

Eleven Questions that challenge the integrity and truth of Straight To Heaven Theology.

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth. Anything espoused by a preacher of part truth and part lies is questionable. That is the root of the problem. It is the reason that modern churches are dead and without power with God. They are not based on the Holy Spirit but a mixture of part truth and part tradition. If you support flawed traditions, then it is mandatory that you answer the following questions.

1. If the person goes straight to heaven when he dies, then is the "Book Of Life" mandatory as an entrance requirement to heaven? The scriptures state in Rev. 21 that the book of life is open and the dead, BOTH LOST AND SAVED, are disposed to either heaven or earth depending upon whether their name is found written in the "Book Of Life." If a person goes straight to heaven when he dies then this theology is throwing away the importance of the "Book Of Life" which is opened in the end of the world judgment.
2. If a person goes straight to heaven when he dies, then why is the judgment of lost or saved necessary in order to determine who goes to heaven? The only description found in the bible pertaining to judgment is the end of world judgment. Going straight to heaven negates the necessity of a judgment as an entry requirement to heaven.
3. If people go straight to heaven when they die, then why is David not in heaven? This is NOT AN OPINION but is a direct statement made by Peter in Acts chapter 2 verses 29 through 34 with Peter making a DIRECT STATEMENT in verse 34 that David "is not ascended into heaven."
4. If you quote Paul in saying that to absent is to be present with the Lord, then where does it show in this verse that this statement applies to ANYONE other than Paul? It is an UNDEFINED STATEMENT.
5. Why would Paul in one verse say that a person goes straight to heaven when he dies yet in another verse contradict himself because Paul in I Thessalonians 4 verse 15 refers to "*them which are asleep*". If the souls were living in heaven how could they be asleep?
6. How can you resurrect someone who is not dead? The very definition of resurrection is to bring the dead back to life yet straight to heaven theology has the dead living in heaven.
7. Straight to heaven theology contradicts the concept of a resurrection from the earth. How can you resurrect someone from the earth if they are living in Heaven? There is a physical difference in location of the person.
8. How can you raise the dead if a description of souls being brought back to earth by Jesus in the resurrection were true? That would mandate that the souls would be lowered.
9. MOST IMPORTANTLY, what is left in the grave to be resurrected if a person is living in heaven? The scriptures state that the resurrected person will have a new spiritual body. A multitude of scriptures state that nothing unclean can enter heaven and that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. VERY IMPORTANT in this issue that in the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith the wrong conclusion was made and put into the articles of faith maintaining that the selfsame body will come from the ground. This is absolutely false. Not only that BUT the current 19 articles of faith taught in the Kentucky seminary outright state that the BODY comes from the ground, being nothing more than a restatement that the selfsame body comes from the ground. VERY CLEAR in multiple places in the bible it is stated that FLESH AND BLOOD CAN NOT inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.
10. Why does the bible outright state that the dead know nothing if it be true that the dead are living in heaven? Eccl. 9:5 "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing."
11. If a person is already living in heaven, then why would a resurrection or judgment be necessary?

The following are more detailed discussions about the previous topic. There are many more examples in the bible which contradict the straight to heaven theology. It only takes ONE contradiction to render a theological premise not valid.

As nearly as I can tell, three verses are taken from the bible and supposedly prove the straight to heaven theology. One verse is Eccl. Chapter 12 verse 7 which simply states that when a person (EVERY PERSON) dies the spirit returns to the creator at death. This is the BREATH OF LIFE, NOT THE SOUL! This verse has been provably misapplied because it is uses the word spirit as a claim that it is the soul that goes straight to heaven. That misapplication is proven by scriptures later in this discussion which categorically show that the spirit and soul are NOT the same thing. The scriptures include BOTH soul AND spirit in the same verse in several locations in the Bible.

The other verse uses the misapplication "to be absent is to be present" as a proof text which is a direct contradiction even to Paul's own writings in 1st Cor. 22-26 where he states that the dead will all be made alive after the coming of Christ. Contrary to these verses, the straight to heaven theology has the dead LIVING in heaven.

Another verse is quoted to maintain that Christ will bring the dead back to earth BUT that contradicts every description of the resurrection which has the dead being RAISED.

Specific scriptural contradictions to straight to heaven theology are as follow:

Ecl. 9:5 For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing

Exactly how can someone who is living in heaven know not any thing? Straight to heaven theology directly contradicts the above verse. Straight to heaven theology is a "pick and choose" theology deliberately leaving out the contradictory scriptures which are many. How is it that this above verse isn't relevant since it contradicts the picture of someone already living in heaven? Surely if they were living in heaven they would know something.

Acts chapter 2 verse 29:

Men and Brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

Continue to verse 34 for a **DIRECT STATEMENT** that **DAVID IS NOT ASCENDED TO HEAVEN**. If you don't accept this statement, then what is the purpose of preaching the bible at all. Man made doctrines and humanized religion will die with the person who conceives them. If David isn't in heaven, then how can anyone justify that mom or dad or friend are greater than David and thus are already in heaven? This scripture was written **AFTER** Jesus had ascended to heaven, therefore not subject to being relegated falsely back to the period of under the law.

**34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand
35 Until I make they foes thy footstool.**

If after reading verse 34 someone still maintains that the dead are already in heaven, then I don't see how there is any hope for truth to be recognized. And who has **MORE** authority, Peter who was **WITH** Jesus or Paul who only had an encounter and was temporarily blinded? If I remember correctly, the next time Jesus was to come back to earth was for the resurrection. So how could Paul have had a personal and physical encounter with Jesus, per this scripture? Exactly what was the definitive source of Paul's statements, the Jewish background he had or directly from Jesus as was the source for Peter? It seems more likely that Paul was speaking of his personal desire and desire doesn't equate to reality. Just to this point there are already more scriptures with direct statements contradicting the straight to heaven theology than the one verse that has been twisted out of context as a proof text. A person has a choice to make. You can either say that the verse taken from Paul's writings is misapplied or you would have to say that the scriptures contradict themselves. Obviously the only choice is that Paul's statement has been misapplied because the scriptures do not contradict themselves.

Consider the description of Jesus' death on the cross that many who were in their graves arose. The bible **DOES NOT SAY** that many came **BACK FROM HEAVEN** but says that they **AROSE** from their graves. How can you read between the lines and conclude something that isn't there? If the souls were in heaven, then I believe the bible would have **SAID** so.

Consider that when Jesus went into the tomb and resurrected Lazarus he **DID NOT** go to heaven and **GET** Lazarus but resurrected him from the grave. He also said that "Lazarus Sleepeth" and when his disciples said that if he is asleep he does well. Then Jesus plainly said **HE IS DEAD**. Then he went into the tomb and resurrected Lazarus to show the people that he was the resurrection and the life.

One **IMPORTANT FACT** is that the book of Revelation teaches that the **Book Of Life** is opened and those whose names are not found in the book of life are sent to the lake of fire. **IF** people are **ALREADY LIVING** in heaven this completely negates the need for the book of life. It invalidates it. **IF** the book of life is the determining factor for heaven or hell **AS STATED IN REVELATION**, then straight to heaven theology completely throws that scripture away. By what authority does anyone deliberately leave out the book of life and claim it has no relevance? Certainly **NOT** by the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The straight to heaven theology is a direct contradiction to the scriptures in Revelations. I know one thing for certain, that a lot of people who thought they were doing God a favor by blindly teaching tradition from misapplied scripture will come before God in judgment for it. I'm not a minister and I'm not teaching either doctrine. Were I teaching a class I would present both viewpoints and let the listener decide for himself which to believe. That puts the burden directly on the person.

When people take the verse from Paul's writings that to be absent is to be present they throw away and directly contradict **ALL** of these other scriptures that are consistent throughout the bible from Genesis to Revelation. I have heard preachers preach a funeral with the dead person in heaven, not having knowledge of whether the person was saved or not, and **THEN** contradict their own statement by talking about the resurrection. And they weren't even aware of the contradiction. If they are **ALREADY** living in heaven, **HOW** can you resurrect someone who is **NOT DEAD**? They have the person both **ALIVE** and **DEAD** which is also a contradiction. You **CANNOT** resurrect a **LIVING PERSON** because that contradicts the very meaning of resurrection.

Another source of the straight to heaven theology is the twisting of the scripture to claim that the spirit and soul are one and the same. To anyone with common sense, since in Genesis man was formed from the dust of the earth, the breath of life was breathed

into him and he became a living soul, then it is a natural reversal of the process that when the breath of life departs FROM the person he no longer is a living soul and the body returns to the dust of the earth from which it is formed. The misapplied scripture has simply stated that the "spirit" departs from the person and returns to the creator, being the SAME THING in this context as the breath of life described in Genesis. Proof texts that this spirit is the "breath of life" are below. Specifically James Chapter 2 says that the body WITHOUT the spirit is dead. The body WITHOUT the breath of life is dead, is the alternate wording based on the Genesis discussion about the creation of man. And the next verse below it is categorical proof that spirit and soul and body are THREE different things, thereby invalidating the false claim that the spirit which returns to the creator at death is the soul. This is proof that they ARE NOT THE SAME THING. And the next two verses prove again that the body and soul are NOT the same thing. You have a minimum of three scriptures which outright state that spirit and soul are not the same.

James chapter 2 verse 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

I Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew chapter 10 verse 28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Hebrews chapter 4 verse 12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Ecl chapter 8 verse 8 There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

Ecl chapter 12 verse 7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. (This spirit is the breath of life and this is the often misapplied scripture.)

The following scriptures prove that the souls of those in the graves are raised. While reading this consider that the "spirit" a.k.a. breath of life has returned to God, the body will be replaced by a new body, clearly NOT the old selfsame body. Therefore ONLY the soul in the grave is available to be resurrected.

Refer to John chapter 5 verse 28 and 29. In verse 28 Jesus says "*Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,*" and 29 "*and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*" If you say that the soul has gone straight to heaven at death, then you are contradicting Jesus because he says in these two verses that he is going to resurrect all from the graves. How can Jesus resurrect them from the graves if they are in heaven or in the eternal hell of Revelations 20 verse 15?

How can the viewpoint be supported that the soul is in heaven and then brought back to earth when every description of the resurrection is a contradiction to that view because "the dead are raised". For example, *I Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 16 states that "the dead in Christ shall rise first"*. If they were being brought back from heaven, the statement would have to be that the dead are lowered. The statement is that they "rise" and is not that they are "lowered".

How can you resurrect a living person? According to Webster's dictionary, the word resurrect means "to restore to life;" If the person is already living in heaven, then how can you resurrect one who is not dead? The concept of a person going directly to heaven is in direct contradiction to the concept of a general resurrection. You can't have it both ways. You cannot resurrect a person twice. Even I Thessalonians chapter 4 verses 16 and 17 describe a general resurrection. Likewise, Revelations chapter 20 verse 13 describes a general resurrection.

Why did Christ refer to death as a state of "sleep"? He did so in John chapter 11 verses 11 through 15. In verse 11 he said "*Lazarus sleepeth*" and later in verse 14 he plainly said "*Lazarus is dead*". In at least fifty reference verses in the Holy Bible death is referred to as "sleep". If the soul goes directly to heaven and the person is living in heaven, then how can that in any way resemble a state of sleep? By the same logic, if the soul of Lazarus was in heaven, then why did Jesus not say that he is in heaven but I'm bringing him back to earth to put him in a body? Furthermore, why would Lazarus want to leave heaven to come back to an inferior earthly life? Even Paul in I Thessalonians 4 verse 15 refers to "*them which are asleep*". If the souls were living in heaven how could they be asleep?

To say that the soul goes straight to heaven upon death is a contradiction of the time table outlined by Christ in John chapter 6 verse 40. In this verse Christ says "that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day". How can the soul go straight to heaven, but Christ himself says that he will raise him up at the last day? Look at Paul's words in *I Corinthians 15 verse 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.* (This verse is PROOF that the souls are DEAD, else he COULD NOT make them alive.) *23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.* In Verses 22 and 23 Paul defined a clear order of events concerning the fruits of the resurrection. Paul first said that all shall be made alive. "Shall be" is plain English for a future event to occur. (If the dead were already living in Heaven, the event would have already occurred and would not be denoted in the future tense.) Christ was the first fruit. Afterwards all others at Christ's coming back to the earth. Then cometh the end. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. To say that a person has been taken straight to heaven is an absolute contradiction to Paul's own words here. Take note that Paul's listed time table here is in complete agreement with the time table of Jesus in which he said that he will "raise him up at the last day".

If you take Paul's statement "*to be absent is to be present*" as applying to every Christian, I find NOTHING within that scripture that applies this to the general group of people. What difference is there in taking the scripture that says Enoch was translated, and conclude that therefore everyone else will be translated? That would be equally wrong. Paul was speaking specifically about himself and the DESIRE to go to heaven rather than face the problems of life. From where do people preach that there is death and after that the judgment if after death and then contrary to that preach that they are predisposed to heaven and don't go to the judgment first. They've broken the order and sequence presented in the plan of salvation. You can't have it BOTH ways, yet people attempt to preach it both ways and evidently don't see the problem and contradiction within their own message.

In Daniel Chapter 12 Daniel had been given a prophet vision and asked the question:

Daniel 12 Vs 8 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?

9 And he said, Go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed til the time of the end.

10 Many shall be purified and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.

11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and nine days.

12 Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.

13 But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

Daniel was told that he "shalt rest" and stand in his lot at the END OF THE DAYS. The word "rest" is consistent in meaning as "sleep" which is used consistently throughout the bible to denote the state of death. The END OF THE DAYS is consistent with the end of time at which the general resurrection occurs. So the words by Paul saying "to be absent is to be present" is in direct conflict with the message that was given to Daniel unless those words are misapplied or that Paul was given a special consideration that Daniel was not given. COVER TO COVER of the bible there are scriptures that contradict the straight to heaven theology. Does ONE VERSE trump all the other scriptures in the bible? I think not, especially since the bible does not contradict itself. It has to be man's interpretation of the bible that is flawed.

One major flaw in the theory about straight to heaven theology is WHAT is left in the grave to be resurrected if the soul is already in heaven? The scriptures CONSISTENTLY teach that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. The body has to corrupt (decompose) and return to the dust of the ground because of the indwelling sin. The exception was made in Jesus' case because he was without sin. The scriptures state that the resurrected person will have a NEW SPIRITUAL BODY. The old body would be the ONLY thing in the grave if the soul was already in heaven, therefore it IS NOT the new spiritual body and doesn't supply the requirements of a resurrected person. The resurrection is pertaining to resurrecting the soul. Straight to heaven theology leaves NOTHING to come from the ground if the soul is already in heaven. And that is the reason for the old false doctrine that the SELF SAME BODY will be resurrected from the ground. They got around that false hood by claiming that the self same body would be resurrected and THEN the person would be changed into a new spiritual body. That doctrine is simply not in the bible. So one lie begets another lie and thus we have also the doctrine that the souls will be brought back with Jesus with that doctrine being twisted from the description about Jesus' return to earth to get the church. If the souls are ALREADY in heaven, then why would there be a need to resurrect them and put them in a new body? It is absolutely obvious that straight to heaven theology would make the resurrection unnecessary because God could provide the new body to those people in heaven. Why even bother to come back and have a resurrection of someone who isn't in the grave? You're not going to be in that flesh and blood body that has decomposed and is lying in the grave. The straight to heaven theology absolutely contradicts the major context of the scriptures.