

DEATH AND AFTERLIFE

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- What happens at death?
- Does our soul sleep?
- Are unbelievers annihilated at death?
- What about these afterlife experiences people report and are documented in books?
- Have people actually been to heaven?

**FALSE VIEWS
OF THE
AFTERLIFE**

SOUL SLEEP

- Soul sleep is the teaching that when a person dies, his or her soul “sleeps” until the time of the resurrection.
- A person therefore is not aware or conscious.
- This has been taught by Seventh Day Adventists and by Jehovah’s Witnesses (also teach annihilation).
- This teaching is usually based on two verses in the book of Ecclesiastes or in the gospels (Luke and John) or 1 Corinthians 15.

SOUL SLEEP

- Eccl. 9:5 - “For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing.”
- Eccl. 12:7 - “and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”
- Solomon is teaching that “all is vanity” and the futility of life when not lived for the Lord. He is not teaching a doctrine about death or soul sleep.

SOUL SLEEP

- Luke 8:5 - Jesus said, "Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping."
- John 11:11 - Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him."
- Jesus sometimes uses the word that we translate as sleep to describe people who have died.
- Paul does the same: "most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:6).

SOUL SLEEP

- Neither Jesus nor Paul teach soul sleep as evidenced by these verses:
 - Luke 23:43 - Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."
 - 2 Corinthians 5:8 - "prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."
 - Philippians 1:21 - "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

UNIVERSALISM

- Universalism is the teaching that all people will be saved.
- Some Christian groups suggest that the death of Jesus has reconciled everyone to God.
- Jesus, Paul, and John teach that our belief is essential.
- John 3:36 - "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

UNIVERSALISM

- Romans 10:9 - “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
- Romans 10:13 - “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
- John 20:31 - “these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

ANNIHILATIONISM

- Annihilationism is the teaching that the unbeliever will be annihilated at death.
- This belief is often promoted because people don't like the idea of a person suffering eternally. Sometimes it has been taught because people think the idea of eternal punishment makes God unjust.
- Romans 6:23 - "wages of sin is death."
- Philippians 3:9 - "whose end is "destruction."

ANNIHILATIONISM

- The problem with this view are the verses with the phrase “forever and ever.”
- These verses talk about an eternal kingdom “forever and ever” (1 Timothy 1:17 and Revelation 5:13).
- These verses talk about eternal damnation “forever and ever” (Revelation 14:11; 19:3; 20:10).
- There are also many verses that talk about degrees of punishment (Matt. 10-11; Luke 12; John 16; Rev. 20).

**BIBLICAL
PERSPECTIVE
ON THE
AFTERLIFE**

MATTHEW 25

- Matthew 25:41 - Then he will say to those on his left, “Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”
- Matthew 25:46 - “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”
- Notice the words “eternal” and “fire.” This sets aside the teaching of annihilation.
- Eternal (*aionion*) means “everlasting, without end.”

MATTHEW 25

- Is the word “fire” merely a figure of speech?
- Jesus used a concept we could understand in human terms. The experience most likely could be worse than earthly language could communicate.
- Hell was made for Satan, but those who follow him also follow him to hell.
- The horror of hell is the eternal separation from God.

LUKE 16:19-31

- Contrast in life: The rich man was wealthy in earthly goods but had no heavenly goods. Lazarus was poor in this world but truly a rich man, “as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.”
- Contrast in death: The rich man was buried with great pomp. We know nothing of the beggar’s burial.
- Contrast in afterlife: Lazarus was at Abraham’s side while the rich man was in torment in hell.

2 CORINTHIANS 5

- 2 Corinthians 5:8 - “we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.”
- This is a reminder of C.H. Spurgeon’s famous 1861 sermon: “To die or not to die.”
- This passage teaches that there is an interval between death and the resurrection, where we are absent from the body but still conscious (no soul sleep) and in the presence of the Lord.

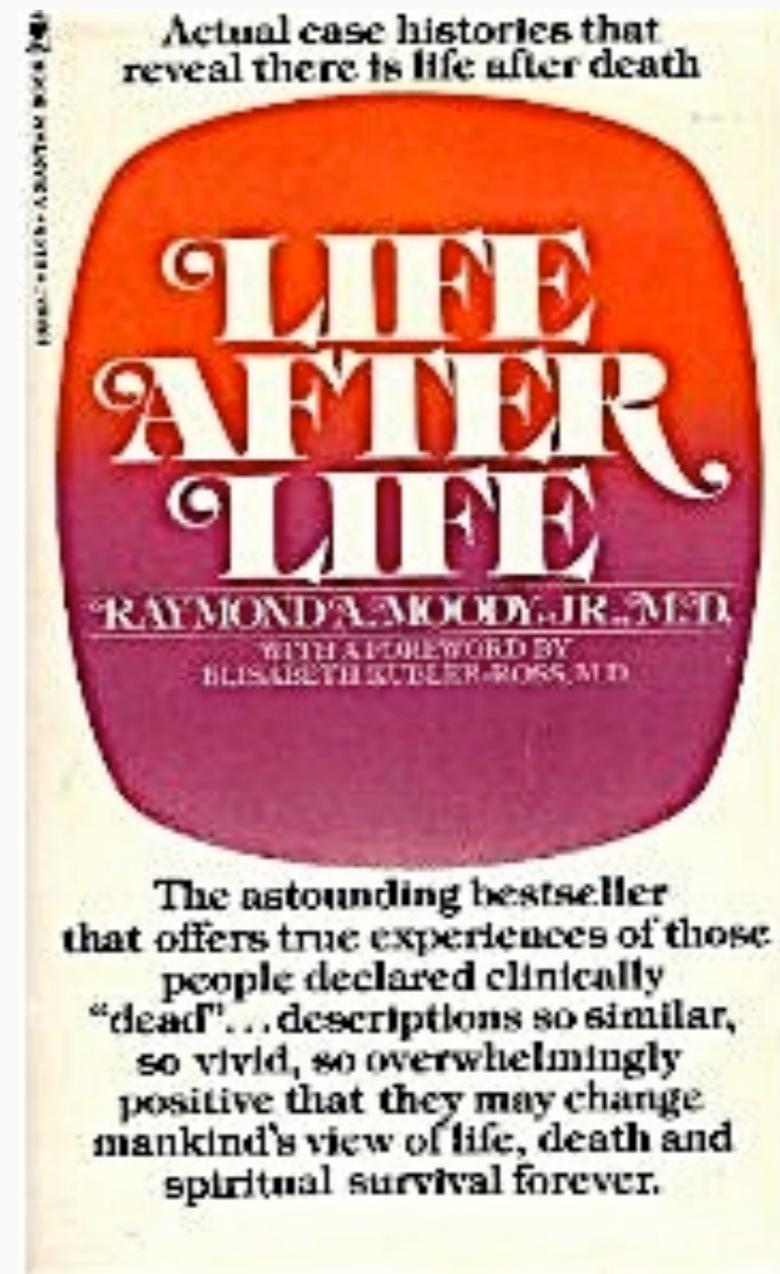
REVELATION 14

- Revelation 14:9-10 - “If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”
- Torment (*basanizo*) means to vex, to cause grevous pain, and to torment.

AFTERLIFE EXPERIENCES

NEAR-DEATH ENCOUNTERS

- Elisabeth Kubler-Ross and Raymond Moody began to document afterlife experiences.
- This book sold 13 million copies.
- Many other books have been written since then.

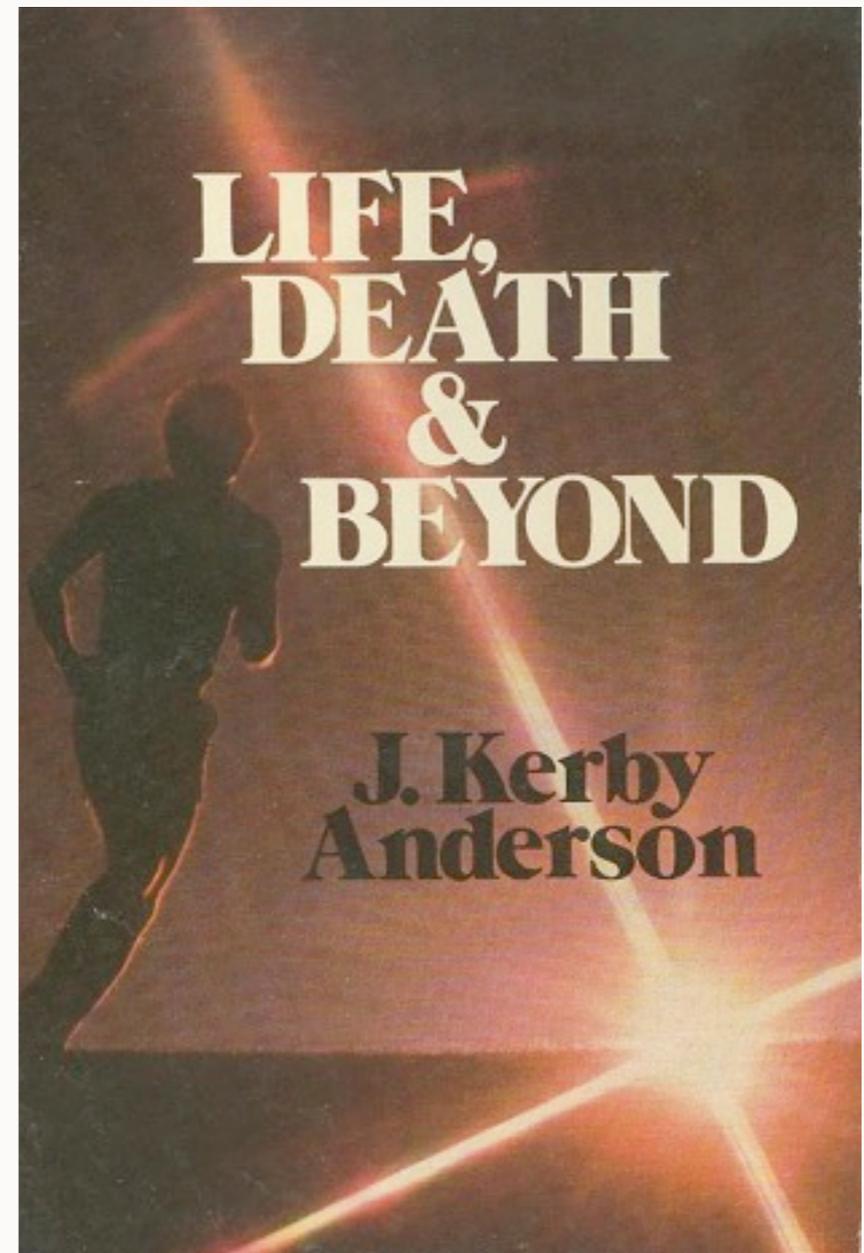


NEAR-DEATH ENCOUNTERS

- Medical studies say that 11 to 30 percent of all who survive a cardiac arrest report some kind of near-death experience.
- What is usually reported is that their conscious mind appears to be independent of their physical body (out of body experience).
- Some people report seeing a Being of Light.

ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCES

- Physiological
- Psychological
- Pharmacological
- Paranormal

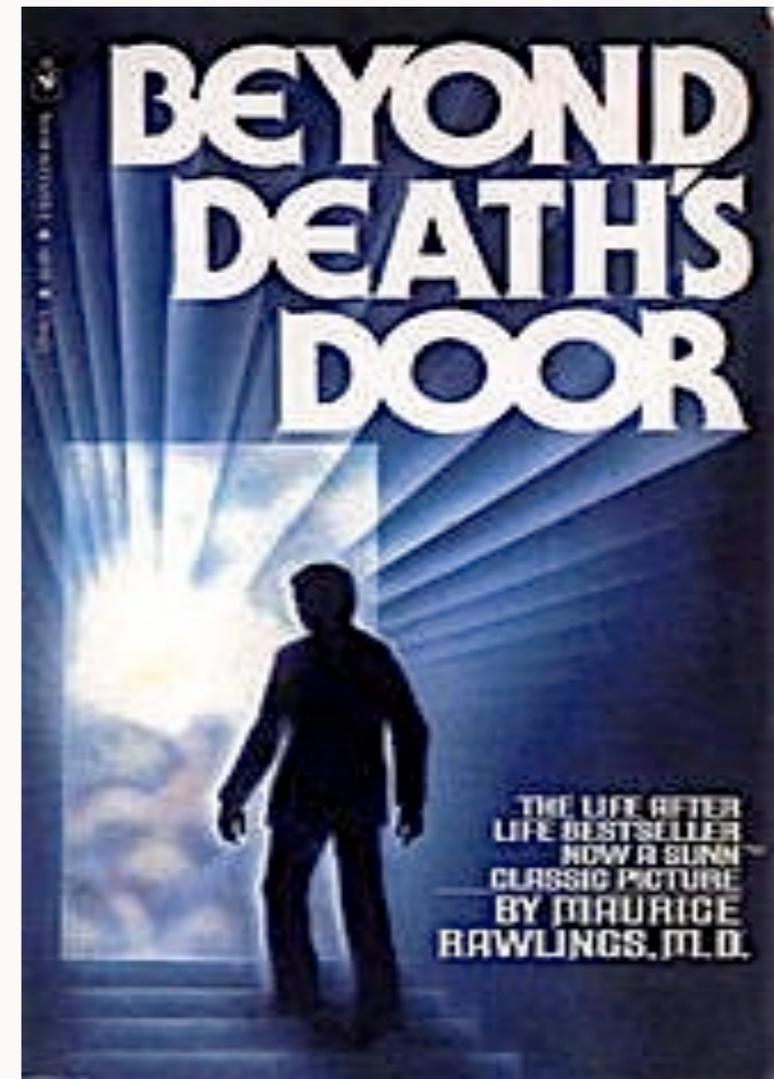


ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCES

- Did these people really die?
- Hebrews 9:27 tells us that it is appointed for us to die once, and after that comes the judgment.
- Death and a near-death experience are a different phenomenon.

ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCES

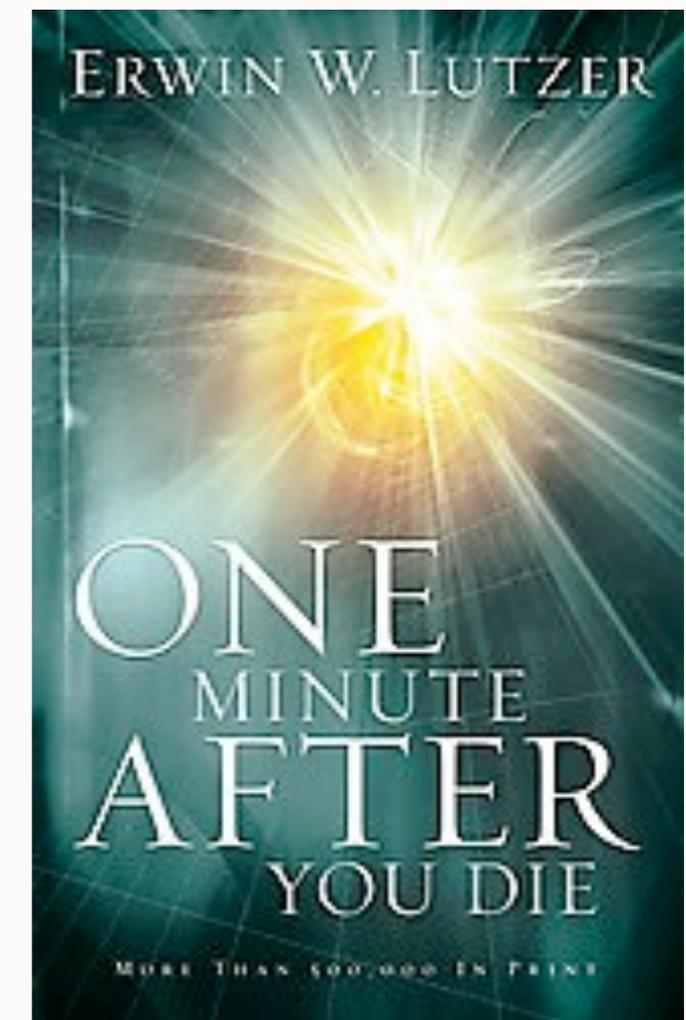
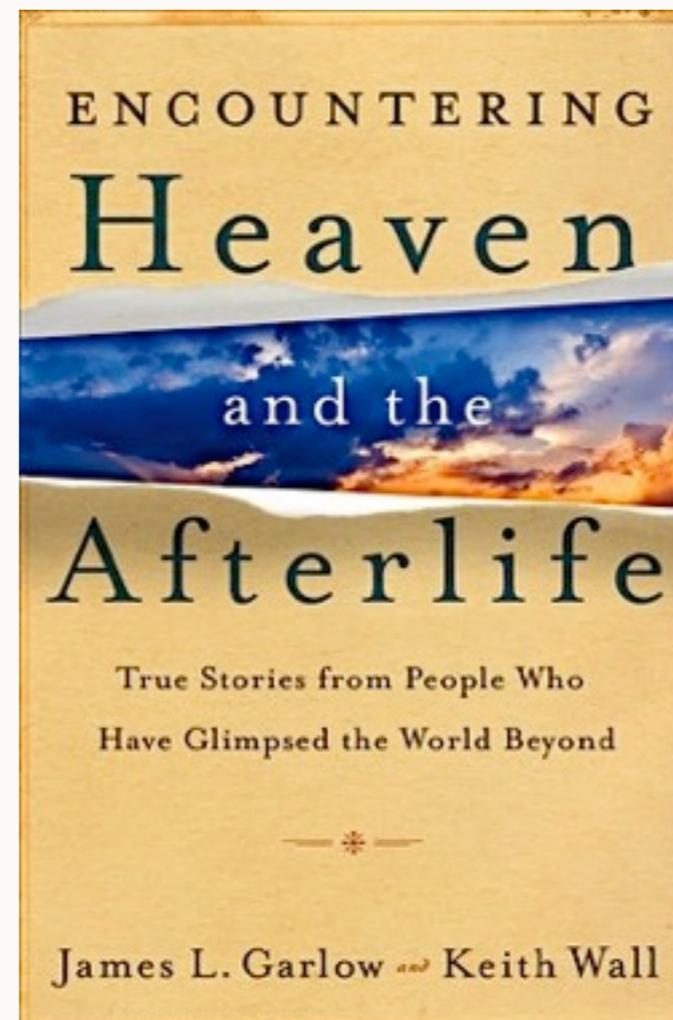
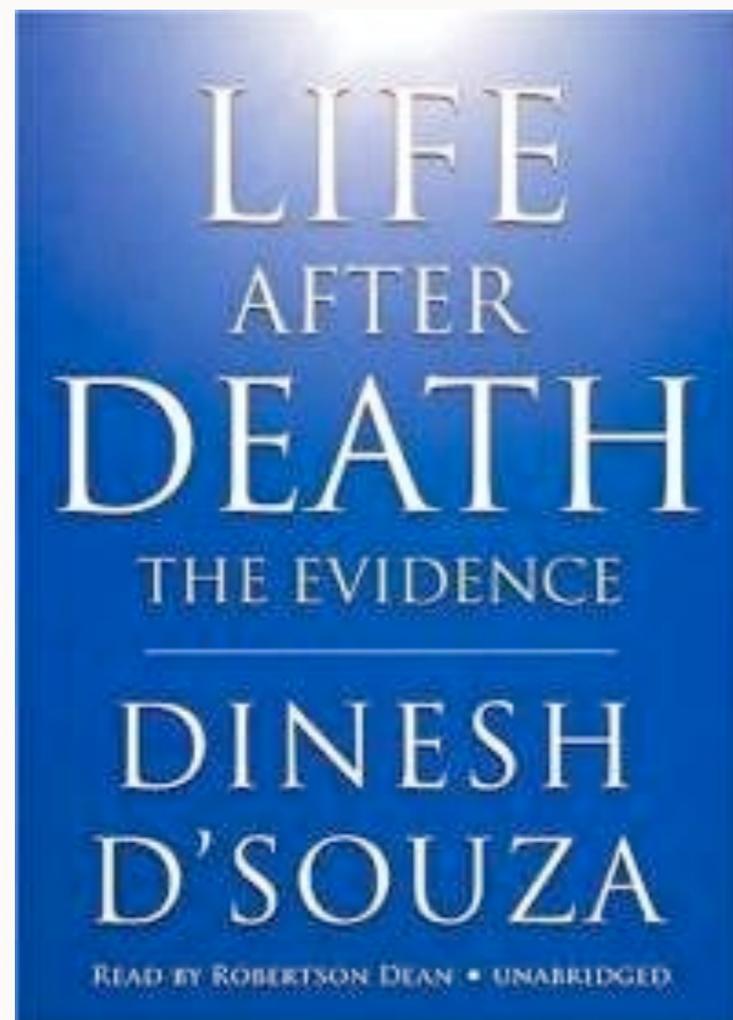
- Are there any unpleasant experiences?
- Maurice Rawlings, M.D.
- Cardiologist - treadmill
- Most people suppressed unpleasant experiences



ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCES

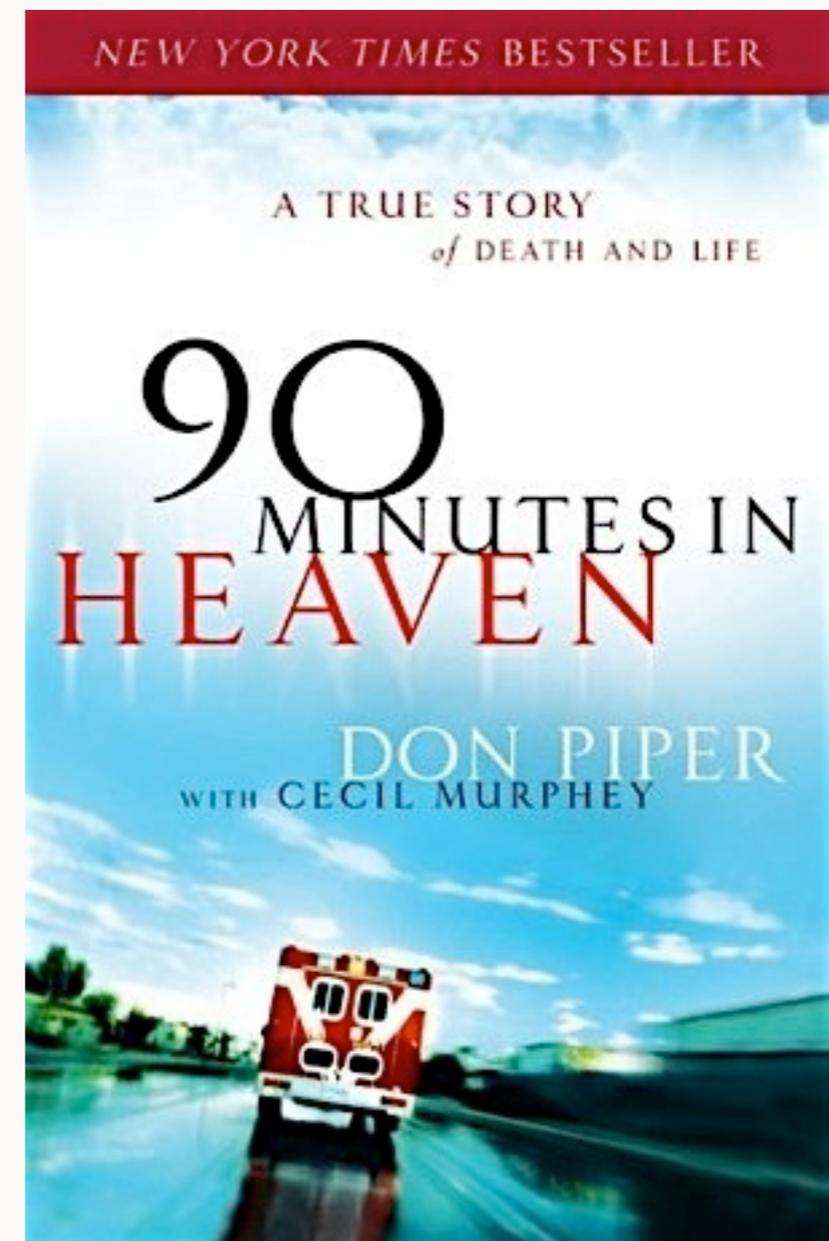
- Could some of these experiences be a spiritual counterfeit?
- We are always to “test the spirits to see whether they are from God” (1 John 4:1).
- Satan disguises himself as an “angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14).

CHRISTIAN AUTHORS



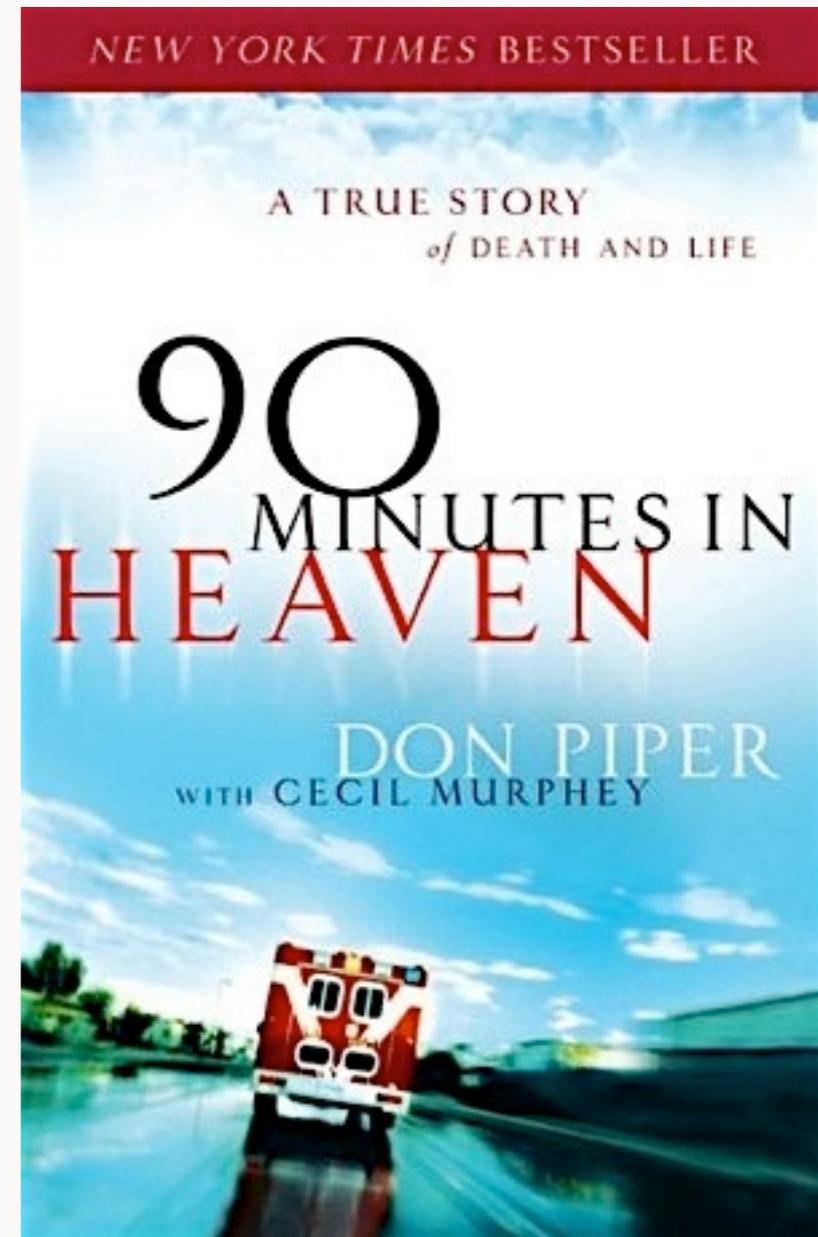
90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN

- January 18, 1989
- Baptist minister Don Piper and Ford Escort struck by an 18-wheel truck.
- Roof crushed, steering wheel impaled his chest, dashboard on legs.



90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN

- Paramedics arrived, found no sign of life, covered him with a tarp.
- A fellow pastor prayed over him while waiting for the medical examiner to arrive.



90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN

- Don Piper says he went straight to Heaven and experienced things he describes as amazing and beautiful.
- He met family members, such as his great grandmother and joined a Heavenly Choir that proceeded into the Gates of Heaven.

90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN

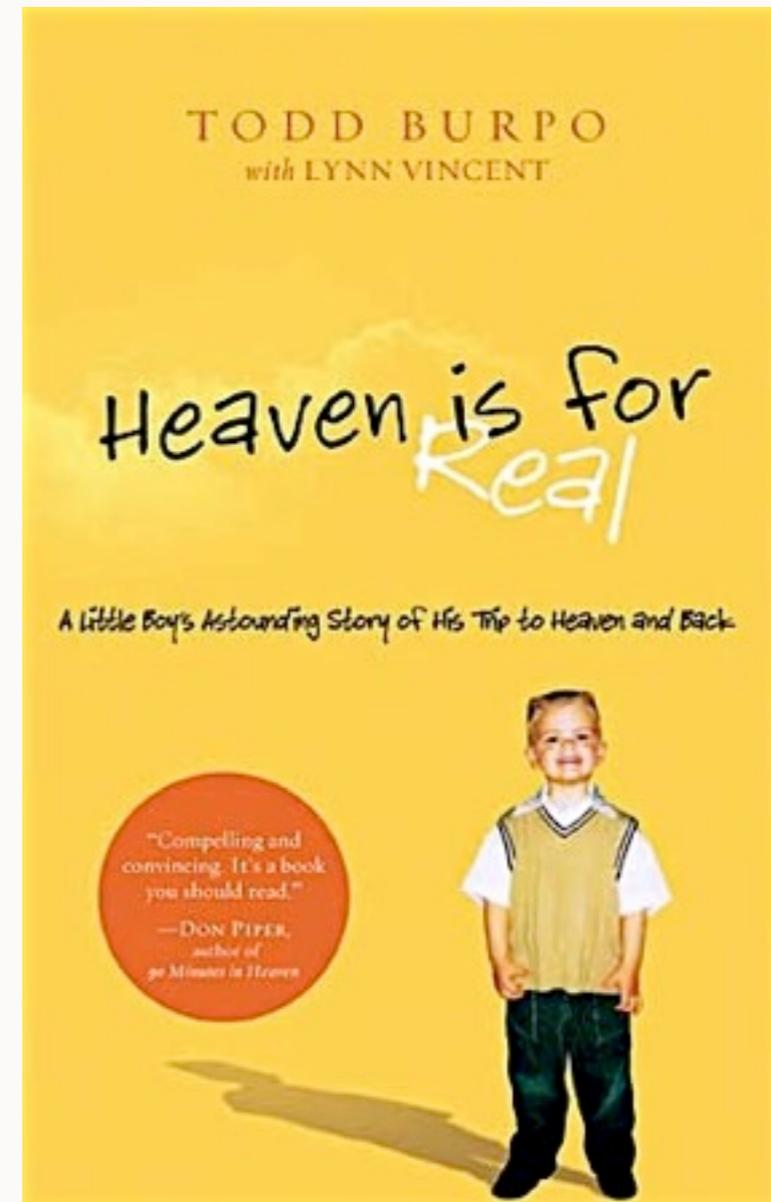
- Timeless - Don Piper insists that there is no sense of time in heaven.
- “Time had no meaning” (p. 24).
- “There is no time there” (p. 27)
- Seems to contradict Isaiah 6:1-13 and Revelation 8:1 (silence for half hour).

90 MINUTES IN HEAVEN

- Jesus - Don Piper did not see Jesus in heaven.
- He explains that “if I had actually seen God, I would never have wanted to return” (p. 33).
- Still there is little focus on Christ and even the biblical account.

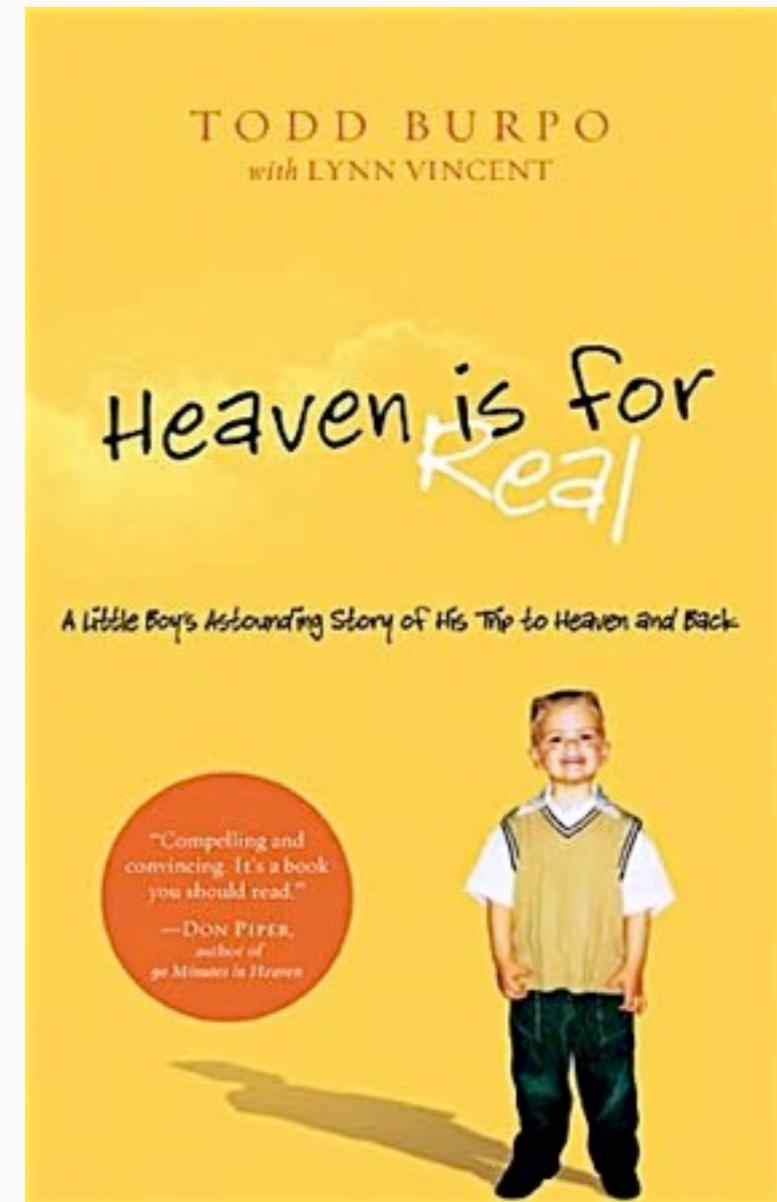
HEAVEN IS FOR REAL

- Colton Burpo (3), son of Todd and Sonja Burpo
- Not the traditional near- death experience, had a ruptured appendix.
- Began to explain what happened to him.



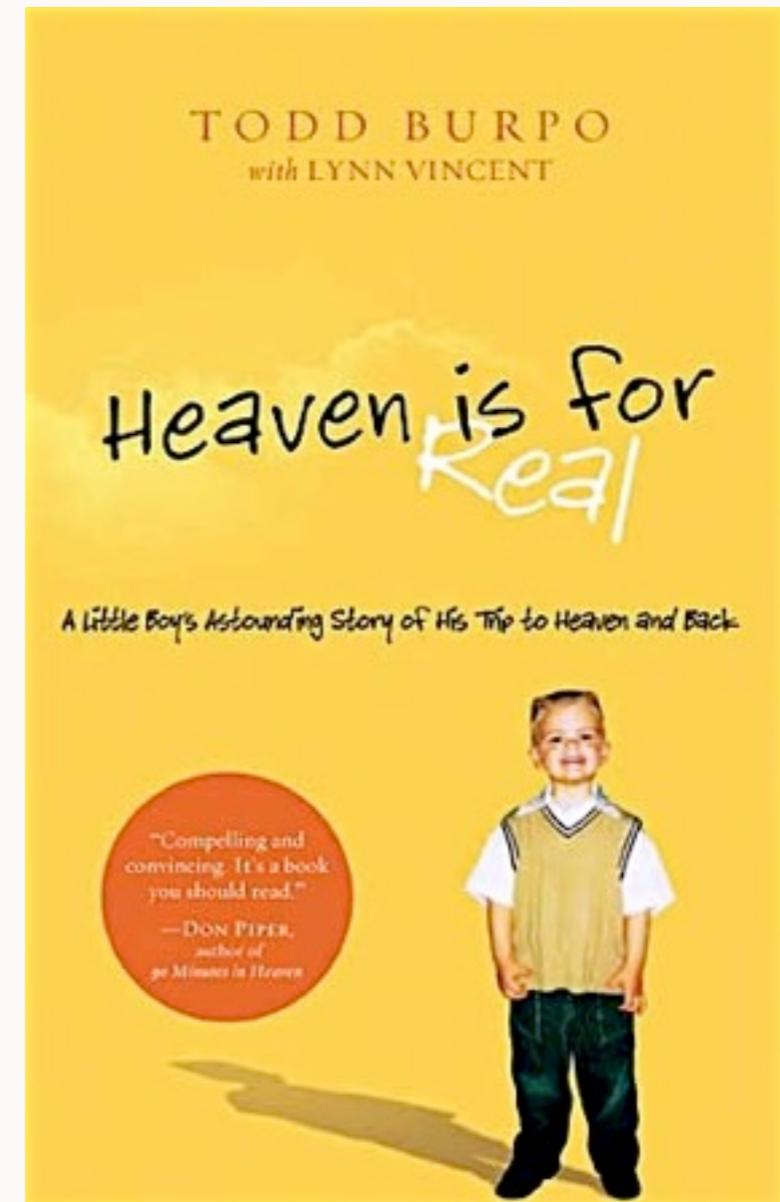
HEAVEN IS FOR REAL

- Sat on Jesus' lap
- Met his sister who died in his mother's womb
- Met his great granddad (who told him things about his father that his father had never told him)



HEAVEN IS FOR REAL

- All the people had wings of various sizes.
- All the people had a light above their head.
- Nobody is old in heaven.
- God is a Trinity.



HEAVEN IN FOR REAL

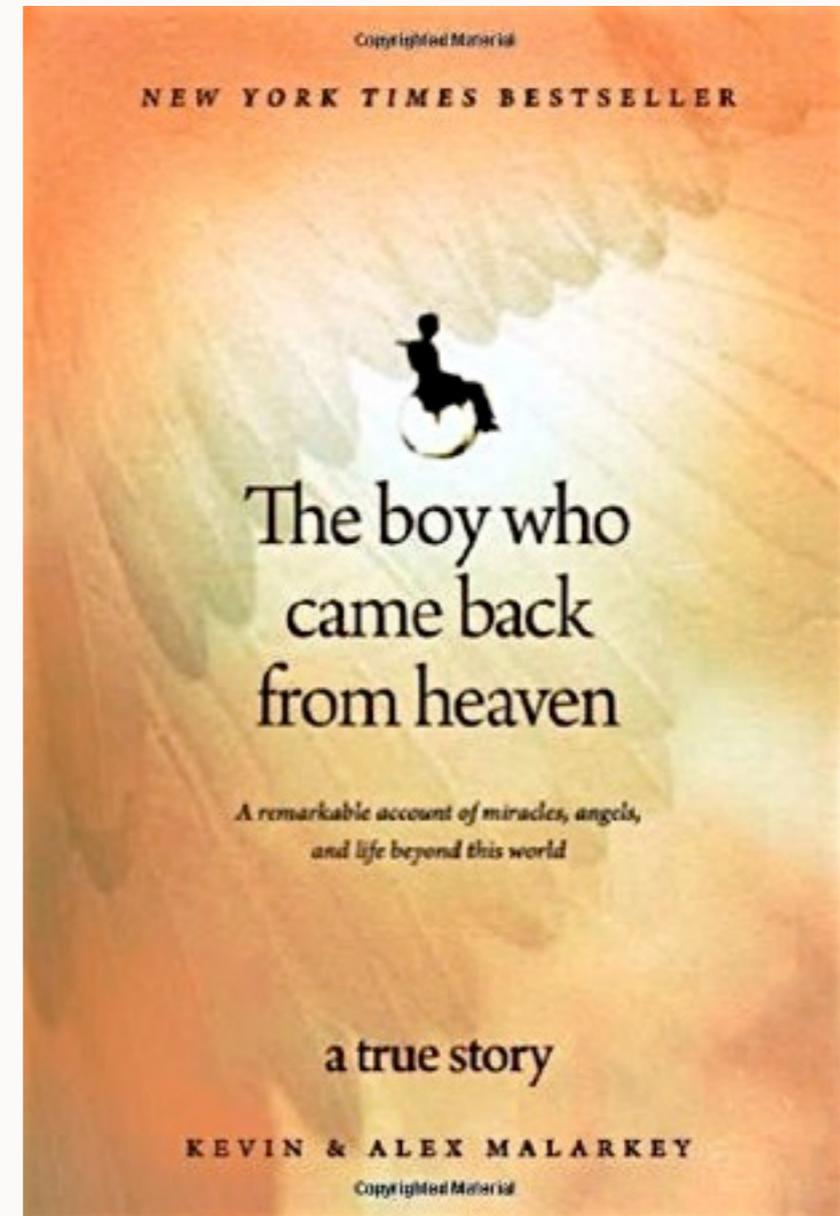
- Wings - everyone, including Colton, has wings in heaven.
- That fits popular lore about heaven more than it fits any biblical description of heaven.
- Some angels have wings, but most do not.

HEAVEN IN FOR REAL

- Halo - everyone has a light above their head, is this a halo?
- Once again that fits popular lore about people in heaven.
- It was a popular view in Greek and Roman culture, even in the Middle Ages.

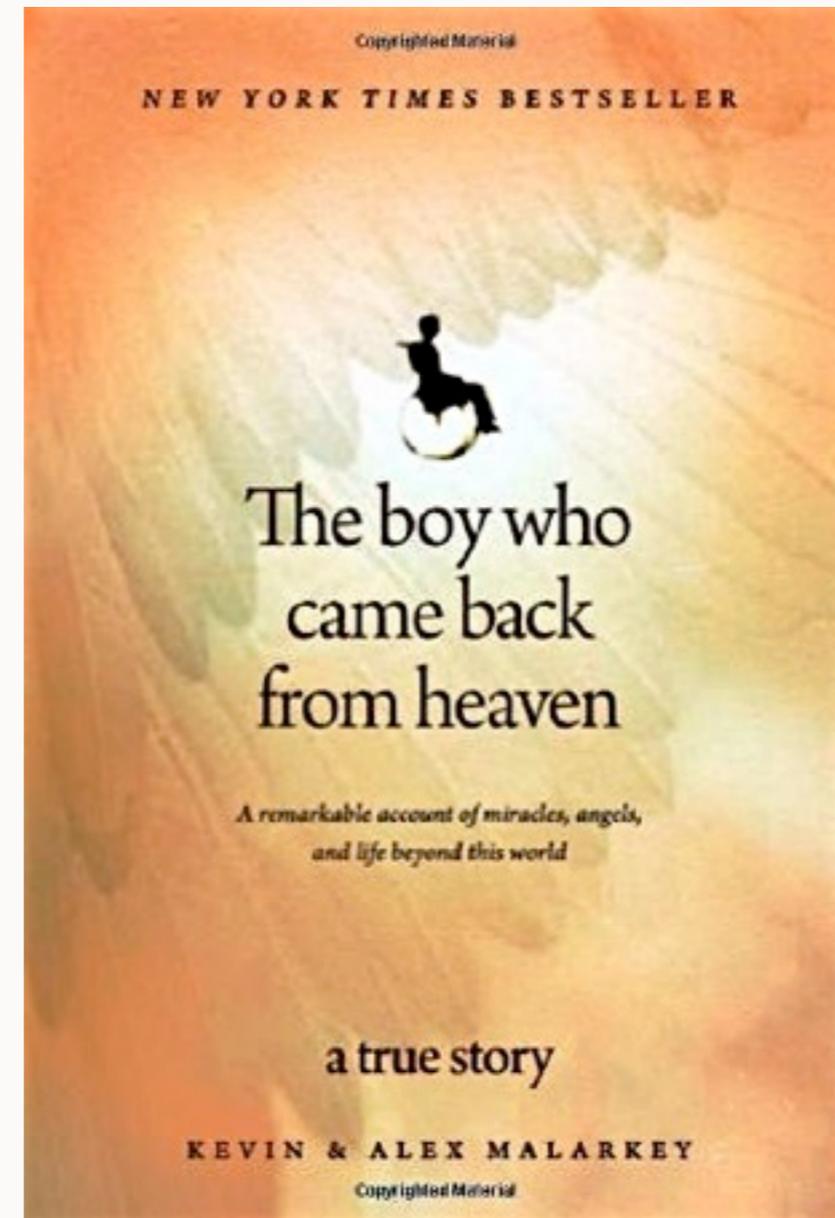
CAME BACK FROM HEAVEN

- Kevin and Alex (6) were involved in car crash (internal decapitation).
- Saw “angels catch Daddy”
- Father talking to man in blue suit by helicopter



CAME BACK FROM HEAVEN

- Says he was in heaven, God's palace.
- Gate was tall, white, and shiny.
- Heard unearthly music.
- Alex later admitted he lied.



SUMMARY

- Bible vs. experience - we are to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1)
- Paul’s experience - Paul was hesitant to talk about his experience (2 Corinthians 12:1-4).
- Satan is deceptive - we should reject many of the afterlife experiences of non-Christians because Satan disguises himself as an “angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14). His demons also disguise themselves as “servants of righteousness” (2 Cor. 11:15).

HELL IS FOR REAL

