

Love Thy Neighbor in Service

Birthday Storms



"Think about it at little as possible." The simple but confusing words were spoken at a birthday party. The statement was made in response to the discussion of our continuing (and apparently more rapid ascent) through life and ultimate death. It is the answer much of America and possibly the world would propose about the prospect of death. Simply stuff it to the back of your mind, enjoy the ride and dare not take the time to consider your death.

Interestingly, that is actually the enemies plan for you. Get you busy working, and playing, in life so you don't think about what is coming. If you are not comfortable about your impending death you need to stop right now and start thinking about it. Everyone has heard the statement; "The only certain things in life are death and taxes." How many people do you know never think about their taxes?

Life can often be confusing, and come at us like a large storm. All is quiet, and then a raging storm hits destroying everything. How many people pouring out of New Orleans considered they may lose everything and never return? Unlike the storms of life, death is an absolute certainty. Not being prepared is simply foolish. Most people have years to think about it. Some would argue that it is uncertain, and an unknown thing. Yes, that is true to an extent but not preparing as best you can is not the resolution.

Most everyone assumes they will live to be fairly old and reach an age where working is too difficult or one simply loses the desire to work. As a result, if you are wise, plans are established and money saved for the time when you will need to have enough to be able not to work. The great problem is retirement may be 20-30 years tops and death lasts for eternity. Planning for a short period, and completely ignoring an incredibly long period simply makes no sense.

Well, how in the world does one plan for death? The argument can be made that no one knows for certain specifically what happens. That is correct based upon

my experience so far in my relatively short 48 years. I may find someone who can tell me with certainty, but even then you would have to trust what they said as being absolutely correct.

I have talked to three people who were clinically dead. All say that death is an incredibly wonderful feeling. However, since they came back, what occurs, except for a very short period in death, is simply not known. We are now left with what we do actually experience here. Everyone has been to a funeral, and seen bodies buried. We know our bodies are temporary.

What do you Believe?

Do we actually have souls which continue on into the after life? I am not certain, but if I am going to make a mistake it is to assume I will continue on without my body. While that may actually be incorrect, I would much rather assume I continue on and find it not to be the case than make the eternal mistake of assuming that I do not go on and find out that I do exist into eternity separate from my body. The first mistake cost me little or nothing, and the second could

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cost me everything in the wildest way imaginable. I have never been one to take big risks, and that is the biggest risk a person can take for their whole existence.

The next step is to determine what information is in existence about eternity. That leads to a bunch of religions. While the creator of the universe, and yes we have to assume a creator exists, may have not told us why we are here yet we have to assume he/she has. If the information does not currently exist we are simply lost. A reasonable person would say that a search should begin immediately if you have not already been looking. The tendency is to begin with the religion of your parents or the predominant one in the surrounding state/country where you grew up.

Unfortunately, at this point I cannot come up with a clear place to begin. The choice is yours, but starting immediately is the thing to do. Interestingly, in Christianity that is exactly what Jesus tells us to do "Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened." Sounds rather mysterious, and when you first begin it is.

I can only tell you of my personal experience. The process I went through was to take the religion of my parents and begin there. I was asked to be in a group of four men. Two already had strong Christian faiths and two of us were searching hard. Yes, I did listen to what the other men had to say but that was never the reason I ultimately came to believe. In the scriptures it

actually says we are allowed to see by the Lord so I cannot claim my effort caused me to believe as much as He allowed my eyes to be opened. I read the bible, then went and searched out every odd thing I could find in the bible to see for myself. I ultimately got stuck in a corner, and this is why many people will never begin the journey.

IT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY MEAN CHANGE FOR YOUR LIFE.

Change scares everyone! After all the searching out one comes to a point of either saying this may be true or it cannot possibly be the truth. For me I believed it to be true, but after reading Jesus words in Mathew, Mark, Luke & John (the four gospels {gospel just means good news}), I had a real problem. Jesus' words, as best I could understand them, appeared to be an absolute call to action in my life. By the way we are not saved through our

own actions, but by accepting Jesus Christ. The action is just the out growth of that belief.

For me personally, the call was to serve the homeless that I passed by every day and had ignored (avoided like the plague) for years. Incredibly, not until I responded personally to Jesus' commands and actually did what He says to do, did I find Him to be real. The whole process, time, and effort appear to be huge. It has been a major part of the last six years of my life. However, what in the world are you engaged in that is so important you need to ignore the possibility you will exist into eternity. Even the smallest amount of logic makes your current activities seem silly when put into that light.

My prayer is that if you have not already started you will begin immediately. Unfortunately, no one is given advance notice of when they will be leaving. His words are

What can you do?

We need your prayers! It is the most important thing you can do for the ministry.

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

(James 5:16 NIV)

LTN is committed to spreading the Gospel by Christ's example to "love thy neighbor as thyself." Matthew 22:39. To this end, LTN has designed programs with the purpose of helping clients build a relationship of faith in God, regain their dignity and eventually, regain their self-sufficiency. Contact us to learn more about the services and programs.

Love Thy Neighbor In Service is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation (IRS#17053159005021). Gifts are tax deductible in accordance with tax law.

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Ask, Seek, Knock...

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absolutely true, "Ask and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened (NIV Mathew 7:7). Jesus stands at the door of your life waiting to come in...

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JC' or similar initials.

John Chapman, Jr.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Matthew 22:39

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Email John if you have a desire to really come to know the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in a real and true way. There are just a few simple steps to take.
