



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Life and Death

"Live life to the fullest!" "You only go around once, so make it count!" "Go for the gusto!" "Eat, drink, and be merry ... for tomorrow we die!"

How often we are urged to eagerly, almost frantically, take all that life has to offer. Yet, how often these encouragements are silently set against a backdrop of mortality, the realization that we will eventually run out of time on this earth and die.

We don't normally talk much about death. We don't typically joke about it, either. We accept it as a reality, but one that makes us uncomfortable, so we prefer to ignore it.

Our discomfort with death is not surprising, since death represents much of what we don't like about life - loss, significant change, the unknown, vulnerability, the absence of control, weakness, humility. Yet, as with all of life's difficulties we are unable to change, we must come to peace with the reality of our mortality. More than that - we must embrace it as a key element in our life mix.

Exactly what role death plays for us and how it impacts our life

depends on our view of life as well as death. For example, if death is the end point of life, if there is no life continuing after death, then the reality of our impending death should spur us ever more intently toward getting and experiencing everything we can during this lifetime, because once it's over ... it's over, and nothing is left but oblivion. If, however, we believe that there is more to life than our experiences on this earth, and if there is more to reality than just physical reality, then death becomes only a momentary chapter break in the ongoing saga of life. It simply ushers in a change of venue to one unified, ongoing life that begins at conception and continues for eternity.

To be truly alive, then, in this world, is to see beyond the limitations of death, to embrace the significant connection between life before and life after death, and to create a unified meaning and purpose for life that embraces both. To do anything less is to cheapen our earthly experience into disposable clutter to be discarded at death.

But why must there be a death and a change of venue in our ongoing life? It suggests that there must be a

meaningful relationship between our pre-death life and our post-death life. Many world religions describe a *performance* connection between these two life segments. What we do or how well we perform in our pre-death life determines the quality of our experience in our post-death life. Uniquely, Christianity recognizes a *relationship* connection between the life segments. It declares that a personal relationship with Jesus (which opens the door to a personal relationship with the Creator God) determines the meaning and purpose of our life on this earth. This life focus, then, carries over and reaches fulfillment in the life we continue to live with Him after death.

Clearly, death has, for too long, been used as a tool of fear to keep us from looking beyond our earthly life experience. Let's confront this fear, move beyond it, and, with proper respect, adjust our perspective to recognize and embrace all of our (continuing) life.

It might just make a difference in how we choose to live our life today.



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work.

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Is Death "No Big Deal"?

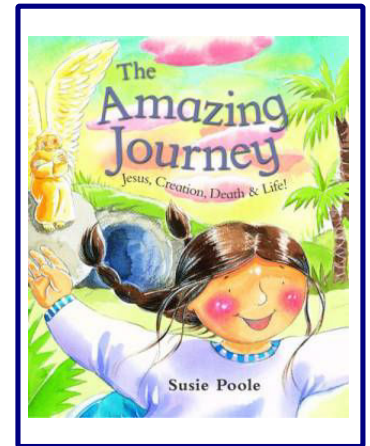
Since death is but a momentary piece of an ongoing life, can we assume then that death is no big deal? Absolutely not! Death is a point of dramatic change, both for the one who dies and for those who love and value this person.

For those left behind, the death of a loved one imposes significant loss - the loss of important relationship and the loss of "life as it used to be". It can also mark the loss of long held dreams, even the loss of felt security. All of these painful losses require a time of grieving and adjustment.

For the one who dies, earthly life is obviously over. Whatever was earned and gathered during that lifetime is left behind. Whatever was not done remains undone. And, even more than that, the course of post-death life is set. The lead-up is over, and there are no "do-overs".

Yes, death is a big deal! So let's respect it, recognizing the important and powerful role it plays. But by conscious choice, let's focus on the more powerful force of life within and around us.

After all ... life is what really lasts!



"Live life each day as you would climb a mountain.

An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal in mind, but many beautiful scenes are to be observed from each new vantage point. Climb slowly, steadily, enjoying each passing moment; and the view from the summit will serve as a fitting climax for the journey."

- Harold B. Melchart