

Now Is The Time!

May 15, 1988

A great loss was had by all of us a short time ago. To some it was the loss of a daughter, to others it was the loss of a sister. For some it was the first experience with death and to others they had been there before. It was still hard.

How do you help teenagers, who think they have years and years to live, understand and accept the death of another teen. All of a sudden they are face to face with their own mortality and it scares them.

Susie, age 17, got up one morning, talked to a friend on the phone, went back to bed to sleep and in 20 minutes it was over. She did not get a chance to wake up. It was sudden and unexpected. A house fire!! But Susie had one advantage. She had "made her peace with God!" Susie was ready to be with the Lord at any time.

If a teen friend dies of a drug overdose or too much alcohol too quick paralyzed the brain, death can, almost, be understood. It is explained away with "He got careless, or he wanted to die!"

"But Susie? She didn't do those things! Why her? I don't understand!" That is the cry of the teenagers that we hear over and over.

What most people will not look at but will do their best to ignore is we only have one guarantee in life and that is we are going to die. (Hebrews 9:27 says "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.") There is no guarantee as to how long we will have before we die. We may have 80 years, or 50, or 17! There are no promises. We don't know how long we have! When Susie went to sleep, did she suspect that she would meet Jesus Christ that morning? Make no mistake, she and everyone when they die, will meet Jesus. But will He say "Well done, my good and faithful servant, Come with me;" or, will He say "Depart from me you worker of iniquity, for I never knew you" and then send you to spend eternity in hell?

I think that each person, somewhere in the back of their mind, thinks that they will be the first one to not die. Come on be honest! If you ignore it, it won't happen. Right? WRONG!!! That is the same lie the serpent told Eve in the Garden of Eden! "...Ye shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4).

When we realize avoiding death is a lie, we always think we have plenty of time. When you are a teen, you think that anyone over 40 can die at any moment. Besides 40 is ancient and who would want to live that long. When you become 40, you feel that your life is really just beginning and you don't die until you are 80 or 90. No matter what age we are, it is always someone older who will die. We will perform any mind game we can to avoid accepting our own mortality and go back to that lie of the serpent. And Satan will feed us all the information we want to use to justify continuing to believe in our own immortality.

We will die! This body will die, our spirit won't! And that spirit will meet Jesus! And what's He going to say to you? Will He open his arms, say I love you and come on in? Or will He say you had a chance, you heard the message. Why didn't you believe?

It's a choice each of us have to make. You can't put it off. You can't wait until you are older because you may not have very long. We have all heard stories or we've talked to people and shared Jesus with people, who have said I have plenty of time. Then they walk out the door and die! They got hit by a truck. They drank too much alcohol. They got asphyxiated in a car. So many things can happen. We have no guarantees! The only guarantee we have and the one thing everyone has in common with every other person is we are going to die. The unbeliever is going to die and the believer is going to die. That is the only promise we have that is for everybody. And running away from it and hiding from it doesn't change it. We start to put up walls around us so we won't have to face death. Then we say it can't happen to me! You've got to let the walls down and realize that now is the time to get your life right with the Lord. That's the whole message. It's time to quit fooling around. It's time to quit procrastinating. **TOMORROW MAY NOT BE THERE.** Jesus loves us enough to give us a chance to get it right.

The last few weeks of Susie's life, we watched her put everything else behind her and walk with the Lord. She became closer to Jesus, than any of us, in those last few weeks that she was alive. **AND WE SHOULD BE SHAMED BY THAT.** But we should use it as an example! She was ready to meet Jesus. Can everyone here say that about themselves? Think about it! Pray about it and ask the Lord what you have to do, what it is going to take, to make you ready.

Have you accepted Jesus as your personal Savior? That's what you are supposed to do. The Bible says to believe on Him. That means you believe what He says and do it! Do you have unconfessed sin in your life? Do you have something that you are hiding and you don't want anyone else to know about it? **GOD KNOWS ABOUT IT!!!** Get rid of it! Get your life right! No one is going to point a finger at you and say you are a dirty rotten sinner! You know your own heart! No one else does. But most of the sins we have to deal with are hidden sins. The ones that no one else knows about. We are very good at hiding them. Get rid of them, shed them, throw them away, send them back to hell where they came from. If Satan can keep you tied up in those hidden sins, he's got a victory. If you turn your back on the Lord, you go to hell. The time is too short. Jesus is coming back for his people. Are you ready? We need to make a decision right now!

There was a prophecy spoken on April 2, 1988. We were celebrating the Lord's Supper together and the Holy Spirit moved mightily. We felt His anointing, and we felt His love. We felt His forgiveness of all our sins. The prophecy concerned Enoch and how all of a sudden there would be someone there and then they were not. They would be here walking with the Lord and then they would be gone.

Immediately everyone said that some Christians were going to be translated just like Enoch was. They were going to be here and instantly they would be gone. That can happen!! But it also meant something else. One night you go to sleep and the next morning you don't wake up! And in 5 days we saw it happen.

Susie was not the only one to die that morning. Her older sister Helen, age 21, her niece Natoshia, age 3, and her nephew Randy (Helen's son), age 2, also died that morning. Susie spent a long time telling Helen about Jesus and just three weeks before the fire, Helen accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. They all went to be with Jesus, together! Praise the Lord!!! They were ready to meet the Lord and He loved them so much that He let them come home to be with Him.

They are the blessed ones! We are blessed because we got to know them. We are blessed because they were a part of our lives. We can be blessed if we can learn from this experience. Don't run away from it. Don't hide from it. Don't ignore it. One day, unless the Lord comes for us first, everyone will die. And nothing is going to change that. So get it right. Know that Jesus is saying that He loves us, and time is short! Get it right and **NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE THAT DECISION! THERE MAY BE NO TOMORROW!**

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Scripture References
Hebrews 9:27
Genesis 3:4