

Title: The End of All Men
Text: Ecclesiastes 7: 2
Date: September 26, 2010
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

As painful as the death of a loved one is, it is good for us to be confronted with death that we might consider, this is the end of all men.

Wednesday morning, Mrs. Santamaria woke up very early. Other than the preparation she was making for her scheduled surgical procedure that day, her routine was like most other days. I as I understand it, she even made her special Cuban coffee and sat down with, Bro Jaime, as they routinely do. The family went about their day fulfilling their obligations as every other. Sharon drove Mrs. Santamaria to the hospital then went on to take care of things she needed to do. Jaime went off to work like every other day. David went to school.

At the same time, the rest of us were going about our daily business. We all had our plans for this weekend. Perhaps some plans were important, perhaps some not so important, but they were important to us because they were OUR plans. In all our planning, we are feasting on this precious thing we take for granted, called, "time"; feasting on those things which bring us joy, which ease us from the burden of one-day-after another, the day-in-and-day-out, the humdrum we call the daily grind.

But in the midst of those plans which we esteemed as all-too-important-to-be-broken, God broke them for us. He stopped us. He changed our plans. We were suddenly taken from the house of feasting to the house of mourning.

None but the Lord knew that Wednesday, was the day, he had appointed from eternity for Mrs. Santamaria's time on this earth to end. None but the Lord knew that many of us would spend our day Saturday in a memorial service for Mrs. Santamaria rather than where we thought we would be.

Solomon was a man of great, God-given wisdom. By divine inspiration he wrote this:

Ecclesiastes 7:2: [It is] better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that [is] the end of all men; and the living will lay [it] to his heart.

Illustration: Everyone here, take a deep breath with me. Those breaths are numbered by God. Soon, you will take your last one. And this is the end of all men. In the book of the generations of Adam we read this:

Genesis 5: 5: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died...8:
And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died...11: And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died...

So it shall be with you and with me. "It is appointed unto men once to die." The number of our days are determined by God. The number of our months are with God. God has appointed our bounds that we cannot pass. Just as Mrs. Santamarias appointed hour arrived and just as all our plans were interrupted in an instant, so it will be when God brings you to the hour he has appointed for you.

No matter what you may deem as so absolutely necessary in your life now, so that you have no time to seek God, when your appointed time comes, in that moment, God will stop you. Then you will stand before Holy God.

We hear that. You hear me say it now. And you know it is true. Yet, when death comes near to us we always experience a feeling of disbelief. But it is better to go to the house of mourning if it wakes us from our slumber.

Have you laid this to heart? Death IS the end of all men. But after that the judgment. If you have, I ask you to listen very attentively for a few moments.

We have a life to live, a death to die and an eternity to face. How we spend "time" will determine how we spend "eternity."

The Psalmist prayed:

Psalm 90:12: So teach [us] to number our days, that we may apply [our] hearts unto wisdom.

Teach us to consider how brief our days are, how fragile our life is. Scripture calls it:

- A handbreadth
- A vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniseth away (James 4: 14.)
- It passes "Faster than a weavers shuttle"
- Few days and full of trouble
- A flower--here today and cut down tomorrow
- A shadow that fleeth and continues not
- It is soon cut off and we fly away

The Psalmist prayed:

Psalm 90:12: So teach [us] to number our days, that we may apply [our] hearts unto wisdom.

HAVE YOU EVER TRULY APPLIED YOUR HEART TO WISDOM? TRUE WISDOM?

Proverbs 9: 10: The fear of the LORD [is] the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy [is] understanding.

GOD IS WISDOM. GOD IS THE HOLY ONE. TO THEM WHO ARE CALLED CHRIST IS THE POWER AND WISDOM OF GOD. THOSE WHO CAST ALL THEIR CARE ON HIM ARE HOLY, ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED!

Oh, teach us to APPLY our WHOLE HEARTS unto GOD THE FATHER AND HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.

Gloria Santamaria--"If he spits the lukewarm out of his mouth, what will He not do to cold hearts?"

Listen to this promise of God.

Proverbs 2: 3: Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, [and] liftest up thy voice for understanding; 4: If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as [for] hid treasures; 5: Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. 6: For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth [cometh] knowledge and understanding.

With such a sure promise from the LORD want it be a complete abuse of the time God has given you on this earth for you to pass into eternity having never truly begged God to make himself known to you?

Two things are certain:

1. If you find yourself "applying your heart unto wisdom", "crying after knowledge", "seeking God as silver and hid treasure" it will be because God has first sought you. The carnally minded man has his mind set on carnal things. The man in whom the Spirit of God has entered finds he has a mind for spiritual things. If you find a desire in you to truly know God, it will be because God has given that desire.

2. This is also certain--"then SHALT THOU understand the fear of the LORD and you SHALL FIND the knowledge of God. For the LORD GIVETH wisdom: out of HIS MOUTH [cometh] knowledge and understanding."

- Mark 10: 46-52--Blind Bartimaeus
- Mark 1: 40-42--The Leper
- Mark 5: 24-34--Woman with the issue of blood

WHAT WILL THIS FEAR OF GOD, THIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE HOLY INVOLVE?

1. SIN, 2. RIGHTEOUSNESS AND 3. JUDGMENT

I. FEAR OF GOD HAS TO DO WITH FINDING OUT WHAT YOU ARE? WHY DO WE DIE?

A. One little three letter word: S. I. N. God told Adam...

1. In the day you eat you shall die--he ate and he died spiritually that day--

- False religion began that day with fig leaves
- False refuge began that day hiding in the trees
- Man began hiding from his Creator.

"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8: 7.)

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2: 14.)

2. What did Adam's sin and death have to do with you?

Romans 5:12:...by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

3. Not only spiritual death but sin is the reason we suffer sickness and trouble and physical death.

Genesis 3: 17: And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed [is] the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat [of] it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return.

- The infirmities of the flesh--disease, withering of our skin, aging and sorrow and sickness...
- Even the ground--the briars and thorns
- The hardness of this life--the toiling and labor
- All the effects of our sin.

B. Consider this: How sad is this?

Genesis 1: 31: And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good....Genesis 6: 5: And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually. 6: And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

True wisdom of God and understanding of his holiness will have to do with discovering you are sin. When Isaiah saw the Lord, he heard, "Holy, holy, holy!"...Isaiah 6: 5: Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

II. APPLYING YOUR HEART TO LEARN OF GOD WILL HAVE TO DO WITH FINDING OUT WHO GOD IS AND HOW GOD SAVES SINNERS

A. GOD IS HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

1. He requires you to be as good as God--not a stab at perfection, not the best you can do--absolute pure perfection of holiness. Christ is the believers Holiness and Separation--he is both he that Sanctifieth and our Sanctification.

Christ Jesus is the perfection of nature, the perfection of obedience, the perfection of purity, the perfection of holiness in which those who have been made to behold him so stand as pure as he.

The very Power of Christ in us--makes us partaker with his nature--a new nature separate from the Adam nature.

- Light from darkness
- Truth from error
- New desires and delights after the law while the old man is yet present

But though we walk in the Light God gives we do not consider our walking to be our holiness. Though we believe through faith we do not consider our believing to be holiness. Though we turn from our old walk, put away the old paths, our putting away we do not consider our holiness. If so we are yet in pollution. If there be some thing we no longer do and we look at that act of abstinence as our holiness then we are merely still trying to clean a dirty floor with a dirty mop and we have become twice dirty.

True separation and true holiness is to be separated from those vain ideas and vain works into Christ who is our true holiness. "Follow after holiness without which no man shall see the kingdom of God" and if you read the first verse Hebrews 12 you will find that our Holiness is Christ--the Author and Finisher of Faith whom we pursue. Our holiness is not the act of laying aside the sin and the weights, our holiness is Christ, we merely lay aside those things that we draw nearer to him who is our Separation and Holy Perfection with God.

B. GOD REQUIRES SATISFACTION

1. "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die...I will by no means clear the guilty...The wages of sin is death.*" Either you will have suffer the eternal wrath of God or someone will have to satisfy God in your place.

2. There is a multitude of sinners, chosen of God from eternity, who shall and must be saved.

- Christ was made flesh for them
- Christ was made under the law for them
- Christ was made sin for them
- Christ was made to bear their stripes for them

- CHRIST MADE SATISFACTION FOR THEM
- CHRIST MADE THEM THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD
- THEY SHALL AND MUST BE SAVED!

Illustration: First day at school--seeing if your name is on the wall. Have you even applied your heart to see if your name is in the Lambs book of life--you might be one for whom Christ died? Have you ever even looked?

- So what if you are the best ball player in the world
- So what if you earn degrees and awards and honors
- So what if you obtain riches in this life

Mark 8:36: For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Have you even applied your heart to see if your name is in the Lambs book of life--you might be one for whom Christ died? Have you ever even looked?

III. THIS FEAR OF GOD AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE HOLY HAS TO DO WITH BELIEVING THAT JUDGMENT IS OVER FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST

1 Corinthians 15:56: 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. Christ Jesus purged the sin of his people!
- B. Christ Jesus won the victory over death!
- C. Through His Spirit he binds the strong man who had us in hard bondage because of a fear of death all our lives!

Look yonder in heaven with the eye of faith!

- Do you behold Christ Jesus risen from the grave-
- Do you behold him seated at God's right hand--
- Do you behold the smile of the Father--well-pleased with his Son?
- Do you behold yourself seated there with him, as he is-accepted in the Beloved!
- Do you find your heart overflowing with joy at the sight of it! Do you believe on him! Do you cast all your care into his hands!

If so listen to this word:

1 John 4: 17: Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

"He shall not fail!" Those sinners Christ came to save shall be saved. The purpose of God cannot be frustrated. The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ shall never be counted a failure!

The Fear of God and Understanding of the Holy has to do with knowing:

- Sin is all I am. But Christ is all my righteousness.
- And my judgment is accomplished in my Substitute!

NOW I WANT TO GET RIGHT DOWN TO PARTICULARS

A. Start today applying your heart to wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 12: 1: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;...

The things pleasurable to the flesh fade with the flesh.

- Natural eyesight is darkened
- Arms, hands, feet and fingers tremor with age
- Back is bent for lack of strength
- Teeth fail so you are limited in what you can eat
- Lips remain shut
- Your appetite is so weak it is a labor to even eat
- Hearing fails--least noise frightens you, no joy in music
- So weak that high places make you fearful and even stone in the path, even a grasshopper is a burden
- Your desire is gone

Most folks who do not seek the Lord in their early years do not seek him in the latter years.

When I was younger, I heard an old man say these things and I thought to myself--one day, when I have "a convenient season" I will seek God--Joey K, paralyzed.

2 Corinthians 6: 2:...Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,

B. What tools will you need? Get alone with the only the Bible and ask God--maybe a good concordance.

1. Read this book with one focus--to see the triune God in Christ, how he saves in Christ--everything else will fall in place. Keeping coming to hear this gospel preached.

C. Don't be ashamed of asking honest questions?

1. Asking God to teach us--is coming without the answers
2. Needing to be filled--means coming empty
3. A broken and contrite heart God will not despise

Listen carefully! Nothing would thrill your pastor's heart more than for you to want to spend some time with me looking into these scriptures.

Illustration: My most cherished days--going down to pastors house with questions, going fishing with Bryan.

D. Confess him! If you find yourself believing on Christ confess him in baptism and give yourself to learn OF HIM the rest of your days. You will find not only the joy of knowing your Redeemer, not only quietness and assurance for your soul, but you will find a family of brothers and sisters who have been praying for you all along. What a joy to sing!

My sin, (Oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!)
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross the cross and I bear it no more!
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! It is well with my soul!

Amen!