

D. Some human beings experience ultimate concern over the question of what death is, and what lies beyond it

In the last twenty years a number of books have appeared describing what are called "near-death experiences." These books attempt to tell us what death is like, and what people experience following death. Unfortunately, they do not really tell us about death, since these people have not really died. Rather, these books tell us about what people have experienced who have been on the very edge of this side of death and who have returned to tell us something about it. None of these people have actually died and then come back to tell us about it!

What is the experience of death really like? What lies beyond it? Does anyone really know?

Thus far we have looked at some ultimate concerns about the future that many people experience, including concern over what they perceive to be the basic needs of life; concern over the question of the purpose, meaning, and significance of life; concern over the uncertainty, contingency, and finiteness of life; and concern over the question of what death is, and what lies beyond it.

Now let us consider the second major question:

II. WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO THESE ULTIMATE CONCERNS ABOUT THE FUTURE?

What sorts of responses should we make to these anxious cares that some people have over things that crucially affect their future welfare and well-being? Perhaps we should ask, What sorts of responses can we make to these ultimate concerns about the future? After all, since these