

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Ready to meet the Lord

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The sudden death of our beloved brother, David Watts, reminds us to be ready at all times to meet the Lord. David preached to us and taught us God's word in our Gospel Meeting last April. Then, in July, David in his mid fifties passed suddenly from this life while exercising on a racquet ball court. I doubt the thought of dying crossed the mind of David when he left home for the court. Death can come at any moment to us all. Suddenly our life is over and our judgment is sealed. How do we make ourselves ready to meet the Lord?

Someone will quickly reply, “Live each day as if it were your last”. How does one apply this wise saying? If I know I am leaving town, I rush around taking care of matters that must be done while I am gone. How does one keep up the frantic pace when the next day occurs, and you are not leaving town after all? The edge of this wise saying dulls when today is not our last. We wake up and we have another day to live as if it were our last. Tying up loose ends and the frantic scurrying that “I will not have tomorrow” can cause, should cause us to look deeper and in a more practical

way of being ready to meet the Lord.

Each day that we do have should be focused upon pleasing the Lord. Paul writes, “Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him” (2 Corinthians 5:9). Regardless if Paul were to be absent from the body and therefore at home with the Lord, or remaining in the body and absent from Lord, his loving focus was upon pleasing the Lord. If in the other world we are going to be pleasing the Lord, should not this same aim characterize our life in this world? When we spend the moments of the day determined to always love our brethren, we know this pleases the Lord (I John 4:11-12).

Each day should be focused upon doing “work in the Lord”. This is energy expended in connection with the cause of the Lord. Paul encourages us to be busy in such work when he exhorts us: “Wherefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord” (I Corinthians 15:58). No work that saves, strengthens, or encourages a soul for heaven is vain.

No work that causes a soul to grow spiritually is vain. In the end the only thing that will matter when we meet the Lord is the condition of our soul. When our energy has been directed in the Lord's cause of saving ourselves and those who hear us, we will be ready to meet the Lord (cf. 2 Timothy 4:16).

Each day we should keep our “secrets” pure. Paul warns all that in the judgment “...God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel by Jesus Christ” (Romans 2:16). We cannot allow feelings of hatred to find harbor in our hearts. We do not have eternal life if we hate our brethren (cf. I John 3:14-15). We cannot allow hurt feelings or ill feelings to go unresolved creating resentment for others in the secrets of our heart. Paul exhorts us with a remedy “...let not the sun go down upon your wrath” (Ephesians 4:26).

Filling each day with “pleasing the Lord”, doing “work in the Lord”, keeping our “secrets pure” and always manifesting “love” for brethren, we will be ready to meet the Lord, even when the meeting comes at a unexpected moment.