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LIFE AFTER DEATH AFTER MARX

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Life after Death after Marx

Elements in Christian Doctrine

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Abstract: Karl Marx's criticism of religion, as applied to afterlife belief, needs to be taken seriously by Christian theologians. After outlining that belief, the author examines a picture of heaven implicit in much Christian belief and practice which is susceptible to that critique. He sets out an alternative eschatology, centred on the Kingdom of God and the resurrection of the body, which is somewhat less susceptible. He then explores whether a doctrine of the intermediate state can be sustained in the light of Marx's criticisms. He goes on to examine the politics of remembrance in the light of Marxist criticism, and to ask whether Christianity can help compensate for the tragic character of Marxism. A constant theme is that Christian theology should exist in tension with Marx's criticisms, never assuming that it has overcome them completely.

Keywords: Marx, eschatology, heaven, political theology, afterlife

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