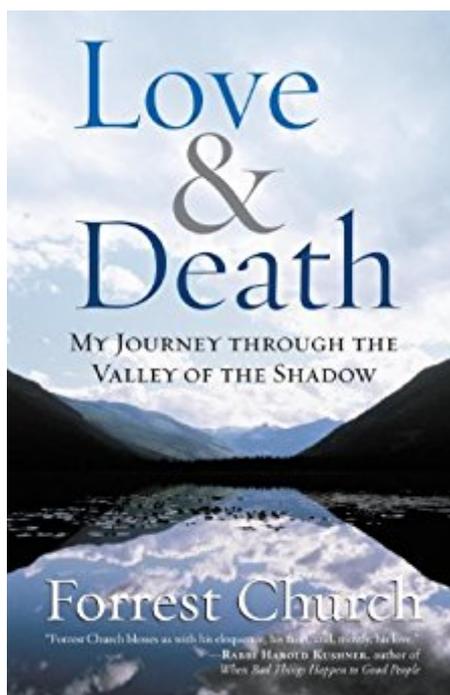


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# Love & Death: My Journey Through The Valley Of The Shadow



## Synopsis

On February 4, 2008, Forrest Church sent a letter to the members of his congregation, informing them that he had terminal cancer but promising to sum up his thoughts on the topics that had been so pervasive in his work-love and death. The goal of life, Church tells us, "is to live in such a way that our lives will prove worth dying for." This moving book is imbued with ideas and exemplars for achieving that goal.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This little book offers thoughts on life that sooth my mind and soul. Rev. Church offers wonderful ideas on living a meaningful life, facing difficulties, and celebrating our humanity. His mantra, "Want what you have. Do what you can. Be who you are." This will be my mantra as I continue to seek to have a well lived life.

As with virtually anything in life, our focus and interests are based on our immediate experiences. At this point, taking a deeper look at my own life purpose has come to the forefront due to my father's

recent transition from this life. As I have explored various authors' works I find it most amazing the many philosophies and beliefs regarding what is most important to live a fulfilled life. Out of the dozens of books and articles I have read, the following statement deeply resonates with me; "The goal of life is to live in such a way that our lives will prove worth dying for," writes Reverend Forrest Church. One of the recommendations from Reverend Church is to want what you have, appreciate each and every moment we are alive and live without the regret of, "if only". If only I would have .... If only I didn't .... In only.... He goes on to say that often we realize only after something is taken from us how valuable it is; whether it be our health, a loved one or a job. Reverend Church speaks not only from the over three decades as a minister whose main message is love and death, but also from the perspective of a man who was diagnosed with incurable cancer being given only months to live. It was in the diagnosis he was able to understand fully if all he professed to be true really was. In reading his book, *Love and Death, My Journey -Through the Valley of the Shadow*, Reverend Church shares a level of wisdom so intensely simple, yet immensely profound. The further I delved into the wisdom in this short and very easy to read book, the more I fully recognize the greatest gift we can give to ourselves and others is to live with such a deep level of congruency with what we claim to be true, what we speak of as truth and what we know to be true. It is one thing to say we believe something to be true and something else to live in such a way that our life is an example of this truth. As you look at your own beliefs, philosophies and faith do your words match your thoughts and your actions? If not, is now not the most important moment to begin to live your truth recognizing today may in fact be the only day left to do so?

*Love & Death* is an inspirational, autobiographical account of how Reverend Church, who was diagnosed with a terminal form of cancer faces death. It contains some of the sermons he gave; his personal struggle of acceptance; and the words of his mantra. Want what you have; Do what you can and Be who you are. Rev. Church has an engaging style of writing. I found this book to be one that is best read slowly, and have a highlighting pen handy, as there are sections you will surely want to refer back to. There are some blank pages in the back of the book which are handy for notations. There are 145 pages, including the acknowledgements.

Its a true life story book one has to read in order to live life simple and untended.

This is a **MUST READ** for anyone fearing their own death (and who doesn't?) or dealing with the death of a loved one. Written by a Unitarian Universalist minister dealing with his own impending

demise, Forrest Church (son of the late Senator Frank Church of Utah) encourages us to appreciate the fact that we are very blessed to be alive at all, given the amazing series of events leading to our births. Rev. Church acknowledges that, while he doesn't know what - if anything - awaits us after the death of our bodies, he is grateful to be able to simply wonder about it. His writings are drawn from his previous books and many sermons addressing this subject, along with the introspective thoughts arising from his recent diagnosis of terminal cancer. Most importantly, he reminds us that the love that we give and receive in this life is immortal. He urges us to subscribe the following mantra: Want what you have Do what you can Be who you are

Enjoyed the book, but found it a little preachy in spots. Only Mr. Church's point of view. Well written and readable, Just not much to say. One thing I did find interesting was the concept of an ethical will. After doing a little more research on them, I've decided to write one.

This is a Thoughtful, gentle and encouraging treatment of facing mortality. A good, solid collection of personal thoughts and vignettes on the theme. Well worth reading, slowly and thoughtfully. The chapter on visiting hospitals should be required reading for everyone!

Forrest Church's poignant observations on Love and Death have long been important to my understanding of what life, love, and death are all about. This book provides very meaningful clarity on the subject of love and death possibly because he wrote it within weeks after having been diagnosed with terminal cancer. It is a must read for people who are interested in living a life worth dying for as Forrest has long encouraged. Tom Reece

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