suffer courageously life's daily purgatory, and to choose the bliss of common wisdom over the miseries of self-preference.

Purgatory is opportunity; heaven is bliss; and hell is the misery of alienation. Give us grace to endure faithfully; insight to catch the grace of the moment; and judgment to choose communal wellbeing over alienation. Give us the intuitional grace to swell the graciousness of nature, not the willfulness of wasting her. This we ask in the name of Jesus, the Cosmic Christ. Amen.