

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

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

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Where Are They Now?

Introductory thoughts

At times it is good to sit quietly and ponder, "What does my life consist of?" This leads to a second question that will be considered later. At times to bring myself to a facing of life I sit and listen to that great pianist Glen Gould; the violinist Yehudi Menuhin; or the magnificent singer Maria Callas. Then as I read about them, I come to the sad words, "Glen Gould died; Yehudi Menuhin died; Stan Laurel died; Maria Callas died. One of the saddest funerals was that of Stan Laurel who died February 23rd 1965. It is totally irrelevant what their financial worth was, the individual is dead. It does not matter the grandness of their house or houses, it is all left behind. Like most everyone else they end up with a piece of ground 2 ½ x 8 feet, or if cremated, a scattering of ashes. Life on this earth is over. As the old gravestone said:

As you are now so once was I
As I am now soon you'll be.

For some they lived for their entertainment, to be comedians, business persons, etc. However, if the individual dies unsaved, without Christ, then at the moment of death they enter another world, a world without the delight of music, artistry is no more, comedy is no more for there are no audiences to entertain, no glorious high sounding songs or arias to sing, no bankbooks or stocks to think about. It is a world where almost nothing of earth matters except for one thing, how to enjoy life.

Some time ago one of the world's most famous fashion designers, Crisda Rodriguez, wrote an article before she passed away from cancer. "I had the world's most expensive car brand in my garage but now I'm traveling in a wheelchair; my house is full of all kinds of designers clothing, shoes and valuables but my body is wrapped in a small sheet of cloth provided by the hospital; there is enough money in the bank but now I'm not benefiting from that money; my house is like a palace but I'm laying in a double size bed in a hospital; I could go from five star hotel to another five star hotel but now I'm spending time moving from lab to lab in the hospital. I signed for hundreds of people, the Doctor's note today is my signature; I had jewelry to decorate my hair - now I don't have hair on my head. With a private jet I can fly wherever I want but now I need two people's help to get to the hospital patio. Although there are many foods, my diet has two tablets a day and a few drops of salt at night. This house, this car, this jet, this furniture, so many bank accounts, so much reputation and fame, none of them are useful. None of all valuables could give me relief. The real life is not about entertaining many people and making them smile "nothing is real but death". Life is so short. On September 20th 2018 Crisda died.

The Leading Question

Everyone hopes that their loved ones are in Heaven but it is a tragic fact that there are untold loved ones who knew the glorious news of the gospel of God's ability and willingness to save them, but they treated it as nothing of value. The substitutionary sufferings of the Lord when He suffered the penalty for their sins means nothing. They intend sometime to get right with God, they will take God's salvation as a fire escape when they are dying, but while they are healthy and have seemingly years to live, 'no thanks' to God and His salvation. The problem is twofold:

- a) Despite the aches and pains of aging bodies, we still speak about others as the old folk! It is we who are in our 70's and 80's who are the old folks, but we live in denial of the reality that death is approaching at the rate of 1440 minutes a day, and any one of us is one breath away from eternity.
- b) We live in the presumption that God is an ultra lenient old grandpa who will accept us when it suits us and be grateful when we come to Him for salvation. Nothing could be further from the truth. The words of scripture stand unwavering, "MY Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3); "Now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). God's plea to each unsaved individual who has never received Christ as Saviour is, "Oh that they were wise . . . that they would consider their latter end" (Deut. 32:29); "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12; 16:25), and finally, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die" (Ezek. 33:11).

Why is God so longsuffering and patient?

Why does God wait so patiently giving multiple opportunities, striving, pleading for the repentance of the individual? There are several reasons:

- a) Because God is longsuffering and "not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. 3:9). As the Lord looked over Jerusalem and knew that the city was populated with people who went to church (the synagogue) but had no time for Him or the message of God, He wept. How filled with pathos were His words, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together . . . and ye would not!" (Lk. 13:34). The Lord has not changed and as He looks down on this earth with its millions of people, it is as if He weeps saying, "Oh Mary, Mary, Mary; Oh John John John, how often would I have gathered thee, protected you from eternal judgment. . . but ye would not!"
- b) One time it will be the last and His tender entreaty will never be heard again. The words of the old war time song will ring clear, assuring the Christ rejector of the time when they will meet God, the words, "We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when, but I know we'll meet again". While in life, be assured each individual will meet the Lord but it will be after death, and there is no change of the situation.

Where are they now?

Tragically, as so many had no time for God in life, He will have no time for them in their death. I could, if I so desired, stand at the graves of the famous, those whose bodies have long gone to dust, and where they are I cannot tell. One thing I do know, if they have depended on Christ alone for salvation, they are in Heaven, but if not, they are in hell and that is their ultimate doom.

Salvation is limited:

- a) It is limited to humanity, there is no salvation for fallen angels, demons etc.
- b) It is limited to a human being as long as they are alive, for there is no salvation after death.
- c) It is limited to those who have heard and understood the gospel.
- d) It is limited to those who accept God's way of salvation. God says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12) and "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb 2:3). Wise is the individual who accepts God's way of salvation while there is opportunity.

. . . . Rowan Jennings

www.scripturaltruths.org

e-mail: scripturaltruths1@shaw.ca

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