

May 19, 2008

SERMONS FOR SUNDAY

May 25, 2008

a.m. *"Growing Old Gracefully"*

Scripture: Psalms 92:12-15

p.m. *"The Seven Walks of the Ephesians"*

Scripture: 3 John 2-4

The Destiny Of The Righteous Soul

Don Hatch

An uncertainty which haunts man is his profound longing to know about life after death. This is a reflective, contemplative and serious question, "If a man dies, shall he live again" (Job 14:14)? Cultures, races, nations and individuals recognize the brevity of life and that they cannot control many of the circumstances which prevail upon it. Because of the transitory nature of the world, the uncertainty of when death will occur, there is a craving to know the unknown about immortality. Will death be without remembrance? These are haunting questions. It seems to be difficult for men to accept the Bible as a final authority on these matters. Man should rebel at the thought of the sum totality of existence being limited to three score and ten years and that the final end of man is the grave. Perceptively men have found there is a belief within them for a future life. God made it possible to know the fulfillment of every genuine human desire. No matter what legitimate desires there may be like food, love, and longing for an endless life [which is a genuine and legitimate desire] God has made a means for them to be accessible.

Life on this earth seems incomplete and suggests a future life. Man's innate sense of justice causes him to feel that something is needed to complete life. Many have known sorrow, pain and suffering. Is it possible that there is nothing better beyond this life? Young and old die never realizing much in the way of satisfaction. Is there nothing else? Even the happiest lives have thoughts of incompleteness. Can it be that death is the final seal to an irrevocable "fate"? Destiny has more to offer than fate. Fate can be distinguished as an agency which predetermines that an event is "inevitable". Fate implies no choice, and ends fatally. Christians have a destiny. Destiny is known as a fore-ordained plan by the Divine and the moral agency of man (Rom 8:26-30).

The most powerful argument to be made for a future life is fellowship with God. God's reality with His highest creation [man] states that He wants eternal fellowship with man. When one believes in God and that the image of God is within man, the idea of life ending in the grave is unthinkable. Everyone who denies immortality denies the intrinsic values resident in man. Doubtfulness of God's existence dismays, while faith suggests a more wondrous place after death. True religion derived from the Bible responds to God's seeking man and fellowship with Him. The binding of the soul of man to His Creator is the heart of Christianity. The spirit of man meets the Eternal Spirit in an ultimate destiny. Such a meeting is not without consequences. Enoch walked with God and God took him. This gives man a hope of what will become of his soul. Abraham abides in eternity with God and souls unite with him in paradise because

Abraham lives (Lk 16:19-31; Mat 22:23-33). God honors His redeemed in an eternity of no more sorrow, sickness, death or misery (Rev 21:1-9). Death cannot put an end to the intimacy of man's soul with His Creator. To admit such a possibility is to deny the sacrifice of Christ and God's redeeming love. God has placed great worth on the soul of man. It is incongruous with all we know of God for Him to invoke His love and call us to fellowship where there is no communion of one's soul with its Creator after death. Enoch and Abraham were friends of God. Can death rob them of this holy intimacy? Can the grave rob God of His friends? If death snatches us from fellowship it proves that death is greater than God. Death was overcome. It has no more dominion over Christ and the redeemed are to reckon themselves to be alive in Christ (Rom 6:1-11; 1 Cor 15:20-28; Heb 2:5-18). Moreover, Jesus made the redeemed His friends (Jn 15:12-17). Such assurance removes all doubt that a loving God will keep His promises of eternal life.

An encounter with God and His love is the assurance of immortality. Such a conclusion is fundamental to New Testament teachings. The message is that Jesus Christ came to give man eternal life (Jn 3:16). Essentially, when one becomes a child of God by the purifying of the soul, in obedience to the truth, the blood of Jesus cleanses and the soul is begotten again unto eternal life (1 Pet 1:13-25). God's love is manifested because He sent His only Begotten Son into the world that man might live through Him (1 Jn 4:9, 10). Jesus proves that there is life beyond the grave. He was raised and ever liveth. When responding in faith and love to the love of God, there is belief in the Christian's destiny because of overwhelming evidence. The gaining of the whole world and losing one's soul is the greatest tragedy known to man (Mat 16:26). God's desire for man is that they should be redeemed and lives in eternity with Him. The unequivocal answer to the question, "if a man die, shall he live", is that Christ triumphed over death! Divine love is the justification for belief because it demonstrates nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ (Rom 8:31-39).

Jesus Christ came from glory and returned to it, to secure the destiny of man's soul (Jn 17; Acts 1:6-11; 2:34-36). The church is evidence of Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God. Jesus was God with us proving there is eternal life (Phil 2:1-11). There is no reason for the church to exist short of being a vehicle used by God's grace to make man aware of life everlasting (1 Tim 1:12-18). The Christian sows to the Spirit, rather than the flesh, in order to reap eternal life (Gal 6:6-10).

FAMILY CARE

A Message from Our Shepherds

Last Sunday evening May 11, Brother Dennis Johnson gave us a very interesting and informative presentation about the Lord's work in the Chennai Teacher Training School in India. Dennis and Beth left Thursday morning after visiting congregations in Happy and Stephenville, Texas.

As Dennis and I were visiting, we realized we had helped the same congregation in Canada many years ago. Our congregation supported a work in Dauphin Manitoba in 1971 - 1976. Some of the brethren traveled with me on my five trips to help in that area. Our youth group spent a week there helping set up Vacation Bible School; Letitia Beverly, Jerry & Laquita

Baker, & Frances LaFerney were all part of that group. Glen Kelly made one trip with me. In 1962 -1965, Dennis and his dad made the 500 mile trip every other Sunday to hold worship services for five ladies in Dauphin. Those same ladies were there, with about 40 other members, when we started supporting the Dauphin church of Christ. I remember staying with some of the members and getting up after midnight and viewing the northern lights, one of God's spectacular creations. The church has grown to over 250 members now. Some of those five original ladies were instrumental in securing the campus of the Western Christian College to Dauphin. Belt Line Road church of Christ and the Johnson's helped for many years in making things possible for the Lord's work in Dauphin, before we actually met.

This is the latest email from Dennis: "We certainly were blessed by and enjoyed your excellent hospitality and many kindnesses! Thank you very much! We thoroughly enjoyed being with all of you at Beltline and so much appreciate your deep interest, help and encouragement in the Lord's work in India. Brother Ravi Asir wrote to say that brother Solomon Gnanai (one of our teachers) had brought 4 to be baptized last Sunday when we were with you, and another was also baptized by 'Postman' Thangaraj the same day. It is so good to hear that so many souls are responding to the gospel, and especially through those working closely with and for us. We very much appreciate your strength in bearing fruit for the Lord. May the Lord bless you and grant you much fruit for your labors."

Our prayers continue not only for the Johnson's, but for all those who we support to do God's work.

~ Richard L. Renfro

SOWING THE SEED OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN 2008

Mid-week Bible Study

Sir Michael Faraday, noted physicist of the 19th century, was lecturing to students and Prince of Wales in England. The crowd was enthralled. At the conclusion the Prince proposed a congratulatory motion and the audience applauded, cheering the motion. The crowd grew silent as it waited for Sir Faraday to arise and accept the commendation. He did not respond because he had left the auditorium. Neither applause of students nor commendation of a Prince had stopped him from an appointment he kept each week. He had quietly left the building at the time of the close of his lecture. It was time for the mid-week "prayer meeting" in a small congregation and he had gone to be with his brethren.

It is not so much missing the mid-week assembly that is serious, many are unable to come. It is the lack of a spiritual heart which hampers one from gathering with the brethren. Those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness find opportunities to be fed. Are you regularly attending the assembly? Start afresh with us.

~ Don Hatch; article to appear in the May 23, 2008 issue of the Dallas Morning News

You Did It Unto Me

An agonizing cry from the valley below,
A sin-sick heart, a low bent soul,
Who will hear, and who will go
Who will venture to the valley below?

Their cries beat against the church's walls,
An eerie echo drifts down its halls;
It takes a caring heart to hear the calls
To answer the need of the wailing walls.

To your own self please be true,
Let your love do the talking for you,
And when you've finished you will know
You've helped to rescue them from below.

Remember this poem and forget it not –
Help your brother to remove each dark blot,
And in the end you will see
You did it unto them,
 You did it unto Me!

~ Earl W. Nester

GREETER ASSIGNMENTS

Sunday, May 25, 2008

Front foyer: Robert & Cathy Taylor; Ilene Ashworth, Carol Swinney

Back foyer: Paul & Bernice Guisinger

Sunday, May 25, 2008

Front foyer: Grady & BC Fowler; Mike & Elizabeth Garrison

Back foyer: Henry & Frances Seidmeyer

Family News:

MISSION PRINTING

Mission Printing will meet **today** at 4:00 p.m. in the Jr. Auditorium.

MENS' GATHERING/DEVOTIONAL

The **Monday morning** gathering will meet at 6:00 a.m. in the Annex.

SINGING SESSION

The **Sunday afternoon** singing session will meet in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

There is an assortment of visual aids for the "days of creation" in the Resource Room. Feel free to take and use what you need for "your day".

MORE POCKET DIRECTORIES

Additional phone directories are available in both foyers.

LADIES

Please join us on **Thursday, June 5th** at 10:00 a.m. in the Annex to work on bears and pillows. There will be opportunities for cutters, stitchers, stuffers and painters. After the work, those who would like to may go to lunch together. Please see Beverly McKey if you have questions.

IN APPRECIATION

Thank you so very much for the cards & calls over the past several weeks. Please keep me in your prayers; I love Belt Line for its loving care for me & all the sick. In Christian love, Nancy Batot

Thanks to all for the prayers, cards, & food during my recent surgery. Prayers are answered as I'm on the mend & am recovering nicely. Love, Melissa Beverly

Thank you for all the kindness shown us during my illness. We appreciate the prayers, cards, calls, & especially the food that Tom enjoyed so much. In Christian love, Tom & B.J. Prince

WITH SYMPATHY

Steve Finley (Juanita Melton's son) passed away last week. Visitation will be at Restland in Dallas on Wednesday, (5/21) from 6-8 p.m.; services will also be at Restland on Thursday (5/22) at 3:30 p.m.

PRAYER CONCERNS

√**Bob Bingham** will begin radiation treatments today, twice a day, for seven weeks.

√**Fauna Garrett** is in CCU #7 at Baylor/Irving with pneumonia.

√**Judy Hancock** had a scan run on Friday to determine if she has pancreatic cancer.

√**Donna Meyer** may need surgery.

√**Georgia Meyer** is not doing well; she is now on oxygen.

√**Jimmy & Betty Douglass** (relatives of Billie Prince & Linda Head) not only lost a brother, but also a father & mother-in-law.

√**Joy Gilliam** (the Gilliam's daughter-in-law) has health problems.

√**Tom Head** (Linda's husband) had cataract surgery last week.

√**Linda Lynd** (Marcella Porter's sister) got a good report; test results show her problem was probably caused by medication.

√**Mildred Pennington** (the Gilliam's sister-in-law) suffers with health issues.

√**Bette Oliver Yearwood** (Becky Henry's sister) has cancer & is undergoing chemo.

Continue to remember those who are recuperating or suffering with long-term illnesses, including: Bob Bradley, Garldean Latham, Frances & Jack LaFerney, Jan Smithson, Frances Tipton, Thomas West, Brad Anderson (Bill Paschall's friend), Paul Batot (Mike's dad), Frank Garrett (Fauna's husband), Bill Roses (Polly's husband), Chelsea Sutton (the Garrison's granddaughter), & our shut-ins.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Be sure and mark your calendar -

- May 30 thru June 1: Colleyville Gospel Meeting
- June: Summer Youth Series
- June 4-Aug 27: Wed. Night Summer Series
- June 5: Ladies in Annex at 10:00 a.m. to work on bears & pillows
- June 16 – 18: Vacation Bible School
- July: Cisco Youth Camp

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Sunday morning:

- Mary Bowen

Sunday evening:

- Debra Alonzo

LORD'S TABLE/MORNING

Front Table

- Brandon Thomason
- Grady Fowler
- Jerry Baker
- Mike Garrison
- Rob Farmer
- Stan Selby
- Derrol Allen
- Marvin Brown

Rear Table

- Nathan Allen
- JC Ross
- Robert Taylor
- Robert Bickel
- Max Melton
- Bill Paschall
- Bobby Bowen
- Roy Martin

SUNDAY A.M. PRAYERS

- Richard Renfro
- Garl Latham
- Bill Matthews

SCRIPTURE READING

- John Mayer
Psalms 92:12-15

SUNDAY P.M. PRAYERS

- Max Melton
- Roy Thomas

LORD'S TABLE/EVENING

- Thomas Rathbun
- Robert Ruckman

COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS

- Ty Harvey

FOR THE RECORD: WEEK ENDING ATTENDANCE & BUDGET

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>This Week</u>	<u>YTD Avg.</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Sun. Class	90	97	96	125
A.M. Worship	192	181	171	210
P.M. Worship	91	95	93	112
Wed. Class	93	101	94	110
Ladies Bible Class	-	-	28	35
Contribution	\$4977	\$5005	\$5401	\$5400

MISSIONS

21st Century Global Missions
Charlie & Mary DiPalma - India
Roland & Rose Mohsen – France
JB & Ivy Paul – Bitragunta, India
Gary & Nadya Workman – Ukraine
Glen & KuinTattersall – Australia
Oleg & Natasha Yakimenko - Russia
Wil & Telanda Sadler – Military Missions
Christ's Haven Children's Home - Keller, TX
Foster's Home for Children – Stephenille, TX
Ian & Mabel McPherson – Tasmania Australia
Wayne Jackson – Christian Courier on the Web
Ted Lingren - Sisophon Bible School – Cambodia
Mission Printing Worldwide Literature Distribution
Terry & Pam Laurence – Bear Valley School of Preaching
Dennis & Beth Johnson - Chennai Teacher Training School – India