

What are You Searching For: Life after Death

Scripture used: [Hebrews 2:14-15 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

In this final message of the “What Are You Searching For?” series, Pastor Hurmon focused on the serious and critical topic of life after death. This sermon takes place in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, which kills an average 3,000 Americans every day. Death is real in our current world, and it forces us to confront the reality that life is uncertain, and death is certain for everyone. In this way, death is relatively democratic: it affects all. The Christian view of death brings both insight and comfort, as it teaches us first and foremost to live a life that is free of the fear of death, and full of courage and faithfulness.

KEY POINTS

- 1) Death is the ultimate expression of sin and injustice. The Christian view is to fight for life, to want life to win. Death is overruled and overturned when life is victorious. The book “Imagine Heaven” by John Burke, and the films “Miracles from Heaven” and “Heaven is for Real” deal with death and near-death experiences that affirm our determination to live a flourishing life. More importantly, Jesus is the ultimate symbol of the assurance and hope we have that God is victorious over death.
- 2) Jesus is seen by the disciples after His death. In [1 Corinthians 15:4-7 and 15:8-9](#), He appears to them, speaks to them, and triggers their commitment to continue engaging with Him, dialoguing with Him, and serving and proclaiming Him to the world. Pastor Hurmon heard a similar call in 8th grade that got him started on his ministry. We experience Jesus’ tangible and living presence in our lives, and it motivates us to serve Him and follow Him and be an example to others.
- 3) [John 16:33](#) reminds us that we should find peace in Jesus; not in money, power, talents, or looks. Knowing Jesus is how we take heart and overcome the brokenness of the world. We face our fears; we surrender our worries; we work through our pain; and we accept the unacceptable (death) with serenity, as we know that -- because of Jesus -- death is temporary and life is eternal. The film “It’s a Wonderful Life” has a scene where the main protagonist jumps into an icy lake to save his brother. This gives us a picture of what Jesus did for us; he plunged into this world to be with us, and experienced death itself, in order to rescue us and save us for eternal life with Him. Jesus still bears the scars of his death on the cross, as Jimmy Stewart’s character lost his hearing because of his heroic act.
- 4) The main character of the “Miracles from Heaven” film, Anna Beam, was suffering from an incurable illness when she fell 30 feet from a tree, survived, and seemed to have been miraculously cured of her underlying condition. Her best friend Haley had just died of cancer and Haley’s father was distraught. But because they saw the peace that Haley had through her friendship with Anna, Haley’s family knew to place their ultimate trust in Jesus and they found supernatural assurance and peace for themselves. Jesus’ resurrection and His promise of life for us means that all the sorrow, pain, and death we face in this life will be reversed; will become “untrue.” This is the assurance and hope those who follow Jesus have.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - In what ways have you been aware of the reality of death as you grew up? Was it talked about in your family? Do you remember a family member or loved one passing? How do you honestly feel when you think about death now in your life?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Hebrews 2:14-15 \(NLT\)](#). What are the signs of being held in slavery by the fear of death? What are ways you see that fear manifested in our culture, and how does that impact our lives personally? For those who follow Jesus, how does the hope and promise of what Jesus has done change the way we think about death? Have there been moments of your life where your faith has made the work of Jesus real and taken away the fear of death? What makes it easier or harder to live with that sense of assurance and hope on a consistent basis?
- 3) **DO** - Spend some time in prayer and acknowledge where we are afraid of death or have a sense of uncertainty about death. Bring these fears and doubts to God. Ask God to help us to understand and experience the reality of God’s promise about eternal life, that Jesus will never leave us or forsake us and nothing can separate us from His love ([Romans 8:38-39](#)). Join NBCC for our New Year’s Eve celebration and see you next Sunday for the start of a brand new series!