

Funeral Thoughts

LEARNING ABOUT LIFE FROM DEATH

Comforting the Bereaved

by Eddie Cloer

All the experiences of life, the bitter as well as the sweet, are learning experiences. As painful as the loss of a loved one is, it is a great teacher.

Jacob refused to let go of the angel until he received a blessing (Genesis 32:26-29). As the hurt pierces your heart, make a demand of death similar to Jacob's. Insist that this loss impart something of value to you; demand that lessons be learned and insights gained from this experience.

We learn some lessons about life when we lose a relative in death which we cannot learn quite so well at any other time. We concentrate upon the big issues of life when we lose a family member. It is a thought-provoking time, a soul-searching time.

What lessons do we learn about life from this death?

I. WE LEARN ABOUT THE UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE FROM THIS DEATH.

- A. No one can actually count upon tomorrow.
 - 1. Life is certain but life in this world is uncertain.
 - 2. Time for all of us is going to eventually run out.
 - 3. Our departure from this world may come suddenly and abruptly.
- B. The Scriptures clearly and forcefully remind us of the uncertainty of life.
 - 1. We are not to boast about tomorrow (Proverbs 27:1).
 - 2. As we make our plans we are always to say, "If God wills" (James 4:14-17).
- C. Live properly today for this day may be your last day in this world.

II. WE LEARN ABOUT THE BREVITY OF LIFE FROM THIS DEATH.

- A. Our stay in this world, at best, is very brief.
 - 1. Seventy years is but a short time when one looks back.
 - 2. "Only yesterday we were young," we say, as we recall how quickly time has passed.
- B. The inspired writers often used figures of

speech to describe the brevity of life.

- 1. Man's days are like "grass" (Psalms 103:15).
- 2. His life is like a "vapor" (James 4:14).
- C. Redeem your days because you will not have many (Ephesians 5:16).

III. WE LEARN ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF LIFE FROM THIS DEATH.

- A. Our earthly life is only a prelude to eternity.
 - 1. We are pilgrims down here. (Philippians 3:20).
 - 2. This world is not our home (1 Peter 1:17).
 - 3. Life is a preparation time for a better and greater life.
- B. It would be hard to look at the death of your loved one and not be reminded of the true purpose of life.
 - 1. Solomon said that the purpose of life is to fear God and keep His commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:14).
 - 2. Death powerfully teaches us that living for God is the only living that really counts.

IV. WE LEARN ABOUT THE VALUES OF LIFE FROM THIS DEATH.

- A. Death helps us to see what is really of value in life.
 - 1. Death makes some of the activities of life look like tinsel and others look like gold.
 - 2. It helps us sort out the important from the unimportant.
- B. A good question to ask about our activities is this: "Is this activity one which could be mentioned with joy at my funeral?"
 - 1. The real values of life survive death.
 - 2. The Christian life is accented and magnified by death.

CONCLUSION

Let the death of your loved one teach you something about life. We have witnessed life and death. Our loved one's life made us stronger in faith; his death made us wiser about life.

Do not go through the pain and tears of this loss without gaining new insights into living

and a fresh hope for tomorrow. Resolve to study God's word harder and to walk closer to Him. Make Him your constant companion and helper through study, prayer, and fellowship. Seek His hand of help as you have never sought it before.

God loves you. His heart breaks because yours does. He will not forsake you or leave you (Hebrews 13:5, 6). Lean upon Him and trust Him. Let Him be your staff of strength and your anchor of hope.

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