**“IF THIS WERE MY LAST SERMON”**

**North West Church Dec 28, 2014**

**Another Missing Plane**

**End of Year**

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**Scripture Reading…James 4:14… 14Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.**

 **Prayer….**

 **The title of the message**… **"If this were my last sermon."**

**IF THIS WERE MY LAST SERMON I’D EVER PREACH WHAT WOULD I LEAVE YOU WITH, OR WHAT WOULD I SAY THAT WILL RADICALLY ENCOURAGE YOU IN YOUR WALK WITH CHRIST.**

**JESUS CHRIST RADICALLY CHANGED THE LIVES OF 12 MEN, HOW DID HE DO IT? HE REPROGRAMED THEIR WAY OF THINKING IN THEIR MINDS AND TRANSFORMED THEIR APPROACH AT LIFE. FOR 3 ½ YEARS HE SHOWED THEM BY EXAMPLE AND GAVE THEM A NEW WAY ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE PRESENT AND FUTURE PROBLEMS AND SITUATIONS OF LIFE!!. IN OTHER WORDS HE ENCOURAGED THEM TO GO FORWARD BY FAITH AND NOT LEAN ON THEIR OWN UNDERSTANDING!!!**

**I. BELOVED, “If this were my last sermon”, I would encourage you to remember**

 **how uncertain and brief life really is.**

 A. It is very easy to take life for granted; however, let me

 emphasize that life is uncertain and brief at best.

1. Many people approach life as if they will be here forever.

 B. However beloved, Life as we know it is like a shadow, a vapor,

 weaver's shuttle and as the grass of the field.

**1 Pet. 1:24;** **24For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.**

 **The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:**

**Job 7:6..****My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope.**

1. Beloved “**if this were my last sermon”** then my first words of hope to all would be the following...

**We need to realize that this world is not our home. We have only a brief stay here, and then we pass on to the next world and a brand new beginning in His prescense.**

**Example….**

 2. When one is staying in a motel overnight, we don't go into

 the room, frown at the decor, and start redecorating. You know Why?

 Because we don't live there. We have a home to live in at

 another place. While we are away, we will manage only on

 what we need, and will save our money to furnish our

 home that awaits us.

1. Likewise, we should not consume our lives worrying about the affairs

Of this world or how we can be most comfortable…Beloved I believe

 We need to spend our time and energy in enhancing our eternal home.

**Matt. 6:19-20****19Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:**

1. **Beloved “If this were my last sermon”…..Then I would like to leave you with this thought…**

**III. We need to remember the value of our souls.**

**Matt. 16:26**….**26For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his**

 **own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**

 A. Our souls are the most valuable thing we possess. It is more

 valuable than all things in this world.

 Actually, our soul is "who" and "what" we are.

 B. The soul or spirit which is in our bodies is that part which is

 made in the image of God.

**Gen. 2:7…****7And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils**

 **the breath of life; and man became a living soul.**

1. This is the only part of a person which is eternal.

**John 6:63a**…**63It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.**

 2. We need to remember that at death, our souls or spirits will return back to God.

**Eccl. 12:7… 7Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.**

 C. In the end, our souls will be in either the eternal place of

 bliss, or the eternal place of torment.

 1. Thus, let me encourage you to seek God with all your hearts

 that you might be in heaven.

 a. Fearing God and keeping His commandments is what is

 truly important in life. It is that which is truly good

 and right.

 b. Determine in your own mind that you will be a godly,

 spiritually minded person, and pursue it with all of your

 being.

 c. Center your heart on God. Give Him your utmost. You

 will never regret it.

1. **Beloved “If this were my last sermon”…..Then I would have to remind us to…**

 **Remember,that God has made a place of eternal punishment for all who do not fear Him.**

**A fire in Pennsylvania…report…**

 a. For over 20 years a fire has been burning deep within

 the earth at Centralia, a small community of 1,200

 residents in the heart of Pennsylvania's coal fields.

 Fifteen different federal, state, and local agencies have

 spent more than $3.5 million to extinguish the fire

 without success. Persons can touch the earth and feel

 the heat. Deep holes and crevices vent hot, smoky air

 and noxious gases. One citizen said: "Standing by a

 hole, you can hear the fires roaring. It's an eerie

 sound, like the beating of a thousand wings." Government

 officials have indicated that they are no longer willing

 to attempt to put out the fire; it is a futile task. As

 flames continue to burn without restraint, townspeople

 plead for someone to save their community.

 b. Jesus solemnly warned of a far greater, eternal fire in

 which all the wicked will be cast.

**Luke 12:4-5… 4And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.5But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.**

 c. Let us avoid hell at all cost. Some people seem to take

 comfort in the fact that they will not be the only ones

 in hell. They somehow think that hell will be more

 tolerable because there will be a great crowd there.

 What foolish reasoning!

1. **Beloved… “If this were my last sermon”,**

**I would encourage you to remember that Jesus is the answer for all things.**

**Phil. 4:13…****13I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.**

 A. Jesus Christ passed, by means of death, into the other world

 and came back again.

**Acts 2:31-32…****31He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.32This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses**

 1. Thus, Jesus is the one who has the answers, the revelation,

 and the comfort regarding death, and life beyond the grave.

 a. Let us be comforted in the Lord. Let us rejoice in the

 Lord.

 b. not forgetting that Through Christ, we gain the victory.

So I remind us all….

**1 Cor. 15:54-57..****54So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.55O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?56The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.57But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

1. **Beloved “If this were my last sermon”…..Then I would want to tell you this story…**

**The Story of a Boy and His Father…**

 2. A boy and his father were traveling in a car when a bee flew

 through the open window. The boy was so highly allergic to

 bee stings that both he and his father knew that his life

 was in danger. As the boy frantically jumped around to avoid

 the agitated bee, the father calmly reached out and grabbed

 the bee with his hand. The father took the bee sting so that

 his son would not be stung.

 a. Likewise, Jesus took the sting of death for us. That we gain

 the victory through Him.

 b. Let us strive to overcome as He did.

**Rev. 3:21…****21To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.**

**another story of encouragement is the following….**

 3. A young man who had been blind since he was ten years old,

 years later met a wonderful young lady with whom he fell

 madly in love. They married and had lived together for

 some time then the young man discovered that a certain

 operation would restore his sight. After the operation, when

 the bandages were finally removed, the first thing he was

 able to see was his wife, and he said, "You are more

 beautiful than I ever imagined."

 a. Like this young married man, though we have never

 seen Jesus Christ, our Savior, when we see Him in all

 His glory, truly, "He will be more beautiful than we ever

 imagined."

**1 John 3:2-3…Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.3And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.**

1. **“If this were my last sermon”,**

**I would encourage you to remember that we are all approaching the day of judgment.**

 A. None will escape the judgment. It is one reservation or

 appointment we cannot cancel.

**Heb. 9:27**;**27And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:**

 1. We all will die; however, many people think that surely

 there will be an exception in their case.

 2. Someone said, "The only thing I have to do is die, and if

 you make me mad, I won't even do that."

 3. Another said, "I'm not afraid to die; I just don't want to

 be there when it happens."

. Beloved, Listen, Everything that we have ever thought, said, or

 done will be brought into the judgment.

**Rom. 2:16; In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel**

**Matt. 12:36-37.****36But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.37For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.**

 1. The best way to prepare for the judgment is to make friends

 with the Judge.

 2. Since Jesus Himself will judge us, it is exceedingly wise to

 make friends with the Judge.

 a. But we can make friends with Him only on His terms.

 **B. Acts 17:30-31… 30And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent:31Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead**

**Concl.**

**My final encouragement to us,**

**“if this were my last sermon,”**

 **Is this:**

**Walk by Faith not by sight…..**

 **"Strive diligently to go to heaven. Remain faithful to Him, and when**

 **it comes time for you to leave this world, go to God in all**

 **humility, relying solely on His mercy and goodness.**

1. **Don't give up! Don't give in! Don't give out!**

God Bless you all !!