

Reincarnation

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➤ Intro:

- **doctrine of reincarnation is becoming increasingly popular**
 - probably because several influential people at the forefront of pop culture lean toward Scientology and New Age religions that believe in reincarnation

What is reincarnation?

- “**reincarnation**” is **rebirth** of a spirit (soul) in another body
- **Platonism (philosophy of Plato) is the most prominent** philosophy on reincarnation
 - **Plato (428 BC) believed that souls existed from eternity**, and that fallen souls are sent to earth to be purified, going through a process of **rebirth** in different bodies, even into animals and then reborn into a human body in another life
 - **Platonism, as it took on various forms throughout history, was adopted into world religions**, especially regarding their view of God and reincarnation.
 - **Gnostics were greatly influenced by Platonism**, as it evolved and was fused with oriental mysticism (Neoplatonism), with many sects adopting doctrines of reincarnation.
 - **Today, Platonism as it has evolved, heavily influences New Age religions** adopting reincarnation (transmigration of souls).
- **pic on first slide: sculpture titled "Rebirth" on display on Genova Street in the "Zona Rosa" in Mexico City**
 - rebirth depicted here as receiving a new body – one soul, two bodies, a spirit reborn in another body
- - **pic: reincarnation in Hindu art, spirit reborn in body after body**
 - **Hindus (India) believe the soul is immortal and born into bodies** time and time again. Through this process, they believe they have experiences, learn lessons and evolve spiritually. In the end, they believe they graduate from physical birth and no longer reincarnated.
 - **contrast: Eastern religion with New Age**
 - **people in Eastern religions** strive to come to an enlightened state so they don't have to be reincarnated (e.g., Buddhist)
 - **people in New Age religions** see reincarnation as a way to escape judgment and eternal punishment, becoming immortal, and becoming your own god
- - **pic: Church of Scientology in Tampa / Scientology Stress Test**
 - **Scientologists believe in reincarnation** as taught by their founder, L. Ron Hubbard
 - **many influential people in media are Scientologists**, which probably accounts for rise in reincarnation in pop culture – Will Smith, Tom Cruise, John Travolta

➤ **Reincarnation in pop culture**

- surveys: **24% of Americans believe in reincarnation**

- “**According to a Harris Poll** survey conducted late last year, approximately **24 per cent of Americans believe in reincarnation** while 68 per cent believe in the survival of the soul after death.”

- “**The figures were not much different when taking service attendance into account.** Even among those who said they attend **religious services at least weekly, 18 per cent** said they believe in reincarnation while **33 per cent of those who “never” attend services** said the same.”

(Father of 'reincarnated' WWII pilot says Christian faith remains, by Josh Kimball, Christian Post, Thursday, June 11, 2009)

➤ - **book: Soul Survivor**

- **Fox News (6-11-09) interviewed boy with parents** who is allegedly a reincarnated WWII pilot killed in the battle of Iwo Jima

- **parents wrote book about child's dreams and drawings**, saying they did research and proved their son had the spirit of a WWII pilot who was killed in battle

- **web site advertising the book:** Whatever your beliefs, after you read this book, they will never be the same.

- **clip 1 parent's video:** (no audio) video by parents, pics child drew, book cover

➤ - **clip 2 parent's video:** (audio) father, establishing **facts beyond any reasonable doubt of proof** that this is not a coincidence, this is indeed the **past life experience of a child remembering the spirit and having the spirit of another person**, join this reality

➤ - **illus.: Drop Dead Diva, TV show on Lifetime**

- **plot:** blond model is killed in a car crash, her soul enters the gates of Heaven and she finds herself declared a self-centered "zero" by the gatekeeper, she begs to return to earth and is brought back to life in the body of a recently deceased, intelligent, lawyer

- **typical reincarnation doctrine, not a good enough person on earth so reincarnated to try and live a better live**

➤ - **illus.: Wendy Wu: Homecoming Warrior (2006)**

- **plot:** Wendy Wu (Brenda Song) is visited by a Buddhist monk who claims Wendy is the reincarnation of a powerful female warrior, and the only person who can prevent an ancient evil spirit from destroying the world

- **popularity:**

- **premiere:** 5.7 million viewers on the night of its premiere, making it the fifth highest viewed Disney Channel Original Movie

- **Japan:** had over 5.7 million viewers on the night of its premiere making it the highest rated Disney Channel Original Movie in Japan

- **UK and Europe:** movie broke records making Disney Channel the highest rated kids channel in Europe

- **movie especially popular in Japan where reincarnation is prevalent in religion and society**

- **we should be on our guard to understand the religious doctrines communicated in media**

- **recreational media can make us feel good**, and to be like the characters

- **be on guard not to embrace false religious doctrines** in media and pop culture

- **parents:** must be on guard and educate our children

➤ **What does the Bible say?**

- **no one in the Bible was reincarnated – two objections cited by proponents of reincarnation**
 - **Jesus** was not reincarnated, he rose from the dead – **same spirit in same body**
 - **Elijah** was not reincarnated - John the Baptist figuratively is said to be Elijah because he prepared Israel for repentance and the coming of Christ - **different spirit in different body**

- - **rebirth in the Bible is spiritual, not physical – same spirit in same body**
 - **Jn. 3:5** born of water and Spirit (Holy Spirit)
 - **Acts 2:38** when baptized, not after die
- - **1 Pet. 1:3, 22-23** born again to a living hope, by obedience to the truth, the word of God
 - **born again** in the sense that our **sins are taken away, to be like a sinless new born baby**
- - **2 Cor. 5:17-20** new creature, born again – old things of sin are gone, and we live a new life in Christ
 - **when baptized, not reincarnated**

- **our spirit only lives in one physical body, not multiple**
- - **Heb. 9:27** die once, then judgment, vs. reincarnation where you die physically many times
- - **2 Cor. 5:1-8** live in physical body once, then eternity – walk by faith

- **walk by faith: demands that we reject reincarnation (Rom. 10:17)**
 - **we live in one physical body**, when it dies we enter into eternity, never to live in a physical body again

- **don't be caught up in the *feel good doctrines* of New Age religion – reject reincarnation**
 - **what's comforting about reincarnation**
 - **no punishment** for sinful people at death
 - **get to try over and over** to live a better life and go to heaven, in essence making **no punishment**
 - **if you can be reincarnated over and over, in a sense you are immortal, and a god**
 - **truth:**
 - **there is punishment**, you don't get to try over and over till you get it right
 - **we have one life**, and one chance
 - **you're mortal**, not a god

Inv.

- **if you understand that you only have one life on earth**, you understand you have to make the most of it, no second chances – obey God, go to heaven