

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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The Brevity of Life

Introduction

There are times when the Holy Spirit of God caused the writers of the scriptures to pen very picturesque wording. In one of the the last verses of the Holy Apostle John's first epistle, he wrote: "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 Jn. 5:19). It is an expression one can visualize for it is of a mother nursing her little baby as the little one lies comfortably in her arms. God says the people of this world are like that little baby, lying in the arms of the wicked one, that is Satan, being nursed to sleep only to awaken in the depths of Hell. The reality of such ought to break our hearts. Bitter tears ought to flow down the faces of every saint. Why is there not the rising up of voices, proclaiming with every iota of God given ability, the cry of warning? Untold millions are dying without God and without hope, only to awaken in finality of death to the terrifying reality, "I am doomed under the curse of God for all eternity".

It was on a beautiful summer's evening on the 28th June 1970 when I had an experience I have never forgotten. I had just listened to the news of the sudden death of Caroline Allpass, Mr. Jeremy Thorpe's wife. Something happened, she veered into the oncoming traffic and had a head on collision with a large trailer. She died almost instantly. That night, pondering on the brevity of life, I walked across the fields and thought of what it means for an individual to die without Christ. I do not know whither Mrs. Thorpe was a christian or not, it was the matter of sudden departure and what then that was arresting my thoughts. I came home and very somberly began to write, "What happens when an unsaved person enters eternity?" Then there was written, "at that second of time they leave time and enter eternity, they pass from opportunity to never having another chance for the acceptance of Christ as Saviour, they go from carelessness to terrifying reality, from laughing to inconsolable wailing, and that for all eternity". Well has the hymn writer expressed its truth in the words:

Eternity! Time soon will end,
It's fleeting moments pass away;
O sinner, say, where wilt thou spend
Eternity's unchanging day?
Shalt thou the hopeless horror see
Of hell for all eternity?
Eternity! Eternity!
Where wilt thou spend eternity?

Eternity! O dreadful thought
For thee, a child of Adam's race,
If thou should'st in thy sins be brought
To stand before the awful face,

From which the heav'n and earth shall flee,
The throned One of eternity.
Eternity! Eternity!
Where wilt thou spend eternity?

Eternity! But Jesus died-
Yes, Jesus died on Calvary;
Behold Him thorn-crowned, crucified,
The spotless One made sin for thee.
O sinner haste! For refuge flee
He saves, and for eternity.
Eternity! Eternity!
Where wilt thou spend eternity?

Tonight may be thy latest breath,
Thy little moment here be done;
Eternal woe - the second death
Awaits the grace rejecting One.
Thine awful destiny foresee
Time ends, and then eternity.
Eternity! Eternity!
Where wilt thou spend eternity?

Composer: William B. Bradbury

The Brevity of Life:

The word of God has a very solemn statement, “He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy” (Prov. 29:1). As I look across the broad acres of earth and learn how, for thousands, life changes in a second. On Tuesday the 4th of August in the city of Beirut, life was as usual. Businessmen were making deals, shoppers were getting groceries, taxi's were scurrying across the busy intersections, children were in school, and the sun shone from a cloudless sky. There was a small fire at the dock area, seemingly nothing to be concerned about. Then, without warning, there was an explosion, and at that instant the shopping list became secondary, the business deals were suspended for a moment. Then, in a split second, the unthinkable happened. A second explosion of approximately 1.2 kilotons or 240,000 pounds of ammonium nitrate exploded. Three hundred thousand were left homeless, some two hundred died, and thousands were severely damaged. It was like a nuclear bomb exploded carrying death and destruction everywhere it went. At that second healthy wives and husbands, father and mothers, little children were ushered into eternity. Tragically, the darkness of that morning, because of the explosion, was nothing compared to the darkness they went into if they knew not the Lord. For those who lived, the horror they found themselves in and the fierceness of the agony endured by those who died later, was nothing compared to those who died not knowing the Lord.

As I sit here in my study 18th August 2020 on a lovely summer evening, I ask myself, “Why does this mean so little to so many?” Looking out my window I see people at KFC and people walking in the evening enjoying the coolness. Eternity, Heaven and Hell is far from their minds. What is wrong with us all? Do we not know the dreadful fierceness of the wrath of almighty God? The answer is given in the scriptures. The evil one, Satan, has cast over this earth's peoples a spiritual atmospheric darkness and blindness. It is like living in a coma, knowing what is happening but not comprehending it. This is how life is lived. We know intellectually of an eternity for each one of us, there is no escape, but it is just a cold empty clinical concept.

How does the devil work with humanity to keep their minds blinded?

Man makes preparation for everything in life, but seldom thinks about preparation for eternity. The scriptures warn humanity, “Prepare to meet thy God” (Amos 4:12). The problem is, the enemy of our souls keeps humanity blinded in a multitude of ways.

- a) Ofttimes saved parents do not want to think about their children or grandchildren going to Hell. The passionate pleading with God through His Spirit to awaken them is surrendered to an honest, but unfeeling mention made of them each day, and sometimes not even that.

- b) The unsaved are satisfied with a self numbing, self deception of reality. The truth needs to be faced, no person ever dies. The body dies but the individual enters another realm, and every one of us is only a breath away from that final out whispering of breath.

The Lord, in His word, gives three major questions starting with the word: “How”

- a) “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” (Heb. 2:3)
- b) “How can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matt. 23:33)
- c) “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?” (Hos. 11:8)
 - i) The first two questions are questions each one of us needs to ask ourselves.
 - ii) The third question is the pleadings of the heart of God as He longs to rescue every individual and bring them into His family, therefore, He pleads with the individual, “How shall I give thee up John, Mary, Patrick, Anna etc?

There is only one way of salvation:

- a) Putting it another way, there is only one Rescuer, that is Christ; there is only one way of acceptability with God, that is Christ; there is only one way of salvation, by one hundred percent dependence on the sin cleansing guilt removing sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. As the little chorus says, “No other door, no other way, no other path to the realms of day, no other keeper when tempted to stray, no other one but Jesus”.
- b) What did the Lord do for each of us?
 - i) I had two aunts, Auntie Isabel who was a big girl and Auntie Myrtle who was smaller and weaker. One day at school Myrtle had failed to do what ought to have been done and was brought to the front of the class to be disciplined. Suddenly her sister Isabel stood up and said, “I will take the punishment for her”. So Isabel came to the front and Myrtle stood to the side. Isabel, the innocent, suffered for Myrtle the guilty. That is what the Lord on the cross of Calvary did for each individual. He hung there on that cross suffering the fierce judgment of God that should have been borne by me. Putting it another way, “He bore my eternal hell for me”.
- c) The questions for everyone are:
 - i) Will I accept God’s truthfulness that I am a guilty hell deserving sinner, incapable to produce any merit of my own?
 - ii) Will I personally and gratefully accept Jesus as my “Substitute”, if so, when shall I do it? The hymn writer wrote the words:

Jesus, I will trust Thee, trust Thee with my soul;
 Guilty, lost, and helpless, Thou canst make me whole.
 There is none in heaven or on earth like Thee:
 Thou hast died for sinners—therefore, Lord, for me.

Jesus, I do trust Thee, trust Thee without doubt:
 Whosoever cometh, Thou wilt not cast out:
 Faithful is Thy promise, precious is Thy blood—
 These my soul’s salvation, Thou my Saviour God!

. . . Rowan Jennings

