

Preparing to Die Well

Introduction

If we desire to end our days in joy and comfort, let us lay the foundation of a comfortable death now betimes. To die well is not a thing of that light moment as some imagine: it is no easy matter. But to die well is a matter of every day. Let us daily do some good that may help us at the time of our death. Every day by repentance pull out the sting of some sin, that so when death comes, we may have nothing to do but to die. To die well is the action of the whole life."

RICHARD SIBBES – English Puritan (1577-1635)

"In every century until our own, Christians saw this life as preparation for eternity. Medievals, Puritans, and later evangelicals thought and wrote much about the art of dying well, and urged that all of life should be seen as preparation for leaving it behind. This was not otiose morbidity, but realistic wisdom, since death really is the one certain fact of life. Acting the ostrich with regard to it is folly to the highest degree. Yet today it has become conventional to think as if we are all going to live in this world forever and to view every case of bereavement as a reason for doubting the goodness of God. We must all know, deep down, that this is ridiculous, but we do it all the same. And in doing it, we part company with the Bible, with historic Christianity, and with a basic principle of right living. Dag Hammarskjold was thinking Christianly when he wrote that no philosophy that cannot make sense of death can make sense of life either ...

J.I. PACKER – Canadian Anglican (1926-)

QUESTION:

Think of some person you know, a friend or family member, who "died well" – someone who was prepared both spiritually and practically to make life's final journey? Then, think of some person you know who did not "die well" – someone who was unprepared in either or both of those areas? Keep both of these persons in mind as we discuss the topics in this class.

Goals of this Class

- Prepare yourself spiritually
 - Understand life and death as a believer of Christ
 - Understand *your* purpose here in this life
 - Understand the final judgment, heaven and hell
 - Understand the importance of *your* sanctification
 - Understand how to have assurance *now* of eternal life to come
 - Understand the sanctity of human life to God
 - Understand a few tough medical and ethical issues around dying
- Prepare yourself physically
 - Record your personal, financial, legal and other information and wishes
 - Manage affairs after the death of your loved one