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3-22-2014

March 22, 2014: Death

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Repository Citation

Ledewitz, B. (2014). March 22, 2014: Death. Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/ledewitz-hallowedsecularism/819>

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Title: Death

Date: 2014-03-22T21:55:00.000-04:00

3/22/2014—Two friends of ours are dying. One of them is staying at home, having spent a day and a half in hospice. The other is looking for hospice in a nursing type facility. One is around 58, while the other is over 80. One is religious and the other really is not. Death is the great frontier for secularism. I have never heard the well-known atheist writers, like Dawkins, address it. For the believer, there are two aspects of comfort with regard to death. In one view, the believer dies but goes to heaven largely to exist in a form similar to this life—he'll be playing golf. I find this sort of thing really silly. Even Jesus made fun of it when the Pharisees asked who the wife would be the husband of, if she married brothers, who then died. (This was a normal procedure to keep land within the tribe.) The other view is that of the hymn, rest to the good and faithful servant after a life well lived. In this view, we know nothing about the other side of life and it does not matter. Serving our intended purpose is all we need to worry about. Now, this view might be available to the non-religiously affiliated as well. It would require a sense of purpose in existence, which organized atheism has tended to scorn. Much more on this topic in days to come.