

# The Moment of Death and Transition

Many have written about their own God experiences. All report that words do not suffice. Language is not sufficient to try to describe the supernatural. An encounter with God is beyond words, but nevertheless words are a medium of communication by which one can try to convey meaning and experience. We must not give up trying to probe the meaning and depth of God. Words are inadequate, but they are all we have.

One of the first things we should do is to read the Bible. If Christianity is part of your foundation, but not a reality in your life, part of your teaching that you received is that truth is found in the Scriptures. Motivate yourself to read what Jesus taught about life. What answers did he have? What is missing in our life, what interior hunger energizes you and motivates you to look.

Start with the basics of Christianity. Begin by praying and reading Scripture. As you read and pray, your faith will grow. You will begin to realize that God is present and you can begin to develop a relationship with him. The same God that you heard others talk about is now becoming your God.

Faith is an energizing force within. Faith animates from the deep recesses of the heart. It is primarily a gift from God, but belief must be nourished and fed. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus tells two parables about faith. The first is a parable about sowing seeds. "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how. The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain of the ear." (Mark 4:26 – 28). The seed of faith will grow of itself when it is nourished by prayer, God's word, obedience and worship. Every day you pray and read the Bible, faith is growing in and of itself.

Faith is a gift that starts as a very small thing. It is simply the urge within you to believe in God and trust that he is there and cares for you. The thought or force or trust within you can quickly become very large. Faith can consume you and become the driving force of your life.

The other parable Jesus told relating to faith was, "the kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed, which when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." (Mark 4:31 – 32). Faith begins as an exploratory search. It starts as energy to seek God. Before you know it, faith becomes your whole life. By faith you are saved and reborn. Faith in God is vitally important!

Remember, faith is a gift and begins as energy within you to seek God. No matter how far along you are in your walk with God, faith will still lead you to search for God. Never give up your search because of some initial "finds." Never rest on yesterday's laurels. Faith will drive you your whole life long to the treasures of God. It will also lead you as you continue your journey as we walk by faith from beginning to end.

Faith comes by hearing. As we listen to the Gospel by reading, watching and hearing the message proclaimed, faith is conceived and grows. Faith is a simple willingness to believe God is and that God cares for us. Once you choose to believe, you orient your actions to your faith. You try to be consistent. Turn from vice to virtue each day of your life. Pray and reach out to people. Faith is then an inner assent. Believing in God is demonstrated by the way one lives their life.

Faith is one of three virtues (love/hope) that lasts forever. It is a confidence, an assurance, and a conviction regarding things not seen. Without faith, it is impossible to please God, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that God rewards those who seek him. (Hebrews 11:6).

Searching for God is a lifelong pursuit. Paul told the Athenians that God created them so "they should seek God, in the hope they feel after him and find him." (Acts 17:27). Never give up and remain persistent in your pursuit of God.

While we do the seeking of God, it is God who does the finding. Jesus presented a God who searches for us. Three famous lost and found stories are proclaimed in Luke 15. All have to do with God search for us, the outpouring of grace, and joy at the finding. In the song "Amazing Grace" we sing, "I once was lost but now I'm found."

## The Tunnel

At the moment of death, the experience is of drifting off to sleep and suddenly feeling yourself being pulled down a passageway. You are very conscious and aware and know what is happening although you have no control. You feel as though you are being pulled through a tunnel or canal of some sort. You don't see it, but somehow sense it is roundabout you. It is definitely a passageway.

Interestingly you don't want to go through the tunnel! You are being pulled against your will and don't have the strength to resist. Just as the force of gravity is a law we cannot resist, at the moment of our death, there will be a supernatural law. We will gravitate to God. You may try to resist, but no matter how hard you fight, you will still be pulled through. You will feel powerless, helpless, and out of control. Instinctively you will know you are going to God.

Strangely enough what is pulling you through that passageway is your faith! As you are being pulled forward, you ask yourself "Oh no, I believe!" Or "Oh no" because you are being pulled to an imminent meaning with God. Believing in seeking God, and, increasing your faith becomes the force that propels you towards God. You know you are now about to come before God.

The passageway is the first thing you encounter at the moment of release. When a person's body is old, sick, or damaged by an accident, there is a departure at the moment of death. Your body will eventually deteriorate and you will need to leave it. Your consciousness, your soul, literally vacates your body and begins its journey toward God. At the moment of your death, you will be very aware. You will have a new awakening, a new consciousness. This movement through the tunnel will occur naturally without your knowing how. It will not take long at all. You will instinctively know what is about to happen, but there must be this "crossing over" or transition first.

It is important to remember that your soul will never die. That will make sure, you, your conscience, your consciousness, your personhood, will be preserved and transformed. Although your body will die, you will live and spend eternity somewhere (heaven or hell).

This "tunnel" or passageway is one that we will all journey through at the moment of our death. When someone "passes away" they go through this cylindrical vortex that is the connection between this life and the next. You gain a sense of "transcendence." Time stands still. You are beyond time. You are moving into a new realm. Its entrance is within our core, our heart. We all have deep within us the opening that leads to the vestibule of eternity. David prayed, "When can we enter and see the face of God?" (Psalm 42:2). We enter at the moment of our death and are summoned to the beatific vision.

It is interesting to note that when we are born into this world, we pass through a tunnel: our mother's womb. No one knows how to be born, it happens naturally. When we are born into the next world, we will all journey through another tunnel. Don't worry about not knowing the way. All of us will go through this passageway instinctively and naturally. It is much like passing through a revolving door. There is one reality on one side and a very different one on the other side. It is like that well-known saying, "There is light at the end of the tunnel!"

You will fight going through the tunnel. You are no longer in control and fear the loss of being in control. Powerlessness is exactly what you experience, that is, the complete loss of control. You have no strength to resist because you are being drawn down the passageway by a power much greater than yourself. The pull is impossible to resist.

You will understand, that God himself is summoning you. Jesus himself said, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." (John 6:44). The obvious meaning of this verse is that God will attract people to salvation in Jesus.

This portal of eternity is a place that transcends time. Time, after all, is but a created reality given us to prepare us for our passing. Time is motion, but the realm you will enter is beyond time. When talking about the attributes of the Holy Spirit the author of wisdom states, "For Wisdom is more mobile than any motion; because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things." (Wisdom 7:24). Perhaps that's why the resurrected Jesus was able to enter rooms even though the doors were shut and locked. (John 20:19).

God transcends time. Time is stopped before God. He can view it all at once. Although God stands beside it he can also enter time. We read, "With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Peter 3:8).

Everything on earth seems so safe and secure. Things are definitely not what they seem. Life on earth is illusory. That is, we think or act or live like we are the only ones present. But just beneath the surface of our thoughts and consciousness, there is a whole new transcendent reality. God is within and he is aware of every little thought, motive and intention in our lives. Every imagination indeed is under his scrutiny. Somehow, God has created a world where it seems like we are alone and no one knows our thinking. God has ingeniously designed the world, faith and doubt, virtue and vice, love and selfishness can play their roles. Only a vastly intelligent God could create a massive universe like this, and yet you can still choose that God exists. We are not alone. Psalm 139:2 says it best, "You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar." This "afar" means beyond time. St. Augustine wisely wrote that God is closer to us than we are to ourselves.

## Prayer Is the Opening Door

Prayer brings us into a relationship with God. Paul tells us, "set your mind on the things that are above." (Colossians 3:2). Through prayer we are able to meet God and have a yearning to be close to him. During the Jubilee year 2000, the theme was to "open wide the doors to Christ." This "door" is at the center of our being, in our heart. "Teach me wisdom in my secret heart." (Psalm 51:6).

Remember what Jesus said, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me." (Revelation 3:20). "Behold, the Judge is standing at the doors." (James 5:9). It is believed that these two verses are the portal to eternity residing in our heart. Few ever find it in this life. Most don't even know it exists and live oblivious to it. Opening that door takes work and discipline and grace. Usually we are far from it, unaware and living in sensuality and carnality. But if we can slow down and get centered, we can begin to transcend time itself and enter the place of rest, God's glorious presence within us.

The answers we seek can only be found by looking within. It is a heightened state of consciousness that will reveal the eternal truths we seek. The final frontier is our heart. It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.

## The Frontier of Death

People are journeying into this portal, this passageway, every day when they die. It is as natural an occurrence as being born. While we mourn their loss, we celebrate their passing! Our births and deaths are a constant conveyor belt of people coming and going. We know that each death is precious to God. (Psalm 116:15).

## The Ultimate Surrender

Do we spend our entire life in a humble surrender? Do we give our life over to God over and over again by our actions? All these surrenders in our life is a preparation for the final surrender, that is, death. Do we trust God and surrender our life to God constantly? Are you ready to go through the passageway?

If you fight life, continually grasping for control and live independently of God, you will struggle in death. But if you learn how to trust in God and let go, you will die without distress. Living independent from God is the source of an addiction. The way to recovery is a deep turning over of your will to the care of God. If you surrender to God and to life, trust in God, and grow old gracefully, your death will be the final surrender among many previous ones in your life. Our sufferings, no matter what form they take, are meant to teach us that we are not in control. They humble us and hopefully cause us to surrender to the one who has control. If we abandon ourselves well now, we will embrace our death with trust when the time comes.

For some reason, many are called to a deep suffering especially towards the end of their life. Not everyone passes immediately. Dying can be a long and drawn out process, including hospital stays, chemotherapy machines or drugs. Many have to endure years of cancer, Alzheimer's, strokes and other debilitating diseases. In the midst of these various sufferings, one is always faced with a choice: surrender to God in the trials or resist and be bitter. The process of dying itself is a call to abandon yourself to God in the struggle. The purification of our will is the result. No one understands the purification process fully, but we must all be refined. God does have an ultimate purpose in our pain and he sees your sufferings and stores your every tear in his bottle. (Psalm 56:8).

If we surrender and die to self now, death will be the final surrender. We will be ready for that moment of letting go. While people who do not accept the Gospel and do not give their lives to Christ are prideful, controlling people, who live for themselves. Control is a blessing and a curse. The ability to regulate, manage and exercise authority over life and events can enable a person to go far. However, the need for control can actually lead to a loss of control. In some ways life is like Jell-O. We can never really grab hold of it completely in the way we would like. There are always unpredictable occurrences and people that we cannot control.

When some people face these situations they can't control, they find their life unmanageable. Some turn to drinking and drugs as a way of escape and coping. Pride is the epitome of grasping for control. It is self-reliance and wanting your own way all the time. Humility surrenders gracefully to the changes and uncertainties of life. We are told that what set Jesus apart was that he emptied himself and humbled himself even unto death on a Cross. (Philippians 2:7 – 8).

Life is always presenting us with opportunities to surrender. Whenever someone undergoes chemo treatments for cancer that is a call to surrender. Every illness should remind us of our ultimate powerlessness and calls us to surrender. God is not necessarily trying to remove all of the control from our lives, but rather to keep us in balance. No matter what your vocation is, God will work through people, circumstances and life events to bring you to new levels of growth and sanctification.

## Quiet Please

If you want to be able to pray well, you will have to deal with distractions. Fighting it does no good. It is a reminder from God that we are not in control. No matter how much we crave silence when we pray, no one is spared life's disturbances. Coping with noise is part of the great surrender of life for many.

We come into life with the illusion that we can run our own life just the way we want. The facts aren't that friendly. We can't have it exactly the way we want it. We must surrender to imperfect relationships, health problems, growing older, rainy weather, losing friends, losing hair, loneliness, trials, adversities, and various other difficulties. Imperfections and irritations are part and parcel of life. We should not passively "take" all of this. For example, if you are lonely, get involved and help someone. You must understand that we do not live in a perfect world. There is no perfect marriage, job, church, hometown, or body.

## Stop Running

Coping with life and the circumstances that life brings can make us bitter or better. God may put us purposely in the places that require us to grow. Try to be happy where God places you. There will always be difficulties no matter where you go or whatever you do. What matters is how you handle what you have on your plate now.

Running away won't help things and could even delay your growth process. Whenever people in the Bible ran from God's will, God always made them come back and face it. A perfect example of that was the prophet Jonah. He was told to preach to the people of Nineveh but instead Jonah ran the other way. A trip to the belly of a whale and a seaweed supper changed all that. His suffering broke his pride and forced his surrender to God's will. Hardships have a way of making us much more flexible and manageable. 5

The difference between the words bitter and better is the small letter "l". It is our selfishness and our narcissism that must die. When we surrender, a little part of us dies so that our true self can emerge. Strive to become a person of love. "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," Jesus taught. (Matthew 5:48). The word perfection in Greek has the implication of becoming whole and complete. It is the end we must strive for. We achieve this goal by loving others.

We need to bloom wherever we are planted and look for the fulfillment of God's will in our life right where we live. It is tempting to think about what life could be like somewhere else. Look at your life right now. Most likely where God has you now is where he is calling you to bloom, love and find contentment.

It is easy to become negative, murmur, grumble, find fault and complain. You may want things to be different. An attitude like that delays the process of growth and begets further cynicism, negativity and unhappiness. Rather "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

The bottom line is: we cannot have life on our own terms. If you grumble about your problems all the time you are not growing, you are grasping for control. Offer God sacrifices of praise. That means, thank God in the midst of trials. It is a sacrifice because it is hard to offer God praise in the difficulties of life, but this is part of the surrender process too. In any sacrifice there is surrender. You must see God's will in the minutest parts of your life. As you do, give God praise. Gratitude will open up your heart to a new flow of life and peace.

God is calling everyone to die to self and to live according to his will. Do not struggle, deny or resist. Abandon yourself to the care of God. Life is a process of abandonment and letting go. Some things you may be able to change but most things you cannot change. Pray that you have courage, serenity and wisdom to surrender to God.

**The following prayer may be helpful in beginning this process:**

**Lord, I need your help.  
People, circumstances, and addictions are beyond my control.  
I let go...  
I want life to teach me.  
I surrender myself to you.  
I also need courage to change what I can.  
I pray for contentment in the situations I cannot change.  
I want to bloom where I am planted.  
I love you Lord.  
Amen.**

We are all heading toward the death experience. That moment will be an encounter with ultimate powerlessness and loss of control. But, our death can be an encounter with grace, a healing. We can expect God to be merciful and compassionate at the moment of our passing. Are you ready for the final surrender? Are you ready for the ultimate "letting go?" We can prepare ourselves well by surrendering ourselves to God now. We surrender by inviting God's power to take control of our will and actions. We must be adaptable and flexible when it comes to the negative people and circumstances of our lives. If you live in accord with God's will now, your moment of death won't be a struggle but a surrender to your natural transition. God is very compassionate. You can expect mercy when you pass. At our most desperate moment, God will be there for us. Our death is precious to God. May the Angels lead us into Paradise... Amen.

# Common Elements of Near-Death Experiences

There appears to be some common elements in people who undergo near-death experiences. First of all, after an accident or operating table experience, the person has the sensation of leaving the body. Some were able to observe themselves on the operating table after they left their body, and even to hear the doctor pronounce them dead! If this sounds fantastically strange to you, listen to these words from the Scriptures themselves: "I know a man [Paul himself] who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise – whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows – and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter." (2 Corinthians 12:2 – 4). Is Paul describing an out of body experience here?

The second common element of a near-death experience is the tunnel. After leaving the body the person has the sensation of being pulled or sucked through some type of tunnel, funnel, cylinder or vacuum. This passageway is the transition place between life on earth and the afterlife.

Next there is an encounter with the divine being. Most described God as being a light. There is a sense of his personality and goodness and love. This light is dazzling and glorious. People from various religious backgrounds describe the being as God, Christ, and Angel, or simply a being. This being usually does not communicate with the person in an audible voice, but through the transference of thoughts. Often people are asked questions such as, "Are you ready to die? Have you lived a worthy life? What have you done with your life? How have you loved?" The questions are asked not so much in condemnation as in love.

Fourth comes the judgment or life review. Perhaps you have heard of a person who had an accident or incident in which their life "passed before them." In a word, that is what happens before the being of light. Suddenly and quickly and without compromise, the individual's life is replayed before him or her. Some say their whole life was reviewed, while others claim that it was just the highlights. But all agree that it is quick and thorough and unarguable. The conclusion drawn by some who have experienced this is that the being of light is trying to show them that the meaning of life is to love others and acquire knowledge. This life review is a means of helping to motivate the person to do just that.

Next comes the sensation of returning to the body. Many report they feel the beam of light has allowed them to return to live on earth again. Some did not want to leave the light, but knew they had to. Once again there is the sensation of being pulled through some type of tunnel and returning to the body. When they do, suddenly they are back on the operating table, in the car accident or where ever they were as if no time had passed.

The final common element reported is a changed life. Transformation results because the person who had the near-death experience knows what has happened to them was real. Life takes on new meaning and becomes greatly appreciated and precious. An important fruit of the near-death experience is the understanding that loving other people is required of each of us. Just as the being of light loved them with generosity and warmth, so now those touched by that love want to love others in return. The need to learn was also expressed. Growing and learning are processes that continue even into the afterlife. Because of their new lease on life, these people tend to take advantage of every opportunity to expand their knowledge.

## No More Fear

After this experience, the fear of death is lessened or removed. The book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus came to "deliver all those who through fear of death were subjected to lifelong bondage." (Hebrews 2:15). While some fears come to us because of traumatic experiences, the fear of death may be the underlining root cause. Most nebulous, irrational fears stem from the primordial and even unconscious fear we all have of the cessation of our life. We fear the unknown as well as being out of control. We fear the loss of our consciousness.

Regarding the unknown, we are filled with confusion. We wonder, "What will happen?" Will it hurt? Will I simply cease to be? Will I panic and have feelings of suffocation?"

In the near death experience, much of the mystery of death is revealed to the person and he or she no longer fears the unknown. Most who have had near-death experiences talk about death as a transition or an entry to another state of consciousness. Since they have already experienced going through death, there is a new peace in their minds about it.

## Grieve Well

Grieving is something we all have to go through at one time or another in our life. 1 Thessalonians tells us, "We (Christians) don't grieve like the rest of the world, without hope." In the early Christian community, Paul reminded those who had lost loved ones of our "living" hope through Jesus. In fact, hope is one of the three things that lasts forever (faith and love are the other two). It is because of our sure hope that we can grieve differently from the rest of the world.

Heaven may be referred to as a "The Great Reunion." One day we will be reunited again and our reunion will be as if no time had passed. We will pick up right where we left off. The best is yet to come!

Allow yourself to grieve in your own way. Then, do not stay stuck. Move through the stages of grief and come to a peaceful acceptance. For those who are mourning at this time: "Grieve Well."

Do not get stuck in emotions. Be your own best friend and encourage yourself to keep moving. Your loved one would want that for you. God's grace in time brings healing.

In grief, you know there are stages such as shock, disbelief, overwhelming loss, sadness, bewilderment, despair, and a whole kaleidoscope of feelings. Try to move through these various emotions to "peaceful acceptance." You grieve well when you don't stay stuck in any one area but move to this hope filled acceptance of the passing of your beloved. Your acceptance moves you to reconstruct your life and remake yourself. Time and grace bring healing, but so does your own self encouragement. Your faith in God and in the future resurrection is foundational. All these ingredients put together will help you not to be at the mercy of your sorrowful feelings. Be strong, and do not allow yourself to be victimized by your emotions.



Grieving well also means you reconstruct your life. You remake yourself. Things have changed and you must adapt and change too. Simply put, you move forward.

When it comes to grieving, know that you will experience many feelings. Let them come and go. Some days will be better than others. There will be ups and downs. Do not let anyone tell you what you should feel. Everyone grieves in their own way. Grieving is a season in your life. New seasons and times are coming. Some may be helped by joining a grief group.

Do you know what an anchor does? Whenever a storm approaches, the ship is moved out of the safe harbor and anchored in open water. The anchor digs deep. When the wind blows and the waves swell high, the ship stands firm, strong, and unshakable because it is solidly anchored. Similarly, when the winds of grief blow and the waves of loneliness and sorrow lash us, we can stand immovable and unshakable because of our living hope.

Here are a few ways to cope with grieving:

Admit you are powerless over the grief.

Believe God has the power to help you.

Surrender yourself and your feelings and loved one to the care of God over and over again.

Be proactive about shifting your time from time spent with him/her to something else. Take responsibility for your grief!

Perhaps take up a new hobby, read, get involved at church/community and pray more.

Join a grief group.

Get a pet. Animals worked wonders...

Be your own best friend and steer yourself away from your negative thoughts.

Move forward. No one can do this for you. Do it for yourself.

Be kind to yourself. Exercise, take walks, get a good perspective on where you are in life and where you are going.

You are in a new season. Embrace it, celebrate, and do not resist it.

Have hope that things will get better in time... They will.

Jesus said: "Do not let your heart be troubled." Feelings can be overwhelming but you still have a choice. You have power. You do not have to be a victim of these feelings. Take responsibility for your own grieving. Remain strong, firm, and secure. We grieve with hope. Ours is a living hope that anchors our soul. Hope lives and last forever. One day it will be hope realized. Grieve well because the Great Reunion is coming and the Best is yet to come.

# The Sunset of Our Lives



**Link Enclosed on How To Pray  
The Chaplet of Divine Mercy For Your Love Ones**

[https://www.pamphletstoinspire.com/\\_files/ugd/a84285\\_8b3e3c2893638e5fd10bd9d166b12ce1.pdf](https://www.pamphletstoinspire.com/_files/ugd/a84285_8b3e3c2893638e5fd10bd9d166b12ce1.pdf)

**Novena of Surrender to Jesus Christ**

[https://www.pamphletstoinspire.com/\\_files/ugd/a84285\\_43ed6af8c8e446f0ad1aeb86429066f9.pdf](https://www.pamphletstoinspire.com/_files/ugd/a84285_43ed6af8c8e446f0ad1aeb86429066f9.pdf)