

Alternate Reality

By Louis Rushmore

Wikipedia says, “The phrase alternate reality often serves as a synonym for a parallel universe” (“Alternate reality”). “A parallel universe is a hypothetical self-contained reality co-existing with one’s own” (*Wikipedia*, “Parallel Universe”). Some cosmologists and physicists imagine the existence of one or more parallel universes alongside of the physical universe in which we live.

From science fiction to science fact, there is a concept that suggests that there could be other universes besides our own, where all the choices you made in this life played out in alternate realities. The concept is known as a “parallel universe,” and is a facet of the astronomical theory of the multiverse. The idea is pervasive in comic books, video games, television and movies. (Space.com)

Neuroscientists observe in patients with mental disorders their imaginary worlds, which often intersect imperceptibly with the real world. Furthermore, “Neuroscience shows us that we all create our own concept of reality” (Jacobs). In addition, there are many people, today, who appear to be in their own little worlds or self-made universes, which are running parallel or even on a collision path with reality. Not surprisingly, anecdotal evidence especially notes young people, who have immersed themselves totally in video games, are increasingly unable to distinguish between a fantasy world and the real world. Also, children who have been overly sheltered or showered with an overabundance of material gifts fail to mature properly—leading them to experience a sort of alternate reality and not preparing them for the real world. All of these are in store for a rude awakening when their alternate realities crash into reality.

There is another, similar confusion over an alternate reality pertaining to spiritual matters. The physical world and the spiritual world truly are parallel to each other. They are both real, but they differ. For instance, the physical world had a beginning (Genesis 1:1), and is temporal, meaning it will end (2 Peter 3:10-12). Likewise, humans possess souls within their bodies, and when the body dies, the soul leaves and returns to the custody of God (Ecclesiastes 12:7; James 2:26). Ultimately, souls will live eternally, either in Heaven or in Hell (Matthew 25:46). Prior to habitation of an eternal dwelling place, souls will be transformed for living in a purely spiritual world. “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:51-53 NKJV).

Therefore, what is real and really matters most is the spiritual realm with its permanence. After all, the physical realm is inferior and temporary. “...we do not

look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18). However, we more readily identify with our physical existence rather than with our spiritual being. No doubt it is much easier to do so owing to our five senses (i.e., touch, taste, hear, smell and see). We cannot squeeze a handful of spirituality with our hands. Neither can we taste, hear, smell or see spirituality. Hence, we might easily mistake the spiritual realm for an alternate reality. Doubtlessly, most people and many Christians incorrectly view the physical realm as reality and suppose that the spiritual realm is comparable to an alternate reality or a parallel universe. That is a spiritually fatal mistake!

The spiritual realm is not hypothetical. It is not relegated to comic books, video games, television and movies, though spiritual characters and places may be the subject of fiction in media. The spiritual realm is not an imaginary world. Neither can the reality of the spiritual realm be morphed successfully and actually into something more palatable to human fancies. Ultimately, the misguided ideas about what really and eternally matter, held by myriads of the world’s inhabitants, will crash into and be crushed by reality at the end of time (Matthew 7:21-23).

Correctly construed, the spiritual realm is the reality, and this mortal life is the alternate reality or parallel universe. The former deserves greater emphasis and focus than the latter. Every soul ought to concern himself primarily with spiritual matters (Matthew 6:33), and Christians must put spiritual things above physical things. “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1).



Works Cited

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