

An Appointment

Int.

1. Aim: To discuss some important facts about our appointment with death so we will be prepared.
2. Heb. 9:27 "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"
 - a. Appointed = to be reserved, to await
 - b. Appointment = means
 - (1) A meeting arranged in advance, a formal arrangement to meet or visit someone at a particular time and place
 - (2) An appointment is a time reserved for something such as a doctor visit
 - (3) An appointment is much like a reservation.
 - c. We all have an appointment with death according to Heb. 9:27
3. Solomon says "To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: A time to be born, And a time to die; A time to plant, And a time to pluck what is planted;" Eccl. 3:1-2
4. We all have an appointment with death.

Discussion

I. DEATH DEFINED

- A. Separation of the spirit from the Body
 1. James 2:26 "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
 - a. Separation of our body from our spirit is death
 - b. Life begins at conception and ends when the spirit leaves the body.

- c. The Greek word for death means: "separation of the soul from the body by which the life on earth is ended." (Thayer p. 282)
 - d. Paul describes death in II Tim. 4:6 as a **departure**. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." The word means:
 - (1) It is an unloosing - as of things woven
 - (2) It is a dissolving - into separate parts
 - (3) It is a departure - a metaphor drawn from losing from moorings, when preparing to set sail, or
 - (4) It is like breaking up an encampment.
2. Eccl. 12:7 "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it."
- a. Gen. 3:19 "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."
 - b. The body decays and returns to the dust of the earth
 - c. The spirit returns to God to await the resurrection.
- B. Separation of man from God
- 1. Gen. 2:17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." - Adam and Eve Sinned
 - 2. Isa. 59:1-2 "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."

C. Eternal or second death

1. Rev. 20:14 "Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."
2. Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

II. DEATH DESCRIBED

A. Like water spilled on the ground

1. 2 Sam. 14:14 "For we will surely die and become like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Yet God does not take away a life; but He devises means, so that His banished ones are not expelled from Him."
2. It cannot be gathered up again

B. The silver cord is loosed

1. Eccl. 12:6 NKJV "Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well."
2. Process of aging

C. As a sleep

1. John 11:11-14 V. 14 "Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."
2. Acts 7:60 "Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

3. This implies that death is:
 - a. Natural - just like sleep is natural
 - b. Necessary - like sleep
 - c. Temporary - like sleep
 - (1) Man does not cease to exist after death
 - (2) Jesus said killing the body does not kill the soul - Matt. 10:28
 - (3) Jesus said that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob still lived, yet their bodies were dead and returned to the dust - Matt. 22:32
- D. As a pale horse - Rev. 6:8a "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him."
- E. As an enemy - 1 Cor. 15:26 "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

III. DEATH IS FEARED

- A. Because of the pain and misery associated with it.
- B. Because of the corruption of the grave which follows it
- C. Because of the uncertainty of their destiny
- D. Because of the love of life and things of this life
- E. Because it's a lonely, untried journey from whence we shall not return
- F. Because of the separation from the ones we love

IV. DEATH IS SURE

- A. Most of us feel that death just couldn't come to us
1. But it will - some day
 2. We begin to die when we begin to live
 3. The cradle and the coffin stand side by side
 4. Life expectancy has doubled because of the advancements in health care but the death rate remains the same, one death for every birth.
- B. The Immortalist Movement
1. Article from paper - March 8, 1978 - Stuart Otto - Chairman of the committee for Elimination of Death - Organization of professionals who believe: "that physical death can and should be conquered."
 2. Book called "The Immortalist" by Alan Harrington - he wrote: "Death is an imposition on the human race, and no longer acceptable."
 3. A CURE FOR THE DISEASE OF DEATH "In a practical sense, although unannounced as such, the road towards immortality has already begun. Medical technology continues to stretch our understanding of clinical death to the point where there is no longer a universally agreed definition of what the term means. Multiple organ transplants promise to replace more and more of our bodies with artificial equipment, offering the possibility of an almost indefinite postponement of death." [The Libertarian Alliance - See file on Immortalist]
- C. Heb. 9:27 - death is sure because God says so "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

1. Methuselah died at age 969 - Gen. 5:27 - Adam = 930 Noah = 950
2. A Russian doctor felt he had invented a youth serum to lengthen life to 150 years. At 64 years of age he died !
3. Ps. 90:10 "The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
4. Death cannot be bribed - a well known gangster was shot and brought into a hospital. He pressed \$725 into the hands of a doctor and told him to take care of him. HE DIED.
5. "By medicine life may be prolonged, yet death will seize the doctor too."
Statement by Shakespeare.

D. Death is SURE to come to all of us.

V. HOW TO DIE

A. There are only two ways of dying.

1. Like the righteous - Numbers 23:10 b "Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my end be like his!"
2. Like a fool - II Sam. 3:33 b "Should Abner die as a fool dies?"

B. The way we die is naturally determined by the way we live

1. Righteous
 - a. Live by the commands of God
 - b. Rev. 14:13 "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."

2. Fool

- a. Living and dying in sin
- b. Rev. 14:13 - opposite for those who die out of the Lord. Cursed instead of blessed.

C. Many people live one life and hope to die another.

1. A young boy heard his Bible class teacher tell the story of the Rich man and Lazarus. The teacher asked the class, "Now which would you rather be, the Rich man or Lazarus?" The young boy replied "I would rather be the rich man while I live, and Lazarus when I die."
2. We cannot sow to the flesh and reap of the Spirit everlasting life.

D. Do you know how to die? If not, then you don't know how to live.

E. Death is the gateway to being with Jesus

1. Phil. 1:21-24 "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. 23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:"
2. We understand that there will be a resurrection day
 - a. Though in Adam we all die, in Christ we shall all be made alive - 1 Cor. 15:22
"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."
 - b. On the resurrection morning, the trumpet of God shall sound and the dead in Christ shall rise, after which the living saints will be translated

- c. 1 Thes.4:13-18
 - d. 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."
3. 1 Cor. 15:55-57 "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
- a. A child of God can face death with confidence, for the sting of death, sin, has been removed by the blood of Jesus Christ.
 - b. Our sins have been washed away by baptism, as taught in Acts 22:16.
 - c. We must continue a life in the light of Jesus Christ and continue to ask God to forgive him of sins committed after baptism. - 1 John 1:7-10

CONCLUSION

1. There is nothing more certain than dying; and, nothing more uncertain than the time of dying.
2. If we are prepared for death then "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." Ps. 116:15
 - a. God anxiously awaits his loved ones to the abode he has prepared for them.
 - b. Words could never adequately describe heaven, the place where God will dwell with His saints forever.
 - c. Can you imagine a place where there is nothing but total happiness.
3. Death is an appointment that we all must keep. Heb. 9:27

4. But there is something much worse than this death which we have been discussion.
 - a. That is the second death
 - b. Rev. 2:11 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."
 - c. What is the second death? He tells us in Rev. 21:8 "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
 - d. There is no release from this second death.
5. Be prepared for the first death and you'll not have that horrible second death.
6. Are you ready to die? If not then now is the time to prepare!
7. Be prepared and in a state of readiness and remember that through Christ we can gain the victory.

Sources Consulted

1. Files on Death and funerals
2. "Some Sober Reflections on Death" by J. Noel Merideth - Gospel Advocate. June 26, 1968 P. 406 Vol. CX Number 26

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Morning March 1, 2009
Evans Church of Christ
515 Gibbs Road
Evans, Ga. 30809
706-855-1249
evanscoc@bellsouth.net
www.evansgachurhofchrist.org