

I am one of six children. (List) One of the most difficult days of my life was the last day I spent with my sister Linda, Cancer: As is so often the case, it was a progressive spiral down to death. I was with her the last day

So ill: I remember going out to lunch after, and trying to understand: You probably know the questions:

- God how could you? Why didn't Dr's catch it soon enough Why didn't treatments work?
- What about her daughter? What happens next? Where WERE you?

We all ask those questions...and many others...when we face death.

Fortunately Jesus didn't leave us without some guidance. Look with me at how He deals with the death of a friend, learn

Today I want to talk with you about: Loving People Like Jesus:

Loving Those Who Grieve

John 11:1-53

Pg 760

How Do We Love Like Jesus?

1. Understand That Physical Death Is NOT The Final Reality.

Vs 1-16

- Our perspective is Off! (We think of death as "IT" and it isn't!) Everything is over...No...
- God has a very different perspective than we do
>He uses death for a variety of reasons
 1. Point out the sinfulness of our world: (Creation WASN'T designed this way...WE did it!) Adam/Eve
 2. Reminds us of the importance of making a decision regarding Jesus (vs 14)
 3. Sometimes uses death for HIS Glory! (vs 4)
- Ultimate reality is found in eternity...not in this world. What we do with Jesus is the deciding factor.

Applic: When death comes...LOOK for God's purpose!

2. Dealing With Death Brings Out Both The BEST Of People...And The WORST!

Vs 16, 45-50

When we deal with death it scrapes us raw...removes the veneer of "nice" we have...and reveals what is underneath

- For some, it reveals the BEST of them! Vs 16
Thomas: *"Let us also go, that we may die with Him!"* Amazing statement...why isn't he remembered for THAT!?
Thomas rose to the occasion...the threat of death didn't cause him to run and hide...he was all in!
- For others, it reveals the WORST of them! Vs 45-50
High Priest: Religious Leaders: "Romans will come and take OUR place and OUR nation.
Caiaphas: "If one man has to die...that's ok with me!"

Applic: Be aware...be prepared...look for the best...prepare for the worst

3. God Often Has A Purpose In Death That Is Greater Than We Understand.

Vs 14, 47-48

Death is a VERY defining event. Both for the person that passes...BUT also for those that remain!

God uses the passing of someone we love for a LOT of different things, but one that is essential to understand is Dividing Line

- Causes some people to believe! Vs 14, 21, 27, 42, esp 45
They saw the resurrection of Lazarus, they believed!
- Causes others to reject! Vs 46, 48

Applic: God sometimes uses the death of a loved one to bring people to Himself. Wakes them up...reminds them...

Those who study how and when people come to know Jesus tell us that there are "windows" of opportunity

The passing of a loved one typically will do one of two things: Bring you closer...Push you away in anger!

USE THIS OPPORTUNITY: Don't let it pass. Help people understand God is near

BEST TOOLS I have for that is a series of little booklets: (Want a set, 10.00)

4. Death Reminds Us Of The Urgency Of Our Faith.

Vs 21-26

After we have known Jesus for a while it is easy for us to lose the urgency of our faith.

When we first put our faith in Him as Lord and Savior we are determined to tell everyone we know...Life and Death balance

But..we cool off. Time passes...We slow down, and we fall into a pattern of not wanting to push, not rock the boat...

Death changes everything! When someone we love dies...it reminds us...What we believe about Jesus is IMPORTANT

Look at vs 25: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will never die!"

- Physical Death: Leaving this life...Stepping into Eternity
- Spiritual Death: Living in eternity w/o Christ...separated from the Father.
Let's clarify: No "universalism" No "It's all good...as long as you are sincere." No: Second Chance
People who die without having put their faith in Jesus, their sin not forgiven by His work on the Cross: Eternity w/o

Applic: For that reason it is absolutely essential that we share our faith...And death makes that sharing URGENT!

If we are going to love people the way Jesus did...then we share with them how they can have eternal life!

5. Death Reminds Us That Sometimes We Need Others To Truly Live!

Vs 44

This detail almost gets lost in the glory of what is taking place. Lazarus is raised from the dead! Amazing miracle.

Jesus is very intentional about arriving AFTER Lazarus has passed, And AFTER the 3rd day. Spirit left the body

When he arrives, prays for Lazarus, raises him from the dead...now notice something..."Take off he graveclothes, let him go

- Watch this now...Jesus..when HE was raised from the dead...HE didn't need any help...Not Stone, Not Graveclothes

- **BUT, When Lazarus was raised...He needed help!**
 >Someone Else had to roll the stone back
 >Someone Else had to unwrap the windings of grave clothes.

Reminds us of the passage over in

Eph 4:22

“Put off your old self”

Col 2:11

“Put off the sinful nature”

Here is what the bible is telling us:

2 Cor 5:17 *“If any man is in Christ, He is a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come!”*

>We individually have responsibility...Implied in Rom, Col, Eph, Peter **YOU PUT OFF THE OLD MAN**

>We also realize...sometimes we need help! Who **BETTER** to help an addict..but a recovered addict!

God **USES** us to help others

Here is the reality

1. We have a **LOT** of “new” Christians...alive in Christ...walking around with grave clothes on!
 You **KNOW** Jesus...but you haven’t been able to “unwrap”
 You are still bound up by the habits, sins, patterns and the thinking of the past!
 You **WANT** to be free...but you need some help!
2. If you are ever going to get beyond where you have been...you **NEED** someone to come help you unwrap!
 Prayer, Accountability, Bible Study To Reprogram your way of thinking, Vision to see a new path
 It can be done...but sometimes you need some help.

CONCL:

Sometime soon...Death will be a reality for someone you know:

1. Focus on the **RIGHT** thing...**NOT** this physical death...but the life to come!
2. Be ready for the best...and the worst...and as a Christian...bring your “A” game to the table!
3. Look for God’s purpose....Sometimes it is enough to say...in response to Why...God didn’t do this..we need **HIM**
4. Hold on to the urgency...every time death comes knocking...remember...what happens in this life determines the next
 Maybe someone you know is ready to listen now
5. Be willing to help “unwrap” those that need some help...and if it is **YOU**...Don’t be too proud to **ASK!**
 I can hear Jesus saying...”Someone...Loose Him...and Let Him Go!

**MOST IMPORTANTLY
 MAKE SURE YOU ARE READY!**