



# Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell

By John Shelby Spong

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Drawing on a lifetime of wisdom, *New York Times* bestselling author and controversial religious leader John Shelby Spong continues to challenge traditional Christian theology in *Eternal Life: A New Vision*. In this remarkable spiritual autobiography about his lifelong struggle with the questions of God and death, he reveals how he ultimately came to believe in eternal life.

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**Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell** By John Shelby Spong Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #429621 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2010-10-05
- Released on: 2010-10-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .65" w x 5.31" l, .49 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 288 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

In this challenging, intellectually rigorous culmination of his body of theological work, retired Episcopal bishop Spong (*Jesus for the Non-Religious*) provides a lucid historical analysis of the development of human religious thought from the onset of self-conscious awareness to the present, and a compelling argument for the creation of a new religious paradigm. Offering deeply personal reflections on his own Christian journey and priestly career, Spong reviews a lifetime of passionate engagement with biblical study and with questions of faith, charting his growing discomfort with language that seemed limited, falsifying and inadequate. Arguing that modern scientific understanding necessitates dismissing outdated metaphors and assumptions by which faith seeks to calm human anxiety, Spong suggests an understanding of God not as a person, but as the process that calls personhood into being. Spong's examination of the gospel resurrection accounts includes an intriguing interpretation of John's portrayal of Jesus as a being so courageously present that he was open to the ultimate reality of life, love and being. This work, bound to be influential, offers new insights into religion's big questions about life and death, making an invaluable contribution to both religious scholarship and faithful exploration. (*Sept.*)

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### **Review**

"In Spong's perpetual quest for truth and knowledge, he has transformed the enigmatic cosmic energy of the 'big bang' into an afterglow of human hope for the ages." (Daniel H. Gregory, M.D., Senior Attending Physician, Bassett Healthcare)

"Fear of death is the most fundamental fear of human existence. The only way it can be conquered is through knowledge and experience of your eternal being. *Eternal Life: A New Vision* is elegant invitation to find this part of yourself and be liberated." (Deepak Chopra, author of *The Third Jesus*)

"His courage, candor and intense awareness are unique gifts to people both inside and outside Christianity at this critical time in human and planetary history." (Matthew Fox, author of *Original Blessing*)

"This work, bound to be influential, offers new insights into religion's big questions about life and death, making an invaluable contribution to both religious scholarship and faithful exploration." (Publishers Weekly)

"Spong has spent his life and work making sense of this most fundamental human issue . . . His fans will find this spiritual autobiography fascinating, but so, too, should anyone interested in the still uncomfortable topics of death and mortality." (Booklist)

"With subtlety and complexity, Spong promotes an idea of an ongoing existence beyond our physicality, one that entirely supercedes "religious" notions of Heaven or Hell and even conventional notions of God . . . Spong's writing here as elsewhere is intelligent, engaged, comforting, and uplifting." (Library Journal)

"Spong once again puts his intellectual money on common sense . . . Religion's purpose, he claims, is "security, not Truth" - a key insight that demands, in turn, a set of wholly new visions. . . . Spong . . . [is] a unique visionary." (St. Louis Post-Dispatch)

“John Shelby Spong, the reinterpreter of Christianity for the doubtful, retired as the Episcopal bishop of New Jersey in 2001 but not from his religious provocations. . . . People have to get beyond the idea of God as a heavenly judge who hands out rewards and punishment,.” (Atlanta Journal-Constitution)

“Eternal Life: A New Vision doesn’t actually give us a clear vision of eternal life at all. Spong would never do that.... Instead he frees us to dream a dream of what life, eternal or otherwise, might be.” (Central Coast Express)

“Spong invites us to engage the questions, to revel in the mystery, and finally to find our place within God’s place, our time within God’s time, and our life within God’s life.” (Anglican and Episcopal History)

From the Back Cover

Bishop John Shelby Spong, author of *Jesus for the Non-Religious*, *Why Christianity Must Change or Die*, *Sins of Scripture*, and many other books, is known for his controversial ideas and fighting for minority rights. In *Eternal Life: A New Vision*, a remarkable spiritual journey about his lifelong struggle with the questions of God and death, he reveals how he came to a new conviction about eternal life. God, says spong, is ultimately one, and each of us is part of that oneness. We do not live on after death as children who have been rewarded with heaven or punished with hell but as part of the life and being of God, sharing in God’s eternity, which is beyond the barriers of time and space. spong argues that the discovery of the eternal can be found within each of us if we go deeply into ourselves, transcend our limits and become fully human. By seeking God within, by living each day to its fullest, we will come to understand how we live eternally.

Always compelling and controversial, Spong, the leading Christian liberal and pioneer for human rights, wrestles with the question that all of us will ultimately face. In his final book, Spong takes us beyond religion and even beyond Christianity until he arrives at the affirmation that the fully realized human life empties into and participates in the eternity of God. The pathway into God turns out to be both a pathway into ourselves and a doorway into eternal life. To Job’s question “If a man (or a woman) dies, will he (or she) live again?” he gives his answer as a ringing yes!

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Betty Borgen:**

This *Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell* is great guide for you because the content that is full of information for you who have always deal with world and possess to make decision every minute. This specific book reveal it facts accurately using great manage word or we can claim no rambling sentences inside. So if you are read this hurriedly you can have whole details in it. Doesn't mean it only offers you straight forward sentences but hard core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having *Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell* in your hand like finding the world in your arm, information in it is not ridiculous just one. We can say that no publication that offer you world in ten or fifteen moment right but this book already do that. So , it is good reading book. Heya Mr. and Mrs. active do you still doubt that?

**Jacob Hill:**

The book untitled Eternal Life: A New Vision: Beyond Religion, Beyond Theism, Beyond Heaven and Hell contain a lot of information on it. The writer explains your ex idea with easy way. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read this. The book was written by famous author. The author brings you in the new period of time of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can available their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice learn.

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**Bradley Cox:**

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