

Overcoming The Fear Of Death

Hebrews 2

Sermon Series: Fear{Less}

Introduction: You may be thinking that you don't want to think about death in church because there seems to be so much going on around us, but Rick Warren is right when he says, "The only time most people think about eternity is at funerals, and then it's often shallow, sentimental thinking, based on ignorance. You may feel it's morbid to think about death, but actually it's unhealthy to live in denial of death and not consider what is inevitable. Only a fool would go through life unprepared for what we all know will eventually happen. You need to think more about eternity, not less." Pastor Warren is correct. Are you ready to die? Are you afraid of death? How can we be ready to face death? How can we overcome the fear of death? The answer connects to the Christmas story, and we see it spelled out for us in Hebrews 2.

1. Jesus is God who became a man in order to die for our sins.

The Incarnation and Virgin Birth

Background in Chapter 1:1-8

This is basic Christianity, the gospel, that we need to be settled on.

Joe Carter, The Gospel Coalition:

"The Background: A survey conducted by the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University find that American adults today increasingly adopt a "salvation-can-be-earned" perspective. A plurality of adults (48 percent) believe that if a person is generally good, or does enough good things during their life, they will "earn" a place in heaven. Only one-third of adults (35 percent) disagree.

A majority of Americans who describe themselves as Christian (52 percent) also accept a "works-oriented" means to God's acceptance—even those associated with churches whose official doctrine says eternal salvation comes only from embracing Jesus Christ as savior. Almost half of all adults associated with Pentecostal (46 percent), mainline Protestant (44 percent), and evangelical (41 percent) churches, as well as nearly two-thirds of Catholics (70 percent), hold that view.

While about 65 percent of American adults describe themselves as Christians, only about half (54 percent) believe they will experience heaven after they die. Only one-third of adults (33 percent) believe they will go to heaven solely because of confessing their sins and embracing Jesus as their savior. Another one-in-five expecting to experience heaven

are counting on earning their way in or because they embrace universalism (i.e., that God will let all people into heaven).

Among those with other views, 15 percent said they don't know what will happen after they die; 13 percent said there is no life after death; 8 percent expect to be reincarnated; and another 8 percent believe they will go to a place of purification prior to entering heaven. A mere 2 percent believe they will go to hell."

2. When we trust Jesus and are forgiven of our sins, we are set free from the bondage of the fear of death.

- Explain the sense in which Satan has the power of death
- Explain what death is biblically
- Talk about heaven and hell
- Talk about why we need forgiveness (John 3:36) and how it relates to the fear of death

3. It is urgently necessary for us to respond to this message and be ready to face death. (v. 1-4)

Hebrews 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." **Are you ready?**