

MAKING A CASE FOR HEAVEN
(WITH HELP FROM AN EYE-WITNESS, THE
LATE BETTY REINCKE FARLEY)

John 14:1-6

THE MEANING OF “DEATH” IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A. When the soul/spirit “separates” from the body and living functions cease.

- Genesis 35:18 “And it came about as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Benoni; ...”
- Luke 23:46 (on the cross) - Jesus said, “into your hands I commit my spirit. ... and, he breathed his last.”

B. Resurrection vs resuscitation.

WHY TALK ABOUT A PERSON'S UNVERIFIABLE TESTIMONY ABOUT HEAVEN?

A. Because heaven is important to God.

- Heaven – 463x in Bible (ESV)

B. Important to us: (Belief in Heaven and Hell, All Adults)

- Heaven: **Yes – 72%** (2003 - 76%*)
- Hell: **Yes – 58%** (2003 – 71%*)

Pew Research – 2014; *Barna Research Center – 2003

C. Because Jesus gave us her experience to share.

D. Her account is validated by Scripture.

NEW TESTAMENT RECORDS RESUSCITATIONS

1. **Lazarus** – died and came back to life at command of Jesus, “Lazarus, come forth.” John 11:43
2. **Young girl** – died and Jesus brought her back to life. Mark 5:37f
3. **Young man** (only son of a widow) – Luke 7:14
4. **Tabitha (Dorcas)** – Acts 9:40 (Peter)

1. HEAVEN IS A LITERAL PLACE PREPARED BY JESUS WITH HIS FOLLOWERS IN MIND.

John 14:2-3:

- A. Many “rooms” (“abodes”; “homes”; “dwelling places”; not “mansions” - not about economic prosperity but spiritual prosperity)
 - B. I go to prepare a place; “specific” place.
 - C. With you in mind – it is for you, individually, for eternity.
- (See D. Jeremiah – *Answers to Your Questions about Heaven*)

1. HEAVEN IS A LITERAL PLACE PREPARED BY JESUS WITH HIS FOLLOWERS IN MIND.

- 2Co 5:1, For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
- Heb 9:24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

2. DEATH IS LIKENED TO GOING THROUGH A DOOR THAT YOU CAN ONLY BE LED TO.

- Luke 16: 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.
- John 10:3-4 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice....⁷ So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."

BETTY'S TESTIMONY WAS THAT JESUS HAD TO LEAD HER AND ON HIS TIME, NOT HERS.

- “I wanna go. I’m ready. Praise Jesus. Please take me. ... He’s up there. But how do I get up there? ..., “You have to take me.””
- “I’m going today. ... Nope. He’s postponed it. I’m going tomorrow” (Monday).

IF YOU ARE NOT LED TO HEAVEN, BY DEFAULT, YOU
GO THROUGH THE WRONG DOOR.

John 10:1 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold [heaven] by the door but climbs in by another way, **that man is a thief and a robber.** Cf Matt 22:11f

Matt. 22:11-13 "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. 12 And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

3. BELIEF IN JESUS IS THE ONLY “PREPARATION” FOR THE TRIP

- John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (ESV)
- John 10:9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.
- John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,

SAVED BY JESUS ALONE

- Rom. 3:23-24 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
- Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

BETTY'S TESTIMONY INDICATES SHE WAS PREPARED THROUGH JESUS.

- What does Jesus look like?
- "I can't describe him. He's just beautiful. There are all kinds of people there, and he loves and cares for them all.
- "I love Jesus, and Jesus loves me."
- Praise Jesus. Please take me. Praise him, Praise him.
- Lifting of her arms in praise and worship, declaring her love for Jesus. Constantly.

BETTY'S TESTIMONY LINES UP WITH SCRIPTURE.

1. "The water is so **beautiful.**" Revelation 22:1 Then the angel showed me **the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.**
2. "And the streets **are golden.**" Rev. 21:21 "... and the street of the city was **pure gold, like transparent glass.** (not paved in gold)
3. "The house is **glorious.** But **you all can't come.** We all won't fit. **Its just for me.**" John 14:2

BETTY TRANSFORMATION IS EVIDENCE THAT HEAVEN IS REAL AND JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET THERE.

- Before she died:
 - Suffering from **dementia**. Didn't recognize or respond rationally the days before she died.
 - Abnormal fear of death (for years)
 - All families have problems. Angers, disputes, expectations, brokenness.

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- After she returned:
 - Dementia gone - Passed cognitive tests, recognized everyone, no evidence of dementia
 - Fear of death (for years) - Wanted to go back.
 - Family healing – all she could talk about was how she loved her daughters, her grands, etc. (even Wayne)

BETTY'S TESTIMONY REMINDS US WHEN WE ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF JESUS, **WE ARE CHANGED.**

- Rev. 21:22-23 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. (ESV)

NEXT STEPS

1. Share the story of Betty's after-death testimony with one person this week. Direct them to the church website to see for themselves.
2. If you have not surrendered your life to Jesus, do so today.
3. If you have doubts, fears, surrender them to Jesus today. Jesus is calling us today.