

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord Will Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

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No Respector of Persons

Introduction

As I sit today in my study, 27th March 2020, I like others live in a world teetering under a major catastrophic medical disaster. Across the world the coronavirus is sweeping across the nations. It is no respecter of persons. Young and old are getting it; religious and non-religious; male and female; rich and poor, illiterate and learned. This virus is no respecter of persons.

This virus cares nothing of grief and concern. It is spreading without hesitation by land, sea and air. Across the globe people are dying. Today, in Italy, the reports are over nine hundred people have died. People are manifesting their fear of death by the wisdom of the precautions they are taking. In the condo complex I live only one person is allowed in the elevator at once; in the stores markers are on the floors to indicate where to stand so as to not be close to others; non-essential businesses are closed; restaurants except drive-thru's also. The streets are virtually empty, stores are shuttered, and shortly after night fall an eerie silence descends as virtually the only vehicles on the roads are first responders.

How are we to view this? I hear people saying, "Why did God let this happen?" I cannot give the full reasons why God lets it happen but there are some things I do know and some of them are:

This is a warning concerning the unpredictability of life

Today I sit here reasonably well and healthy, but which of us knows what will show up in the next twenty four hours. One month ago there were approximately 30,104 people across the world who got up, lived and had family life. They never thought that in one month maximum they would be dead. I doubt if any of them thought that by the time March 31st rolled along they would long be buried or cremated. Life was going along nicely, and then suddenly, without warning, perhaps due to old age, bodily infirmity or carelessness, the virus struck and from that point on it was only a matter of time. Death is no respecter of persons.

In my lifetime I have taken a number of funerals ranging from a little baby, only a matter of days old, to an old man in his ninety's. However, there have been those I was never asked to take and for that I am thankful. One in particular I remember. I was speaking at a church gathering on a Sunday evening and at the prayer meeting before the meeting there was a father praying for his son. You see the young man was the only one in the family not ready to meet God. To the grief of all who knew him he had no time for God or His salvation. That was a Sunday night. The following Saturday the young man was killed with a sniper's bullet in Belfast. I shall never forget that funeral. The funerals were held from the home of the deceased in those days and as we all waited outside the home, suddenly the wailing rent the air. The mother was not only looking at her son in death but she knew the young man was in Hell. As the cortège moved down the street,

the anguished screaming and wailing of that mother is something I suppose I shall never forget. Death had come suddenly and an empty chair was in the house. Death is no respecter of persons.

It is a fact that all humanity is marked for death. It will be the quickest journey each one will take. For a time we may lie in a bed slowing dying but then that final gargling in the throat comes. The end is near and almost imperceptibly it's all over. The individual has moved from life to death. For the unsaved, they have moved from the opportunity for salvation, from hope to no hope, from transience of life to eternal doom and being under the full blast of God's wrath for all eternity. There is no coming back, it's all over. They will cover you up and the trolley will be pushed along the corridor to the morgue. This coronavirus is a warning that we must all needs die.

This is a warning of love to get ready to meet God

Make no mistake, death is not the end of the road. It is only a doorway, a doorway which many are frightened of having to enter. When sickness comes close they begin to panic. Despite outward hardness they know that they are not ready for what is beyond death. For years some have known the way of salvation but kept putting it off. A king once said after hearing Paul the Apostle preach, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28). How many have been like that and then gone out of a church service or out of a situation because they did not want to hear anything about the gospel. God says, "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12) and again, "O that they were wise. . . that they would consider their latter end!" (Deut. 32:29). No matter how severe the suffering is from any disease, to be under the full fury of God's eternal wrath in a never ending Hell is dreadful to consider.

Rather than let people go to Hell the Lord lets warnings come along to remind us of the brevity of life. God is reminding people across the world that no one knows who or where this virus will strike next. God, by letting this spread across the world, is reminding all men everywhere to prepare to meet Him. It is a time when they ought to learn how unimportant material things are at the time of death, and when each will meet their Creator. At that time, money will mean nothing, possessions will mean nothing, property will mean nothing, prestige will mean nothing. No one ever carries money to the grave (1 Tim. 6:7) and when an individual dies, be they king or pauper, as they came into the world, they will go out (Job 1:21; Eccl. 5:15).

- a) God speaks to each of us by the death of loved ones, by the passing of years, the failing of health, and global catastrophes. The warning comes loud and clear, "PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD". Wise is the individual who prepares for that meeting by the casting aside, as dirt, all earthly effort to gain God's acceptance, all religious rituals, and accepting the Lord as their personal Saviour and depending on the sacrifice of the Lord at Calvary. How can an individual prepare to meet God? By full 100% dependance on the sacrifice of Christ. In the words of the old hymn which said, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." Salvation is open to all for God is no respecter of persons.

God is no respecter of persons

According to God's righteous evaluation, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23); all are without hope (Eph. 2:12); "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6); all are under the condemnation of God, "There is none righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:10); and all the world is guilty before God. But God, being no respecter of persons, has provided in the sacrificial offering of our Lord a full, free and eternal salvation to all that come to Him and accept His offer of salvation. As far as God is concerned:

- a) It does not matter how old an individual is, the message is still, "Come unto me"
- b) It does not matter how sinful they are, the message is the same, "Come unto me"
- c) It does not matter how often a person has rejected, despised or sought their own way for salvation, the message is still, "Come unto me"
- d) Perhaps someone will think God would never accept me, it's too late in my life, but He says, "Come unto me" (Isa. 45:22) and He will never cast you out (Jn. 6:37).

That is the promise of God. The door is wide open, the cure for the malady of sin is right beside the individual. As I have said to others, "If the Lord was sitting right beside you at this moment, what would you say to Him?" Would you say, "Get away and let me try my own way" or "Lord I have sinned, deserving nothing from you and being utterly destitute of helping myself to get right with God, I accept your kindly gift of salvation". The decision is yours for the Lord is right beside you, He says so, so why not speak to Him now. The hymn writer penned the words:

O come unto the Saviour, for why will you delay?
The Spirit now invites you, O do not turn away;
The door is open now, but it will be closed at last,
For the summer will be ended, and the harvest will be past.

Chorus:

*O come, sinner, come! for thy sands are running fast;
Soon the summer will be ended, and the harvest will be past.
O come unto the Saviour, He's merciful and true,
A full and free salvation, He kindly offers you.*

O come unto the Saviour, the night is coming on,
There's danger in delaying, for the Spirit may be gone;
He's waiting to release you from the chains that sin has cast,
Ere the summer time is ended, and the harvest time is past.

O come unto the Saviour, nor let Him plead in vain,
There is a crown of glory, and eternal life to gain;
His offer's now accept, ere the sky is overcast,
Or the summer time is ended, and the harvest time is past.

. . . . Rowan Jennings



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