

週一嗎哪 午間查經分享祈禱會

MONDAY MANNA
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TAKING AN HONEST LOOK AT MORTALITY

By Ken Korkow

About 18 months ago, I was at the Veteran's Administration (VA) hospital where military veterans in my area can receive treatment. Being a veteran of the Vietnam War, I was there for a routine checkup. After the physician reviewed my medical report, I asked for and received a copy of it.

After I went home, I added up the numbers reflected in the report. It showed that by adding up my various disabilities, most related to injuries I suffered in battle, the percentages totaled 260 percent. That means total disability for more than 2.5 people! Two months after my hospital visit, the VA doctors told me I have Parkinson's Disease, and Agent Orange disease, the result of being exposed to the dangerous chemical contaminant while serving in Vietnam. The Parkinson's diagnosis did not bother me. I know other people who dealing with it, and for the most part it is manageable.

My Agent Orange response, however, was totally different. I watched one of my Vietnam Marine buddies die from that; I am working with three other men under the same death sentence. It is a terrible way to die. For about half an hour, I allowed myself to wallow in self-pity. I can relate to a quote attributed to actor and film director Woody Allen: "I don't mind dying. I just don't want to be there when it happens."

But then I reminded myself of the hope – the confident assurance – that I have about life after death, all because of what Jesus Christ did for me: "*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Romans 6:23). In terms of eternity, this life is hardly the blink of an eye.

What about you? The reality is, sooner or later, because of one thing or another, we all are going to die. The human mortality rate is 100 percent. Even if you are a young adult just starting in business or your professional career, this is a reality you will face one day. And if you are older than 40, you are probably already on the downhill side of your physical capabilities. I do not intend to seem morbid, but death is an inescapable fact. We might as well accept it – and prepare for it.

Many people put off thinking the 'end' is getting closer and closer with every passing day. They whistle through cemeteries and act as if they will somehow find an escape clause. There are temporal concerns to address – such as having documents prepared stating our last wishes, ranging from how to dispose of our worldly possessions to our burial or cremation desires.

But more important than these is the question: Are you living TODAY with the ETERNITY in mind? After you are gone, what will remain? What legacy will you have left behind? Are you, as

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Jesus Christ told His followers, determined to “go and bear fruit – fruit that will remain” (John 15:16)?

Do you even have the hope of eternal life? The Bible addresses this as well: “Yet to all who received [Jesus Christ], to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.... For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 1:12, 3:16).

If you knew you had only 2 years left on Planet Earth, what would you do? For me, if I knew just two more years left, I would keep doing what I am doing: serving God and pointing others to Him. Do you have the assurance of eternal life? And are you making life investments that will last for eternity?

Ken Korkow lives in Omaha, Nebraska, U.S.A., where he serves as an area director for CBMC. This is adapted from his “Fax of Life” column. Used with permission.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Who was the closest person to you that has died? What impact did losing that person have on you?
2. Have you thought much about your own death, knowing that it is inevitable and inescapable? Or is it something you have chosen not to think about? What concerns you most about it? Explain your answer.
3. What would you do differently – if anything – if you knew you had only two more years to live on Earth?
4. Do you have assurance of eternal life, that physical death will not be your final “act”? If so, what are you presently engaged in that will result in what Jesus described in Matthew 6:20 as “treasures in heaven”?

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:
Matthew 6:19-21, 33-34; John 15:1-8; Romans 3:23, 5:8; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 3:12-14

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