

Homeward Bound

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Part 1: Is Death a Door or a Hole?

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

In our series on the Apostle's Creed earlier this year, we learned that "I believe" is a phrase we use in so many areas of our lives, from opinions about the outcome of athletic events to our relationship with God; from things of little consequence or importance to matters of great and eternal significance.

We examined what authentic belief looks like: it involves the *mind* (recognition of the Truth about the Object of my Faith); the *emotions* (embracing the relevance of my faith's Object to my need); and the *will* (actually relying on God with my actions). In other words, my entire being, my whole heart is to be engaged in my faith walk with God!

The Apostle's Creed is a summary of what the Bible teaches. It is a description of the Object of our Faith. It is a summary of ultimate Truth. So we looked at the question, "In a world of so much pain and so little time, why study such an old document like *The Apostles' Creed*?" As our society casts away more and more of its reference points and restraints, the fangs of sin and its effects are more exposed. The result is people who are in great pain and need. So we tend to think the priority is our need for comfort and freedom from our sin, etc., not Truth. What we forget is that for us to receive the comfort and the freedom, we must drink from the well of Truth!

That is indeed accurate when it comes to what I believe about death and eternity. In this short series called *Homeward Bound*, we will revisit the last phrases of the Creed: "I believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." What difference does my belief about death and heaven make in my day to day life?

All of humanity can be divided into one of two beliefs about physical death. Death is either a *door*, leading to either heaven or hell, or a *hole*, leading nowhere. Based on Christ's historical resurrection from the dead, Christianity teaches with authority that death is indeed a door.

Do I believe that death is a door or a hole? Do I or do I not believe in "the resurrection of the body and life everlasting"? My answer will make a dramatic difference in my life's journey. My answer to that question will definitely determine the degree to which I "launch my faith." If I have an eternal perspective, I will make sure my life—including my abilities, my finances, and my time—revolves around God's purposes. I'll make sure everything I am, everything I have, and everything I do is aligned with ultimate reality.

In 2 Corinthians 4 and 5, Paul teaches how, for Christ's followers, the knowledge that death is a door to heaven can make a difference in how we live.

If Death is an
Empty Hole...

If Death is a
Door to Heaven...

1. Dominant theme of life (4:16)

2. We have an outlook of: (4:16)

3. Suffering: (4:17)

4. Reality is that which is: (4:18)

5. Priority is on the (4:18)
