

My Loved One Just Died—Is She in Heaven?

One of the most difficult things a Christian can face when grieving is knowing whether or not their loved went to heaven.

No one wants to consider the alternative to heaven.

No one wants that alternative for their loved one.

Most, if not all, of us have faced a loved one's death without being fully certain of their salvation, which leads to an even greater depth of grief, not knowing for certain where they are.

While many people would want to comfort us, telling us that our loved one was a good person and "surely God wouldn't send a good person to hell," for those of us who understand that good works are not a basis for eternity in heaven, this is small comfort.

Here are three things to remember when you're not certain your loved one is in heaven:

1. God is a God of mercy.

Yes, God is a just God, and those who defiantly refuse God's gift of salvation will go to hell. However, God is also a God of mercy. This contrast is the perfect nature of God: He is both just and merciful. If need be, God will reveal Himself in human form if that is what it will take for a person to surrender himself to Him.

2. God doesn't want any to perish.

No one is born predestined to destruction and hell. No one. The Bible says that it is God's will that none perish, and God will go to great lengths to call a person to salvation.

Does this mean that every person will be saved? No. Because God has chosen to limit Himself to human will. This is the astounding thing about God. He is all-powerful and could make us surrender to Him, but He chooses to limit that power to our will. Therefore, we can choose to circumvent His will; we can choose not to surrender to Him.

But God will reach out until a person's final breath to call them to salvation.

3. We can't know what went on in the final hours of their life.

While a person may not be fully conscious, or conscious at all, in the final moments of their life, until the last beat of their heart, God is calling them.

And mental consciousness is not required for salvation.

While a person may no longer have their mental capacities, their spirit is still responsive, and God is reaching out.

This is why Jesus warned us so strongly against judging others. We cannot possibly know where a person has gone once they've died, and to assume we know what took place between God and them in those final seconds, in those final heartbeats, is to be incredibly presumptuous.

God is a God of mercy and grace, and He will do everything necessary to call a person to salvation until their final breath.

While we may never know for certain whether or not our loved one is in heaven, we can make a choice to trust in God's mercy and grace, in His love and justice.

Without the merciful and loving nature of God, full of grace and justice, none of us would have any hope in this world.

And this truth is the ultimate comfort for us all. {eo}

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