

Doctor Warns Hellish Near-Death Experiences May Be Far More Common Than Reported

A medical scientist who studied near-death experiences says frightening encounters of Hell during clinical death may be more common than many people realize.

Dr. Orson Wedgwood, a New Zealand-based healthcare researcher and author, told the Daily Mail that negative near-death experiences are likely underreported because many people either do not share them or cannot remember them.

“Some people may not report them because they are ashamed, or some may not remember due to dissociative amnesia, [that is] the experience was so horrific the brain stops them remembering it to avoid reliving the trauma,” Wedgwood said.

According to Wedgwood, only a percentage of people who are clinically dead report near-death experiences. Of those, a smaller percentage describe encounters marked by fear, dread and torment. He believes the true number is much higher.

“Dissociative amnesia due to the experiences being so bad may mean that as people age they are more likely to have a negative experience but are unable to remember – this is psychological not physiological,” he said.



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Wedgwood's research examined scientific studies alongside testimonies from people who reported out-of-body experiences during medical emergencies. His work led him to conclude that reports of both heavenly and hellish encounters deserve serious attention.

One recurring theme in negative experiences involved encounters with hostile beings. Wedgwood recounted testimony from one individual who described hearing voices beyond an open door while outside his body in a hospital room. The voices initially appeared welcoming before becoming violent.

"The pain felt real, and the fear was absolute," Wedgwood said while recounting the testimony.

He also pointed to research involving consciousness during cardiac arrest. Wedgwood cited a study led by Dr. Sam Parnia that found bursts of brain activity associated with higher cognitive function during extended CPR efforts.

Wedgwood said many researchers have dismissed negative near-death experiences while accepting positive ones. He pointed to a 2019 study published in the journal *Memory* that found positive and negative near-death experiences shared many of the same characteristics.

"[They] concluded that they share the same set of traits as positive NDEs such as feeling more real than life, timelessness, 360 degree vision and heightened senses, except positive feelings were replaced by dread, fear and horror," he said.

Discussions about hellish near-death experiences bring to mind the testimony of Bill Wiese, author of the bestselling book *23 Minutes in Hell*.



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Wiese has shared for years that he was shown a place of torment that included overwhelming darkness, extreme heat, demonic creatures, screams of agony and a crushing sense of hopelessness. He described being confined in a prison-like chamber and witnessing suffering beyond anything experienced on earth.

At the center of Wiese's message is the conviction that hell is real and that Jesus Christ provides a way of salvation through His death and resurrection.

The Bible repeatedly warns about eternal judgment while also proclaiming God's offer of redemption through Christ. Jesus spoke of both heaven and hell, calling people to repentance and faith.

We do not respond to these accounts with fear. We respond with gratitude for the grace of God and renewed urgency to share the gospel. The same Savior who warned of judgment stretched out His arms on the cross so that no one would perish but have everlasting life.

These testimonies remind us that eternity matters, every soul matters, and the message of Jesus Christ remains humanity's greatest hope. Our calling is clear: remain faithful, share the gospel boldly and point people to the One who conquered sin and death.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a journalism background from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and at the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man's Commentary* and a contributor to Charisma magazine. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.