

LEARNING HOW TO DIE

Int.

1. Aim: To show how from the death of Jesus how we must prepare for death !
2. Genesis 27:1-2 "And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:"
 - a. Isaac was about to pronounce a blessing on his son Esau and he said that he was old and did not know the day of his death.
 - b. That is a true statement for all of us whether young or old. I do not know at what age, or how I shall die. But I will die.
3. Death is a subject we don't like to discuss
 - a. We have this mistaken idea in the back of our minds that we will live forever
 - b. But it is a fact stated in Heb. 9:27 that we will die
 - c. We may deny it, and pretend death will never come to us.
 - d. King Louis XV, King of France, decreed that the word death should never be spoken in his presence. He also ordered that he never be allowed to see a monument or cemetery. But on May 10, 1774 he died of smallpox.
4. Learning how to die is what learning how to live is all about.
 - a. We can learn from the death of Jesus how we should die.
 - b. Some ways in which his death will differ from ours
 - c. Yet there are many things about His death that we should follow as we approach the valley of the shadow of death.

5. You cannot understand the death of Christ apart from his life, for his death is a reflection of his life.
6. Lessons we can learn from Jesus on How to Die !

Discussion

I. HE KNEW DEATH WAS CERTAIN

HEB. 2:14 "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil."

- A. He never avoided the thought of death or postponed considering it until the hour was at hand
- B. We should not put off until death is at hand the subject of death
 1. We should think seriously about death
 2. Many avoid the thought of death until it approaches them. This was not the way with Christ
 3. Even though Jesus knew his death would be a horrible death, it didn't keep Him from thinking about it.
- C. The fact He would die did not make him sad or cause him to lose interest in living
 1. On many occasions he mentioned his death and discussed it with his disciples
 - a. Mt. 20:18-19 "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, 19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again."
 - b. John 12:32-33 "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. 33 This he said, signifying what death he should die."

- c. Mt. 26:38 "Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me."
- 2. We know death is certain for all of us, so let's face it and not try to ignore it.
- D. If we learn from Jesus how to die we must learn how to live, for no man is ready to die until he has learned how to LIVE!

II. JESUS WAS IN CONSTANT FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

- A. It was natural for him to turn to God in death Lk. 23:46 "...Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit..."
- B. Those who are not in constant fellowship with God
 - 1. Are terrified when death approaches
 - 2. Learn to their sorrow, too late, that God is the only refuge in such an hour!
 - 3. II Tim. 4:6 "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."
- C. To die as Jesus did, in peace and unafraid, we must keep in close fellowship with God and not frantically seek his help at the moment of death!

III. BEST PREPARATION IS TO BE FOUND DOING GOD'S WILL

- A. Christ had a work to do and he set himself to do it
 - 1. At age 12 - Lk. 2:49-50 - lost in the temple
 - 2. He was about his father's business Jn. 9:4 "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."
 - 3. He left nothing undone Jn. 17:4 "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

4. Jn. 19:30 "it is finished.*"

B. Are we doing God's will ?

1. Will we approach death knowing we have made it our purpose and mission to do God's will?
2. How many of us will face death having put the kingdom first in our lives?
3. God's will for your life is not:
 - a. To accumulate wealth
 - (1) 1 Tim. 6:6-10
 - (2) Matt. 16:26 "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - b. To have a good time - a life of pleasure and ease
 - c. To just exist on this earth
 - d. To intend to obey God's will - Matt. 7:21 "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."
4. But: God's will for you is to be a Christian - a faithful dedicated Christian — being holy — serving God by serving your fellow man
 - a. (1) Teaching = soul
 - b. (2) Helping = body
5. Rev 2:10 "...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
6. Matt. 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

IV. JESUS DIED WITH WORDS OF SCRIPTURE ON HIS LIPS

- A. Some of his last words were quotations from the scriptures
 - 1. Lk. 23:46 "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."
 - 2. Taken from Ps. 31:5 "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth."
- B. Jesus knew the scriptures
 - 1. They were his dally meditation and study
 - 2. He used them in every crisis of life and found them helpful?
 - a. Temptation — with 3 quotes he defeated Satan Mt. 4
 - b. Enemies try to trap him — he turned to the scriptures to show their folly
- C. The scriptures had been his guide and support in life
 - 1. They now sustain him in the hour of death
 - 2. He had lived by them and was now willing to die by them
 - 3. He knew he could trust them for he had relied upon them before trials of life.
- D. No wonder so many are scared to die. They are afraid to trust the scriptures in death for they have never trusted and tried them in life.

V. HE DIED WITHOUT HATRED OR RESENTMENT TOWARD ANYONE

- A. If anyone ever had a reason for feeling resentment and soured on the world — He did!
 - 1. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." Jn.1:11
 - 2. He was hated without a cause

3. He was scourged, spit upon, mocked, numbered with sinners, betrayed by friends, - YET NO WORD OF COMPLAINT OR BITTERNESS
4. Even when his enemies were slowly taking his life by crucifixion — he prayed for them - Luke 23:34 “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

B. What a lesson this teaches us about how to die!

1. Many step out into eternity with hearts filled with resentment and hatred.
2. The way to die without hatred is to live without it.
 - a. Matt. 5:23-25
 - b. Eph. 4:26 “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”
3. Illustration: “If I should die”

VI. WE LEARN FROM CHRIST TO THINK OF OTHERS EVEN IN DEATH

A. Though suffering from dying - He thought of others !

1. His mother watched him die
2. No doubt she would have gladly died in his place if she could
3. She saw his wounds - but could not bind them up
4. She saw his parched lips and heard him cry for water - but she could not give him drink
5. She could feel the spikes as they tore his flesh
6. She watched the blood flow from his head and sides but could not wipe it away.

B. In spite of all this agony - he never forgot others

1. He did not forget his mother - Jn. 19:25-27 “Behold thy son” “Behold thy mother.”

2. He did not forget the thief on the other cross — Lk. 23:43 “And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”
 3. He did not forget to pray for those who nailed him to the cross - Lk. 23:34 “Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”
- C. Let us learn from Christ to think of others even in death
1. The only way to do this is to live an unselfish life as he did
 2. We cannot be unselfish in death when we have been selfish in life.
 3. The rich man tried this ——Lk. 16:19-31

CONCLUSION

1. The question is not, “Will I die?” because we will all die. But the question is “Am I prepared to die?”
2. Our death will be a reflection of our life!
3. We learn from the death of Jesus that death is not the end - just the separation of spirit and body
 - a. Lk. 23:46 “ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”
 - b. Jesus died knowing there would be a resurrection
4. You can die knowing there is a resurrection to life if you live for Christ today!
5. John 5:28-29 “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

Source Consulted: Old Truths in New Robes - By Franklin Camp P. 126

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Morning - April 27, 2008
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