

Monday, July 11, 2010 – Brevity of Life

The prayer request I sent out last night reminds us of not only the brevity of life, but the suddenness in which it can end.

At a time like this, the human design causes our emotions of sadness and grief to dominate our reactions to the news of someone's death. The emotions are much stronger when it involves the death of someone who made such an impact on so many people's lives. Sadness and grief are good; they are required for us to process what has occurred and it will allow us to move on.

As Christians, when we push through the sadness and grief, we know the joy that is found when someone goes home to be with the Father.

Psalms 16 - Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust. O my soul, you have said to the LORD, "You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You." As for the saints who are on the earth, "They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight." Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god; Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, Nor take up their names on my lips. O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance. I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons. I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

We grieve at our loss. Grief is a natural reaction to death. Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 4:16 - 5:1** that we should not lose heart when faced with death. In death there is comfort; comfort in the fond memories of this dear loved one and how he has touched all our lives, and there is comfort from the Lord.

In **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** we read, "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the

archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

The child of God never needs to fear death, for Jesus Christ came to earth to grant us victory over it. Jesus tells us in **John 14:2-3**, **"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also."**

Every day in our world, we see tragedies that, in the blink of an eye, bring about a finality that was never thought of only minutes earlier.

James warned us in James 4:14, **"whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away."** We need to understand life is precious.

Life is precious because our time on this earth is short. **Job 14:1-2** states, **"Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He comes forth like a flower and fades away; He flees like a shadow and does not continue."** We do not know the number of days we are going to be given on this earth. That is why Jesus has always warned us that our purpose is not to put stock in the things of this world, but to prepare ourselves to meet God (**Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:16**). Parental responsibility in raising our children is so important because our kids will learn about life somewhere and from someone; it needs to be from their Christian parents. Even if they live with us until adulthood, we have very little time to **"...bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."**

Life is precious because death is sure. **Hebrews 9:27** tells us, **"And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment."** We must be ready to meet the Lord at whatever time he may come. We have no idea when that will occur. Peter reminds us, in **2 Peter 3:10**, **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."**

Life is precious because souls, all souls, are important. In **Ezekial 18:4** we are told, **"Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die."** Christ reminds us in Mark 8:36, **"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a**

man give in exchange for his soul?"

The death of a Christian, instead of being a senseless end to a futile existence, is really the crowning of a life lived in faith and obedience. This is the great hope of Christianity.