**Death**

**Why seek ye the living among the dead?**

**He is not here, but is risen.**

**(St. Luke 24: 5-6)**

**Behold, I show you a mystery;**

**We shall not all sleep,**

**But we shall all be changed.**

**(1 Corinthians 15:51)**

**And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;**

**and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor wailing,**

**neither shall there be any more pain;**

**for the former things have passed away.**

***(Revelation 21:4)***

**Insurance policies always exclude “acts of God.” What do they think dying is -- a recreational pastime? (The American Legion magazine)**

**Somehow I’ve adjusted to all life’s other changes, so I suppose I’ll adjust to becoming dead. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**As a general rule, I’m against death – but, if certain things didn’t die, I couldn’t live. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**It's impossible to experience one's death objectively and still carry a tune. (Woody Allen)**

**Gloria: “Let's go antiquing this weekend, Lance.” Lance: “Doesn't being around all those old, decaying things remind you of death, Gloria?” Gloria: “Actually, it reminds me of your house.” *(J. C. Duffy, in The Fusco Brothers comic strip)***

**Anything worth dying for is certainly worth living for. *(Joseph Heller)***

**Eat well, stay fit, die anyway. (Tidbits of Denver)**

**“Assisted dying” is the new term for mercy killing. And nursing homes are now called “assisted living.” If you can’t pay your assisted living bills, we have another assisted program more in your price range, Mr. Shapiro. *(Daniel Liebert)***

**Death is the black backing on the mirror that allows us to see anything at all. *(Saul Bellow)***

**On April 7, 1891, American showman P. T. Barnum died in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Though he was gravely ill, the 81-year-old showman’s sense of humor hadn’t deserted him. He requested that a New York paper run his obituary before he died so he could enjoy reading it, and the paper obliged. (MOMENTS IN TIME – The History Channel)**

**The day you die is just like any other, only shorter. (Samuel Beckett, in The Washington Post)**

**Nothing dies so hard, or rallies so often, as intolerance. (Henry Ward Beecher)**

**First man: “Do you believe in life after death?” Second man: “Heck no. Believing in life before death is hard enough.” (Jeff MacNelly, in Shoe comic strip)**

**Laughter is a protest scream against death. *(Mel Brooks)***

**When I was young the Dead Sea was still alive. *(George Burns)***

**Death is an enormously magnificent, dynamic teacher. It's democratic; it comes to everyone. And when you make your peace, truly -- not just talking it -- with the fact that you are mortal, and that you are not going to live forever, all at once things really become passionate. I cannot tell you how many people who, when they found out they had a terminal illness, all at once became great lovers of life. Death says to us don't wait! -- because it can come at anytime. You don't have to be 90 years old to die. Little children can die. It can come at any time in your life. Knowing that, step aside from it and live! Life is the gift you're given while you're waiting for death. It doesn't matter who you are, how famous you are, or how many people you've influenced -- you're going to go! If you can look at death as a positive experience suggesting that you live life, then anything else is insignificant and pales. (Leo Buscaglia)**

**For the record, it takes Madame Butterfly 4 minutes 48 seconds to die. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Don’t call me back and do not cry, I am so glad to go, I oft have longed to soar the sky and other worlds to know. Don’t call me back! A little while and I am far from earth, and I am leaving with a smile to face another birth. (Helga Stromberg)**

**Some 1,200 people who had stopped flying after 9/11 died in car crashes in the year after the terrorist attacks, according to a Cornell University study. (Forbes, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 13, 2005)**

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**Somebody said to me, “I can’t believe Jerry Garcia is dead. And I thought, "Doesn’t this guy know? Everybody’s dead. It’s all a matter of degree.” *(George Carlin, in When Will Jesus Bring the Pork Chops?, p. 111)***

**If no one knows when a person is going to die, how can we say he died prematurely? *(George Carlin, in When Will Jesus Bring the Pork Chops?, p. 110)***

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**Why isn't more being done about the most common cause of death: running out of time? *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**He was a very cautious man, who never romped or played. He never smoked, he never drank, nor even kissed a maid. And when he up and passed away, insurance was denied. For since he hadn't ever lived, they claimed he never died. (The Pepper Box)**

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**One thing is certain: You can't die in the same world in which you were born. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**If death is certain, at least I don’t have to worry about possibly missing it. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

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**Death and taxes may be the only certainties in life, but nowhere is it written that we have to tax ourselves to death. (Nation’s Buisness)**

**The actual death certificate of a certain Missouri man reads: “Went to bed feeling fine, but woke up feeling dead.” (Kathy Wolfe, in Tidbits)**

**This last act must take place, as surely as the fruits of trees and the earth must someday wither and fall. But a wise person knows this and accepts it with grace. (Cicero, in The Atlantic)**

**We do not die from the darkness. We die from the cold. (Miguel de Unamuno)**

**I am companioned though you are gone; from selfish yearning my heart is free. Still you are loving; still you are loved; veil of a moment hides you from me. How could I sorrow? Death is unreal, life has no vacuum; love has no gloom. Thronging the silence – angels of God fill with new gladness, your empty room. Beauty for ashes, laughter for tears, all this you gave me while you were here. Treasures of Spirit, friendship and love – I hold them precious, I hold you dear. Love’s compensation blesses this hour; tenderest Being knocks at my door. With or without you, God is my all. I am companioned forevermore. (William Aubert Luce)**

**One of the things you learn when you become a parent is the horrible thought that your children will be your children for the rest of your life. That's why there's death. *(Bill Cosby)***

**Telemarketer: “Is Ruby Moon there?” Woman: "Who wants to know?” Telemarketer: “This is the A-1 Credit Company, and…” Woman: “Ms. Moon died.” Telemarketer: “Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. We were going to increase her credit limit.” Woman: “Wait a minute, I think I see signs of life.” (*Jerry Bittle, in Geech comic strip)***

**An armored truck in Archdale, N. C., ran off a highway and overturned, killing a security guard, who was crushed when more than $1 million fell on him. *(Bill Flick)***

**Throughout Eastern Serbia, some newly rich peasants with hefty consumer appetites and a thriving cult of the dead have been building houses on the graves of their relatives, as a show of respect. Some people have even furnished their grave houses with stoves, refrigerators, televisions, video recorders and other appurtenances that they are sure their relatives’ spirits will enjoy in the afterlife. According to an old Slavic belief, if a dead man’s relatives neglect or forget him, his spirit will return to cause crop failure and family ruin. The people who build the grave houses are mostly those who profited handsomely by selling produce in Belgrade’s farm markets and by working abroad for hard currency, says Ivan Kovacevic, a Belgrade University professor of cultural anthropology. “They have so much money that they are itching to spend, and there is no other way to invest it,” reports Kovacevic. Other anthropologists say that the grave-house phenomenon would fade away as Yugoslavia adopts a market-based economy that would give people the opportunity to invest in more practical ways. *(Chuck Sudetic, in New York Times, 1991)***

**You should never say bad things about the dead . . . . Joan Crawford is dead. Good. *(Bette Davis)***

**Death is delightful. Death is dawn, the waking from a weary night of fevers into Truth and Light. (Joaquin Miller, in Even So)**

**Death is not greatly in demand – but still each person is usually allowed only one. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**I recall a man who had a nagging wife who was constantly scolding him on every occasion. When she passed away and they had the services at the graveside, there came a strange phenomenon. There was a great rolling peal of thunder and the jagged bolt of lightning in the sky. The bereaved husband contemplated this phenomenon for a moment, and finally turned to the minister and said, “Parson, I think she made it.” (Sen. Everett Dirksen, in Quote magazine)**

**Aubrey, my five-year-old son, and I were having a discussion about death. He asked thoughtfully, “Mom, if heaven is so wonderful, why don't people want to hurry up and get there?” “Well,” I began, “God has placed inside us all something that makes us want to live.” “Oh," Aubrey interrupted, “that's what the liver is for!” (K. D. Samuelsen, in Reader's Digest)**

**A husband and wife went to the doctor. The husband is hard of hearing. The doctor says to the wife, “You’ve got to do three things to keep your husband well. First, you’ve got to keep everything real clean and smooth. You got to iron everything. Second, you’ve got to fix him fresh meals every day from scratch. No leftovers, no fast or frozen foods. Third, you’ve got to give him more loving.” They get home and the husband asks, “Well what did the doctor say?” The wife looks at him and responds, “You’re going to die.” *(Tidbits)***

**Doesn’t everything die at last, and too soon? *(Mary Oliver, poet)***

**Nelson: “Grampa, have you ever had any other dogs besides Roscoe?” Grandpa: “Oh, heck, yes, let’s see. There was Shep and Boots and Cleo and Patches and Chewey and . . .” Nelson: “What happened to ‘em? All of ‘em?” Grandpa: “They died. Yup.” Nelson whispers into Roscoe’s ear: “I’d keep my eyes open if I were you, boy.” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**If you die in an elevator, be sure to push the up button. *(Jack Kreismer, in The Bathroom Trivia Companion, p. 56)***

**Nothing is dead. Men feign themselves dead, endure funerals and mournful obituaries, and there they stand, looking out the window, sound and well in some new disguise. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

**Every man dies. Not every man truly lives. (Braveheart)**

**Everybody has got to die, but I have always believed an exception would be made in my case. *(William Saroyan, novelist)***

**Death is not putting out the light. It is extinguishing the candle because the dawn has come. (Unity in the Rockies newsletter)**

**W. C. Fields always referred to Death as “that fellow in the bright nightgown," and he always hated and dreaded Christmas. It is ironic that when “that fellow” came for him in 1946, it was on Christmas Day. (J. Bryan, III, in Hodge Podge Two, p. 42)**

**Billy says to Jeffy: “If one of our fishes dies we hafta pick which way to go – burial or flushing.” (Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)**

**When my granddaughter was 5, she visited her great-grandparents in Clearwater, Florida. One day they took her to the beach, and on the way they saw some flamingos. “April,” said her great-grandmother, “I bet you’ve never seen a live flamingo before.” “No,” April said, “and I’ve never seen a dead one, either.” (Lydia Matriciano, in Reminisce magazine)**

**A woman was trying to get her mother to fly out for a visit. “No way am I getting on an airplane,” her mother said repeatedly. “Look, Mom, when it’s your time to go, it doesn’t matter if you’re on the ground or in the air.” “That doesn’t bother me,” her mother said. “I just don’t want to be that far off the ground when it’s the pilot’s time to go.” (Rocky Mountain News)**

**How come Korean apartment buildings don’t have a fourth floor? The word for four is “sah,” which also means “death.” So they skip labeling a fourth floor the way a lot of American builders skip labeling a thirteenth floor. (L. M. Boyd**

**Let thy vices die before thee. (Ben Franklin)**

**To die is poignantly bitter, but the idea of having to die without having lived is unbearable. *(Erich Fromm, psychologist)***

**“If I sold my house, had a big garage sale, and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into Heaven?” I asked the children in my Sunday School class. “No!" the children all answered. “If I cleaned the church every day and mowed the yard, would that get me into Heaven?” Again, the answer was, “No!” “Well, then, if I were kind to animals, gave candy to all the children, and loved my wife, would that get me into Heaven?” Again, they all answered, “No!” “Well,” I continued, “then how can I get into Heaven?” A 5-year-old boy shouted out, “YOU GOTTA BE DEAD!” (Kathy Wolfe, in Tidbits)**

**For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun? And what is it to cease breathing, but to free the breath from its restless tides that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered? Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing. And when you have reached the mountain top, then you shall begin to climb. And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance. (Kahlil Gibran)**

**Ten of the hairs on your head will stop growing today, if yours is a typical head. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**God does not die on the day when we cease to believe in a personal deity, but we die on the day when our lives cease to be illumined by the steady radiance of a wonder, the source of which is beyond all reason. (Dag Hammarskjold)**

**It’s not healthy to look directly at death, without at least blinking. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**I think we're finally at a point where we've learned to see death with a sense of humor. I have to. When you're my age, it's as if you're a car. First a tire blows, and you get that fixed. Then a headlight goes, and you get that fixed. And then one day, you drive into a shop, and the man says, “Sorry, Miss, they don't have this make anymore.” *(Katharine Hepburn)***

**A great man's greatest good luck is to die at the right time. (Eric Hoffer, philosopher)**

**There is no death, only Life, ever-continuing Life! (Dr. Ernest Holmes)**

**We give our loved ones back to God. And just as He first gave them to us and did not lose them in the giving, so we have not lost them in returning them to Him. For life is eternal, love is immortal. Death is only a horizon, and a horizon is the limit of our earthly sight. (Helen Steiner Rice)**

**Death destroys a man, but the idea of death saves him. (E. M. Forster, in The Atlantic)**

**Original inscription on a North Carolina grave read: “As I am now, so must you be. / Prepare for death and follow me.” Somebody added: “To follow you I’m not content. / How do I know / Which way you went?” (L. M. Boyd)**

**A certain court jester went too far one day and insulted his king. The king became so infuriated he sentenced the jester to be executed. His court asked the king to have mercy on this man who had served him well for so many years. After a time, the king relented only enough to give the jester his choice as to how he would like to die. “If it’s all the same to you, my Lord,” the jester replied, “I’d like to die of old age.” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

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**Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. *(Steve Jobs)***

**Steve Jobs was diagnosed with a rare form of pancreatic cancer in 2003 and had a liver transplant six years later, said The Washington Post. He rarely spoke of his illness but addressed it directly in a now-famous Stanford commencement speech in 2005. “No one wants to die,” he said. “Even people who want to go to heaven don’t want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because death is very likely the single best invention of life. It is life’s change agent." (The Week magazine, October 21, 2011)**

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**If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)**

**It’s an old tradition in Korea that a woman is not permitted to hold the hand of a dying man. (L. M. Boyd)**

**We are here to laugh at the odds and live our lives so well that Death will tremble to take us. (Charles Bukowski, poet)**

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**A UCLA medical school official has been charged with making money off of cadavers. They were selling body parts of cadavers that were donated to the university. So after you die you can go to heaven, hell or e-Bay. (Jay Leno)**

**Some sad news -- legendary Senator Strom Thurmond has passed away at 100. The cause of death: He was 100! (Jay Leno)**

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**If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, 10 angels swearing I was right would make no difference. (Abraham Lincoln)**

**I can only live until I die – that’s all anyone can do – yet somehow it’s not enough. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**Loneliness in itself has never been known to cause death -- but it can make death more welcome. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**There is no Death! What seems so is transition; this life of mortal breath is but a suburb of the life Elysian, whose portal we call Death. (Longfellow)**

**To have lost your reputation is to be dead among the living. *(Quoted by S. H., Simmons, in New Speakers Handbook)***

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**All love is doomed, seen in the light of death. (*Anita Shreve, novelist)***

**As a physician who has been deeply privileged to share the most profound moments of people’s lives, including their final moments, let me tell you a secret. People facing death don’t think about what degrees they have earned, what positions they have held or how much wealth they have accumulated. At the end, what really matters – and is a good measure of a past life – is who you loved and who loved you. The circle of love is everything. (Dr. Bernadine Healy)**

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**When will the mathematician die? When his number is up. (Rocky Mountain News)**

**Dying is a very dull, dreary affair, and my advice to you is to have nothing to do with it. (Somerset Maugham)**

**The woman hurried home from her doctor's appointment, devastated by the medical report she had just received. When her husband came in from work, she told him, “Darling, the doctor said I have only 12 more hours to live. So I've decided we should go to bed and make passionate love throughout the night. How does that sound, dearest?” “Hey, that's fine for you,” replied the husband. “You don't have to get up in the morning!” (Lucille Selsor, in Reader's Digest)**

**In the Columbus, Indiana, newsletter of Creak, Inc.: “Three members have died since paying their dues, so I refunded their money because they would not be able to attend any meetings in 1993.” (Reader’s Digest)**

**On the death of my mother, I found a friend's thought apt and consoling: “You can't weep for people who have left more in life than they have taken out.” (John J. McAleer, in Reader's Digest)**

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**Don’t let it worry you – death is just a natural part of the aging process. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**About 100 people die every minute – somewhere in the world. That means 6,000 deaths per hour, or 144,000 each and every day. So death as a natural phenomenon would be a major problem of human existence even if all crime, war and calamity could be eliminated. (A. S. Otto, Jr.)**

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**It’s disgusting and it’s irritating and it’s frustrating, and if you can think of any other words, go ahead and use them. And I’m not dead. (Margaret C. Morris, 95, of Bellevue, Nebraska, after her insurance company and Medicare dropped her coverage because they presumed she was dead due to an apparent clerical error). (Associated Press, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 12, 2006)**

**At Time magazine's 75th anniversary party, Dr. Kevorkian waited around so he could talk with Kevin Costner. Reportedly, Costner told him, “Hey, The Postman was bad, but not that bad.” (Conan O'Brien)**

**You only die once, but you can spend your whole life doing it. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Is there death on other planets? (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**If everybody has a right to life, why hasn’t death been outlawed? (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**A 92-year-old woman, nearing death, awoke suddenly. “We have to change our teaching!” she declared. “There isn't supposed to be pain in heaven!” “Mother,” replied her daughter, “you're not in heaven yet, you're still here with us on earth.” “Oh,” said the woman, relieved. “It's all right then.” *(Forum Letter, in Catholic Digest)***

**An elderly woman, who had never married, died. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she made very clear that she did not want male pallbearers. She wrote, “They wouldn’t take me out while I was alive; I don’t want them to take me out when I’m dead.” *(The Lutheran Witness)***

**An impassioned minister was visiting a country church and began his address with a stirring reminder: “Everybody in this parish is going to die.” The evangelist was discomfited to notice a man in the front pew who was smiling broadly. “Why are you so amused?” he asked. “I’m not in this parish,” replied the man. “I’m just visiting my sister for the weekend.” *(Roger Delahunty)***

****I bought my sons a pet rabbit after they promised they would take care of it. As expected, I ended up with the responsibility. Exasperated one evening, I said, “How many times do you think that rabbit would have died if I hadn’t looked after it?” “Once,” my 12-year-old son replied. *(L. Barry Parsons, in Reader’s Digest)*****

**My friend’s four-year-old daughter spotted some old photos on my piano. “Who’s that?” she asked, pointing to one of my grandmother. “That’s my dad’s mother,” I told her, explaining that the photo was taken a long time ago and that my grandmother is now dead. The girl looked puzzled and said, “Then why is she smiling?” *(Misty McElroy, in Reader’s Digest)***

**As you live, believe in life. Always human beings will live and profess to greater, broader and fuller life. The only possible death is to lose belief in this truth simply because the great end comes slowly, because time is long. *(W. E. B. Du Bois, American author and reformer))***

**“I’m concerned about this prescription, Dr. Jones,” the woman said. “I thought you said I’d have to take it for the rest of my life.” “That’s true,” Dr. Jones said. “What’s the problem?” “It’s for 20 pills,” the patient said. “And it says, ‘No refills.’” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**Good week for: Last laughs, after Frederic J. Baur of Cincinnati, the deceased designer of the Pringles potato chip can, had his cremated remains buried in one of his tubular inventions. *(The Week magazine, June 13, 2008)***

**Doctor: “What seems to be the problem, Mr. Purvis.” Mr. Purvis: “Nothing.” Doctor: “Nothing.” Mr. Purvis: “No, when I woke up this morning, nothing hurt.” Doctor: “Then why are you here?” Mr. Purvis: “Am I dead?” *(Jerry Bittle, in Geech comic strip)***

**It is a matter of record that one rattlesnake's heart continued to beat 59 hours after its head was chopped off. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Just after my retirement from 45 years of teaching, I decided to do some subbing for a local school. During one of my classes, I asked the children if they would be willing to die for a friend. “For example,” I asked, “would any of you be willing to die for me?” “That wouldn't be fair,” a young voice piped up. “You're going to die in a few years anyway.” (Rose Long, in Catholic Digest)**

**Death is a distant rumor to the young. (Andy Rooney)**

**Death is always and under all circumstances a tragedy, for if it is not, then it means that life itself has become one. (Theodore Roosevelt, American president)**

**J. K. Rowling may write for children, says Geordie Greig in the London Telegraph, but her underlying topic is deadly serious. “My books are largely about death,” says the author of the Harry Potter series. “They open with the death of Harry’s parents. There is (the villain) Voldemort’s obsession with conquering death and his quest for immortality at any price. I so understand why Voldemort wants to conquer death. We’re all frightened of it.” Her own terror of death is easy enough to trace. When Rowling was 15, her 35-year-old mother was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis; after a 10-year-long decline, she died in 1991. At the time, the penniless Rowling was working on a book about a boy with magical powers who goes off to study at a school of wizardry. “I was writing Harry Potter at the moment my mother died. But I had never told her. Dad called m at 7 o’clock the next morning and I just knew what had happened before he spoke. I was alternately a wreck and then in total denial.” Rowling, who has sold hundreds of millions of books, feels cheated that her mother never knew of her success. “Barely a day goes by when I do not think of her. There would be so much to tell her, impossibly much.” *(The Week magazine, January 27, 2006)***

**Die for this sacred cause! What makes it sacred? All those who’ve already died for it. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**All sadness in relation to the experience we call death passes when we understand the truth of the universe of form -- that everything from the atom to the solar system is alive in God. (Nona L. Brooks, in Mysteries, p. 64)**

**I am glad God saw Death and gave Death a job taking care of all who are tired of living: When all the wheels in a clock are worn and slow and the connections loose and the clock goes on ticking and telling the wrong time from hour to hour and people around the house joke about what a bum clock it is, how glad the clock is when the big Junk Man drives his wagon up to the house and puts his big arms around the clock and says: “You don’t belong here, you gotta come along with me.” How glad the clock is then, when it feels the arms of the Junk Man close around it and carry it away. (Carl Sandburg)**

**That the end of life should be death may sound sad; yet what other end can anything have? *(George Santayana, philosopher)***

**A father was at the beach with his children when the 4-year-old son ran up to him, grabbed his hand and led him to the shore, where a sea gull lay dead in the sand. “Daddy, what happened to him?” the boy asked. “He died and went to heaven,” the father replied. The boy thought a moment, then said, “Did God throw him back down?” (Rocky Mountain News)**

**When a person is dying, hearing is the last sense to go. Sight is the first. *(Uncle John’s Unstoppable Bathroom Reader, p. 299)***

**There is an old legend about a rich merchant in Baghdad who sent his servant to the market. While he was at the marketplace, he was jostled by someone in the crowd. When he turned around he saw a woman in a long black cloak and knew it was Death. The servant ran home to his master and in a trembling voice told him about the encounter and how Death had looked at him and made a threatening gesture. The servant begged his master to loan him a horse so he could ride to Samarra and hide so Death would not find him. The master agreed and the servant galloped away. Later the merchant went down to the marketplace and saw Death standing nearby. The merchant asked, “Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant and frighten him?” “That was not a threatening gesture,” Death replied. “It was just that I was startled to see him in Baghdad because I have an appointment with him tonight in Samarra!” *(Sermon illustration used by Peter Marshall, retold by Alice Gray in Stories for the Heart)***

**As long as I have a want, I have reason for living. Satisfaction is death. (George Bernard Shaw)**

**I’ve done the research, and I hate to tell you, but everybody dies -- lovers, joggers, vegetarians and nonsmokers. I'm telling you this so that some of you who jog at 5 a.m. and eat vegetables will occasionally sleep late and have an ice-cream cone. *(Dr. Bernie S. Siegel, in Peace, Love and Healing)***

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**Overheard: “When I die, I want to go peacefully in my sleep like my grandfather – not screaming like the passengers in his car.” (Robert Marks, in Reader’s Digest)**

**The peak time of day for deaths is reported to be about 6 a.m. Medical statisticians say they’re trying to link that fact with sleep disorders, but are not sure they can. (L. M. Boyd)**

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**A woman in Florida is having trouble convincing the Social Security Administration that she’s still alive. When Josephine Miskowitz, 78, stopped getting her monthly benefit checks, she went straight to the Social Security office, where a worker informed her, “You’re deceased.” Miskowitz presented photo ID and filled in a form attesting to her pre-deceased status, but three months of checks have still not arrived. “If they keep this up,” said Miskowitz, “I will be dead in a couple of months.” (The Week magazine, June 17, 2005)**

**Death is sort of an affront to American life. It’s so anti-aspirational. (Zadie Smith, author)**

**The timing of death, like the ending of a story, gives a changed meaning to what preceded it. (Mary Catherine Bateson, author)**

**If you treat every situation as a life-and-death matter, you'll die a lot of times. (Dean Smith)**

**I recently revisited the little town of Lakeside, California and was reminded of how things were there in 1949. As you drove into town, which was all of two blocks long, from the west, there was a stretch of road lined with cork elm trees that formed a tunnel. At the beginning of the tree tunnel was a billboard-size sign that read, “Please Drive Carefully. This Is a One-Hearse Town.” There was, in fact, a mortuary on Main Street. It’s still in business. (Sister Anna Mary Meyer, in Reminisce magazine)**

**The trouble with death is that it doesn't fit with anything else in my plans. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**A woman picked through the frozen turkeys at the grocery store, but she couldn't find one large enough to feed her family. “Do these turkeys get any bigger?” she asked a stock boy. “No, ma'am,” he replied. “They're dead.” (The American Legion magazine)**

**A very melancholy man who was always up on the latest accident and death statistics once cornered Mark Twain. “Mr. Clemens, do you realize that every time I breathe, an immortal soul passes into eternity?” “Have you ever tried cloves?” asked Twain. (Bits & Pieces)**

**John DeFrain, a social researcher at the University of Nebraska, has studied about 500 families who have experienced unexpected death. “At first,” he says, “they are so stunned they don’t even know what they need to do, let alone tell others how to help.” This is why people who are grief-stricken seldom respond to the well-meaning offer, “If there is anything I can do, let me know.” (Barbara Russell Chesser, in Reader’s Digest)**

**When he wasn’t composing musical masterpieces, Richard Wagner oversaw the digging in his garden of his own grave. He was pretty proud of it. Even used to parade dinner guests out to it between courses. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**An attorney I know once drafted wills for an elderly husband and wife who had been somewhat apprehensive about discussing death. When they arrived to sign the documents, he ushered the couple into his office. “Now,” he said to them, “which one of you wants to go first?” *(Robert W. Cunningham, in Reader's Digest)***

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