

PREPARE TO DIE!

Things to Prepare Before Dying

Lesson # 2a

Below you will find some ideas of things you might want to consider putting in a folder for your imminent death. Some of these were discussed in the second lesson and some will be discussed in the fifth lesson. You can begin to gather the information you feel is important. I would recommend that you make several copies. Give a copy to the church, keep a copy at home, and give a copy to a close relative. When the Lord takes you home in His good timing, you will be a great help and blessing to those who are grieving your loss and will be better prepared to glorify God in your death.

1. Make decisions concerning the issues raised on the “Ideas for Organizing a Memorial Service” sheet (Lesson #2).
 - a. Background music, special music, congregational music, exit music, etc. Maybe include author, song, words, etc.
 - b. Scripture reading, who should read, and maybe why you chose this particular Scripture.
 - c. Who should give the opening prayer, read the eulogy, give the message and closing prayer.
 - d. Instructions about the message, text, length, preacher, etc.
 - e. Give instructions as to whether or not you want to have an open microphone or select key individuals to share, or both.
 - f. If you’re going for the in ground burial, do you want a grave-side service?
2. Details about your burial, what you want, and what you do not want e.g., cremation?, in ground burial?, above ground?, crypt?, type of casket?, headstone?, epitaph for your grave marker or headstone (see below for ideas), location?, etc. (see lesson 5 for options and costs)
3. Maybe include a letter to those left behind explaining your faith and hope in the Lord.
4. Maybe include details that will make writing your eulogy much easier. Key dates, places, spiritual events, hobbies, accomplishments, etc. in your life.
5. Maybe include a CD with digital pictures of your life that can be turned into a slide show.
6. Make sure those you leave behind have a copy of and are aware that you have a detailed will or trust that spells out what you want in exacting detail, especially in areas related to money or possessions. Say what you want and don’t want done with what you leave behind.

7. Maybe you want to design a memorial service program or bulletin and include that in your materials. (Including a hard copy and a digital copy of written information would be helpful as it will save someone having to retype everything.)
8. If you are going to have a gravestone or grave marker you might want to write an epitaph. Here are some ideas:
 - a. In a Silver City, Nevada, cemetery – *“Here lays Butch, We planted him raw. He was quick on the trigger, But slow on the draw.”*
 - b. In a cemetery in Hartscombe, England – *“On the 22nd of June Jonathan Fiddle - Went out of tune.”*
 - c. William Shakespeare – *“Good friend for Jesus sake forbear to dig the dust enclosed here. Blest be ye man that spares these stones and curst be he that moves my bones.”*
 - d. Wyatt Earp – *“Nothing's so sacred as honor and nothing's so loyal as love.”*
 - e. *“The grave of Ellen Shannon in Girard, Pennsylvania Who was fatally burned March 21, 1870 by the explosion of a lamp filled with "R.E. Danforth's Non-Explosive Burning Fluid.”*
 - f. *“The body of Benjamin Franklin, printer (like the cover of an old book, its contents worn out, and stripped of its lettering and gilding) lies here, food for worms. Yet the work itself shall not be lost, for it will, as he believed, appear once more in a new and more beautiful edition, corrected and amended by its Author Benjamin Franklin.”*
 - g. On a grave from the 1880's in Nantucket, Massachusetts – *“Under the sod and under the trees lies the body of Jonathan Pease. He is not here, there's only the pod: Pease shelled out and went to God.”*
 - h. Boot Hill Cemetery, Tombstone, Arizona – *“Here Lies Less Moore, Four Slugs From A 44, No Less, No More.”*

*“By the sweat of your face You will eat bread,
Till you return to the ground,
Because from it you were taken;
For you are dust,
And to dust you shall return.” (God – Gen. 3:19)*

“And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.” (God – Heb. 9:27-28)