

OPINION & NEWS

Issue In-Focus 1: What Happens When You Die?

Jessica Brown

Many cultures believe in the after-life and what happens afterwards can vary from religion to religion. There are many names for the afterlife and where one would go. I would like to believe there's something after death, but I'm the type of person who requires proof or hard evidence before I can believe. For the moment, my belief is in rebirth. I believe, would like to believe, that after death, we get a chance to come back, that we get the chance to do things we could not do the first time, or to be something we could not be. In each life we learn a little bit more to make us a better person the next time.

Dustin Midgett

Hebrews 9:27~ "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment."

I believe in the triune God of the Bible—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe He created all that we see before us, and I believe we have been made for Him. We've been created to know, love, and enjoy all of who God is. Unfortunately, we often choose our sin over God and God is holy. Sinners cannot be in His presence. Thankfully, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to cover our sins. He took the wrath we deserve because a just God does not let sin go unpunished. Jesus says continuously throughout Scripture that His arms are open and that all who come to Him will never be turned away. Jesus proclaims to be the bread of life (John 6:48), the light of the world (John 8:12), the door (John 10:9), the good shepherd (John 10:11), the resurrection and the life (John 11:25), the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6), and the true vine (John 15:1). If Jesus is who he says he is, then we all will face Him one day and give an account for the life he has given us. That can either mean two things: an eternity with Him, or an eternity without Him.

Elantence Richardson

I believe that once you die your soul

is taken to a waiting place. God will return to Earth one day, and when he does, he will take his children with him; others will be left here with the devil to suffer from the problems of today's world. This world will be the "Hell on earth" and the suffering will be terrible, and hot and uncomfortable. There will be 144 mansions in heaven and it will be amazing, with no worries or troubles. God's children will rejoice, dance, and sing with their king, in heaven.

David Robinson

Dying, I'm told, is like walking from one room to another. There are significant stories of near-death experiences (NDE), enough to strongly suggest that life is not over when it's over. Yogi Berra's famous quote, "It ain't over till it's over" will catch a lot of us by surprise when we discover that it is not over, and never will be. Yes, I believe that, strongly. I've never had an NDE, nor do I know anyone who has, but I have read enough about them, and studied scripture enough to think seriously that preparing for an ongoing existence is a good idea, essential even.

Santanlia Scoggins

I believe that once I die, I'll be reincarnated. I'm a Christian but I believe that there is much more after death. If you lived a life full of hate, then that's how your next life will be depicted. I guess you could say I believe in Karma and reincarnation. The way you lead your present life will dictate your future life. I refuse to believe that once I die, that's it—no more living for me. I just don't accept it. I'm hopeful that there's more than just death.

Travis Thompson

I'm a Christian. The Bible has taught me: If I'm good and live my life by the Bible, if I accept Jesus as my savior and try to be like him, I will be rewarded with a life in heaven, the cloud city, with gold streets and all my needs met. If I don't live a life with Jesus as my savior, then I will spend the after-life in hell, getting punished for my sins. That's how I was raised. But I now think it might be a little different after I die. I think you wake up outside your body and look down on your family. Then you go up to a set of offices where you go over the wrongs you've committed in your life.

Kelli Wynn

When you die, your soul will leave your body and ascend to God. God is the all mighty who rules and controls life. He is the one who replays your life to you and determines where you will go based on what you've done here on Earth. Once your judgment is done, God will determine whether you go to heaven or hell. Heaven is a beautiful place where God, his son Jesus Christ and his angels dwell. Hell is a place of fury where people are tortured by fallen angels and Lucifer (Satan). There are different levels of heaven and hell. Depending on how you were judged, it determines the level where you'll remain. In both places you will have eternal life.

Issue In-Focus 2: Which Presidential Candidates Appeal to You in 2016?

Kelli Wynn

For the presidential election I do not plan to vote. I haven't been keeping up with the candidates and the election news. It's not that I don't care, but I don't have a television in my room for me to sit down and watch the coverage throughout my day. Most of the time I'm busy with school, work or cheerleading practices. If I had been keeping up with the election, I probably would vote because it involves my life as well as that of others.

Elantence Richardson

I am planning to vote. This will be my second time. When I voted the first time, it was easier. Obama was the first black man to run for president, and I knew that I could be part of history by helping him get into office. I just didn't look at history when I was voting; I also looked at the things that he could bring to the table for middle-class Americans. This election is a little harder because we have two amazing Democrats running for president. Hillary is a wonderful lady, but most of her supporters are women age 45 and older. How would she benefit me, a 22-year-old college student? Right now Bernie Sanders is the candidate who most appeals to me. He has pointed out a lot of things that Hillary wants to do that won't really benefit Democrats. Even though he doesn't agree with some of Obama's actions, I want to see if he can do better.

Santanlia Scoggins

I doubt that I'll be voting in this upcoming presidential just because I haven't been keeping up with the candidates and what their goals are for bettering our country. If I had more time to look at their plans, then for sure, I'd vote. But I've been so swamped with issues in my personal life that I just don't have time to follow the campaigns. I took a survey/test and it said that I sided more with Hillary Clinton. I guess my views on immigration reform were similar to hers.

Dustin Midgett

I do plan to vote. I think it's our civic duty as American citizens. I didn't vote my freshman year. I could have, but I foolishly neglected to register myself in Nash County. I plan to make up for that this fall. I've been following the primaries. Most of the time I watch Fox News to get information about the primaries. I think our media is overwhelmingly liberal, and I'm not a big fan of listening to a liberal report the news. I'm a bit disappointed that Marco Rubio and Ben Carson are not doing well. I really like Carson. I think he would be a great president. He has a quiet confidence that I like, and he's brilliant. His ideas on health care, education, and the economy are smart. He also loves Jesus Christ. The only thing that concerns me is his foreign policy. I'd rather have Donald Trump in there to deal with our foreign issues. He would deal with our enemies, not make naïve deals with them.

Kre'Shaun Davis

This year will be my first time voting. I figured I'd be voting for Donald Trump until he lost his mind and gave out false information. I feel he wouldn't be able to hold up his end of the bargain. I don't want Hillary Clinton to be president because she

has too many untold stories about her. I feel Ted Cruz would be the best person for the job. He started off slow, but has been on a roll in recent weeks. Just his background and what he has done has impressed me to the point where I can see him taking the spot. Cruz appeals to me because of what he is trying to bring to the United States, in terms of education, energy and environment, health care, and gun rights. There are a lot of reasons I want him to become president. He has been consistent with

what he has said he is going to do.

Jessica Brown

I've voted in every election since I turned eighteen, and I plan on voting this year as well. I try to follow the primary coverage, but since I work most nights, it's difficult to do so. If I work during a primary, I usually go online to look up the results. For the moment, the most appealing candidate is Bernie Sanders. He seems to have more of a liberal mindset. That's appealing to me and many in the younger generation of voters.

FRESHMEN

from pg 1

on campus and in the classroom was positive. Williams also said having close relationships with professors and recognizing everyone on campus was appealing to her.

On her visits from her hometown of Chesapeake, one of the first things Williams noticed about Wesleyan was its location. Though it is much smaller than the Virginia Beach area, she still enjoys it. "Rocky Mount is in a good location. It isn't too secluded, but it's also not like a big city," Williams said.

She called the fall season a "developmental year" for her. Even though she saw playing time as a striker and midfielder, Williams hopes to earn more game action in the upcoming season. And while soccer is a passion of hers, Williams commented that even if she did not play soccer, she would still attend Wesleyan.

Williams has done well in the classroom, earning an impressive 3.54 GPA in the fall. She recently decided that her major would be biomedical sciences. "I'm not sure about the future. I could be a doctor, nurse, surgeon, surgical assistant, or even a teacher," she said. Williams is a member of her team's Academic Committee and she hopes to help her teammates in the classroom as well.

Williams stated that Wesleyan has great potential for the future and that she could see herself at Wesleyan for the rest of her college career. "The student population at Wesleyan is expanding, and I hope that the nursing and medical programs will expand as well," she said.

Keaira McMiller

Keaira McMiller said she chose Wesleyan because she was offered a scholarship.

"I do see myself graduating from here just because of the scholarship," she said. "That's the main reason I'm here. I'm starting to make good friends so that's pretty hard to leave."

A Norfolk native, McMiller is a freshman who intends to major in exercise science.

When asked about Wesleyan's flaws, McMiller said she's not happy with campus life. "There's stuff to do here sometimes, but on the weekends there's nothing to do," she said. "If you don't have a car, then you're out of luck because you can't get off campus."

Asked if enhanced campus activities and entertainment would help student retention, McMiller said, "Yes, because we have the Hartness Center but there's not a lot of variety in there. If we had more stuff to do here on the weekends, then that would make us want to be here more. If all you do is sit in your room on the weekend, then you're not getting the whole college experience."

Despite her criticisms, McMiller is satisfied with her decision to attend Wesleyan. Along with the relationships that she's made here, she loves Wesleyan

for its small campus, which she finds easy to navigate. She added that she likes that there is a Food Lion and Chinese restaurant just north of campus.

The small class sizes appeal to McMiller as well. She mentioned that professors at universities often don't know their students' names, while at Wesleyan students are given the opportunity to get to know their professors better. She said her Wesleyan courses have gone well so far. "The classes are small enough where I feel like they're engaging. At the same time they're challenging enough where I know that this is a college-level course."

McMiller is looking to get more involved on campus. "I'm hoping to join the Exercise Science Club," she said. "That way I can be more involved on campus and not be in my room as much."

Last semester, McMiller joined a campus sorority called Delta Phi Epsilon. "It helped me have a good experience here at Wesleyan because I've made cool friends," she said. "If I hadn't joined, I wouldn't have anyone to talk to. If I wasn't in a sorority, I'd probably wouldn't want to stay here."

Timothy Sauls

"Should I stay or should I go?" is a question many students ask in their first year at college. Some students don't have much of a choice and Timothy Sauls is one of them.

A Nashville native, Sauls is a history and theater major. He came to Wesleyan because he received a full scholarship, the Heritage scholarship. Sauls has several likes and dislikes about Wesleyan, however. "I like the fact that it's a small school," he said. "It allows you to be more personable with your professors." He went on to say that the professors never seem put out if students wanted to stay after class to speak about an assignment or ask questions.

Sauls also likes that the size of the college allows students to form relationships and spend time together in the same classes or outside of class.

Sauls enjoys the extracurricular activities and clubs offered at Wesleyan. He is a member of the Film Club, the drum line, and the Wesleyan Players. He wishes there was more student involvement in activities around campus.

While he is satisfied overall with his decision to attend Wesleyan, he did identify several issues that he feels the college should address.

The food is a dislike for Sauls. He lives on campus and gets free food thanks to his scholarship, but he is restricted to eating in the cafeteria most of the time. He said that there was so much emphasis placed on the food seeming healthy that the quality was lost. For example, he said, sometimes the ham was deli style, but sometimes it looked more like "lunch meat." After eating the latter, he never felt well.

When it comes to the residence halls, he said he wished the school would focus on renovating the existing dorms rather than building new ones. He explained that the air-conditioning systems often broke down and the overall temperature was inconsistent. He also expressed a wish for more privacy when it comes to the closets in the rooms, which, he said, are very small.

As a final criticism, Sauls said that the college should devote more energy to retaining its existing students. "While I feel it's positive in general, the current administration is more focused on bringing in more students" rather than retaining them.

He went on to observe that the college administrators want to make Wesleyan into a more Christian campus and a shining example of what a community of free thinkers should be. Along with an emphasis on a Christian education, the administrators encourage free and open-minded thinking in the students, Sauls said.

Some Excited to Vote, Others Not Paying Attention

By Decree Staff Writers

Many Wesleyan students plan to vote in the 2016 presidential election, while others expressed indifference to the political process.

Given that this is her first time voting, Victoria Ingram said, "It's our future at stake, so we need to vote."

Even though it's his second time, Kenneth Flowers was just as excited about casting his ballot. "It's my right to vote, so I feel like my voice should be heard," he said. "I don't want to miss the opportunity to vote, and there are people out there that can't vote or have a say."

Ashley Dunn and Darryl Hamilton feel it's important to vote. "I feel my people have earned this right to vote," Hamilton said. "Black people have been through a lot, just to give me this

chance to vote, so if it's good or not, I'm going to vote and not waste it."

Nick Corn IV plans to vote not only to make an impact on a national scale, but to have an impact in local elections. "The reason why I vote is for local elections," he said. "That's where I really have a say. In the local elections I can make a difference."

Jose Garcia agreed, saying, "The presidential election is a waste, but the local one is very important."

Aubrey Motley feels that students should get more involved in the political process. If they choose not to participate, then they should not complain about the president and other political leaders. "You can't put in your say unless you try to help," he said.

Some students expressed skepticism

about the election.

"Why should I vote? It's not like it matters," Marie Flemings said. "I think that people have been voting for years, and there has not been enough significant change."

Some students claimed the election does not interest them. "None of the candidates really fit me, and what I want," said Shay Williams. "I don't want to vote for the wrong person."

Others said that they've been too busy to follow the campaigns and get to know the candidates and their stands on the issues. "I don't really feel it's best that I vote because I don't know what's going on with the election," said Kaevon Bracy.

Chris Lawrence offered a similar view. "I just really do not have time," he said.

See VOTING pg 4

THE DECREE

since 1960

"of, by, and for the Wesleyan community."

STAFF

Senior Staff Writers

Katie Beeman, David Robinson

Staff Writers

Jessica Brown, Carolyn Davern, Kre'Shaun Davis, Grace Lee, Dustin Midgett, Elantence Richardson, Santanlia Scoggins, Travis Thompson, Kelli Wynn

Special Contributors

Grace Wallace (Photos)

Faculty Advisor

Dr. William Grattan

English Department

179 Braswell • Phone: 985-5336

Submission Policy

The Decree encourages students, faculty and staff to submit letters to the editor and opinion pieces that focus on campus news and events. Note: Such submissions will be edited for conciseness and grammar and checked for accuracy.

To make a submission or suggest a story idea, email the faculty advisor at WJGrattan@ncwc.edu.

The Decree publishes 5-6 issues per academic year; copy deadlines vary from issue to issue.