

From Our Pastor January 13, 2018

Warm Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

Everyone knows that the final enemy is death! There is a sure way to defeat it and live forever, but scientists and researchers have rejected that formula and are instead spending huge amounts of time and money in an effort to come up with another solution.

Blogger Larry Getlen wrote this week: "A few of the ideas being explored by scientists to extend life span toward immortality are cryogenic freezing, meshing human cognition with AI (artificial intelligence) and even uploading thoughts." With scientific advancements exploding at an exponential pace, some believe the Grim Reaper could soon be out of business.

Instead of consulting the guide book provided to us by the God who created us, men are experimenting with a variety possible life extending solutions. One of the best known is Cryonics-- the process of suspending a just-deceased person in a frozen state until the remedy for what killed them has been discovered. At some point, theoretically, the person can be thawed out and cured.

On Jan. 12, 1967, James Bedford, a psychology professor at Glendale College in California who had just died of cancer, became the first person ever frozen in cryonic suspension, embedded in liquid nitrogen at minus-321 degrees Fahrenheit. A major player in this freezing business is Alcor Life Extension Foundation cryonics facility in Arizona. Alcor now has 153 deceased patients frozen in its facility — including Bedford — and almost another 1,000 people have made arrangements to be preserved there when they die. Between Alcor and the Cryonics Institute in Clinton Township, Mich., there are at least 290 people cryonically frozen in the US.

Some believe that we will one day extend our lives by merging with technology. People who promote this idea are called "Singularitarians." They predict there will be a theoretical future moment when artificial intelligence will overtake and either merge with or replace human intelligence. The premier evangelist for "the singularity" is scientist and futurist Ray Kurzweil, Google's director of engineering, known for creating the first text-to-speech synthesizer and the CCD flatbed scanner.

Finally, there is "Mind Uploading." Proponents of "mind uploading" go further than Kurzweil, believing that you won't even need a body or a brain to exist, because one-day human consciousness will live on a computer. An organization called, " the Brain Preservation Foundation" announced a prize for companies that can figure out how to preserve brains and, by extension, their connectomes.

Oddly enough, there is a kernel of truth in the last one. God's word is clear that, when a person dies, his spirit (thoughts, mind) departs and his body returns to dust. Psalm

146:4 says, "His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish." Where does the spirit go? To God who gave it. Ecclesiastes 12:7, "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it. "

Preserving our physical bodies may sound like a good idea, but it is simply impossible and a waste of time and money to try. This body of elements and chemicals must be replaced by a spirit one in order to live forever. The truth is very clear and obvious: ".. this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Corinthians 15:53). The good news is that the final enemy--death-- will be defeated, not by science or human engineering, but by Jesus Christ at the time of the resurrection of the saints. We can have firm faith in God's promises. 1Corinthians 15:26, " The last enemy that will be destroyed is death."

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