

Words of Truth

There Is No One To Visit In That Grave

By: Brian A. Yeager

Unless our Lord and savior Jesus Christ returns to judge the world (Matthew 24:35-25:46, John 5:28-29, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, and II Peter 3:1-14), death is a reality that we all will face (II Samuel 14:14, Psalms 89:48, and Hebrews 9:27). With death comes sorrow from those who remain alive. Emotional reactions to the death of a loved one is normal and acceptable to God (Genesis 50:1-6, Numbers 20:29, Deuteronomy 34:5-8, John 11:1-36, Acts 8:1-2, etc.). There is a time to mourn (Ecclesiastes 3:4).

Death is a good thing to consider. There are lessons to be learned each and every time we are surrounded by death. Consider this: *“A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one’s birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth”* (Ecclesiastes 7:1-4).

Some people experience great difficulty in understanding that a person is gone when that person dies. Some people make regular visits to burial sites to “visit” the person who has died. Some people practice cremation and keep the ashes close by to feel closer to that person who has died. The list of common practices is extensive and varies greatly in different cultures. The fact is, many people struggle with understanding that a dead person is gone from this world. They struggle in understanding that once a person dies, the physical remains are ultimately just dirt (Ecclesiastes 3:20). So, let’s see what God says about this.

The Body Without The Spirit Is Not A Living Person

The Scriptures plainly tell us that a physical body, without a spirit abiding therein, is dead. Consider: *“For as **the body without the spirit is dead**, so faith without works is dead also”* (James 2:26). When a person dies, that fleshly body returns to dust (Job 34:15). The spirit, the real person that once lived in that fleshly vessel, is gone. Notice: *“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it”* (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

The person who visits a grave site to “talk to their loved one” or “visit their loved one”, is denying what God said in the Scriptures you just read. The person who keeps ashes

in the living room to watch television with is calling God a liar. If you believe what God said concerning the separation of the person from the flesh at death; you'd never think you're talking to, visiting, caring for, etc.; a person when you are considering human remains. The fact is, that person is either somewhere much better or worse than here.

They've Moved On To One Of Two Places

If a person dies in sin, no matter what they've faced on earth, that person has NOT gone "somewhere better". The death of a righteous person is not so sad of a story (Psalms 37:37) and even something a righteous person can look forward to (II Corinthians 4:5-5:1 and Philippians 1:21). Here is what Jesus taught about life after death, but before the Judgment Day: *"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead"* (Luke 16:19-31).

The place described above is otherwise known as "hades". This is also where Jesus went after death, but before His resurrection (Acts 2:22-31)[the term is mistranslated "hell" in the KJV]. Hades has two separate locations. One place of torment the other being paradise (Luke 23:39-43). When anyone dies, that person goes to one of those two places. Therefore, a grave site or any such thing is merely a dumping ground for wasting remains.

Conclusion

Your future planning should be about where your soul will go (Luke 12:13-21), not about how to preserve your remains. When it comes to those whom we love, that have died, we have to accept that there is no seeing them again in this lifetime. Whatever efforts you make to visit their remains as a way to "see them", is a denial of the truth!
