

10-13-19
DO THIS NOW TO AVOID FUTURE REGRETS

Do you remember when you were younger someone telling you someday you will be sorry if you don't do this or that. Maybe in high school you could have taken certain courses that you thought you didn't need. Maybe you decided to take the easy courses. Maybe today you have some aches and pains because of some foolishness in your youth.

I remember when I was young I thought that I only needed study music, because I knew I was going to be a musician. So when I was 13 years old I decided I didn't need to know anything else but music. I mean I was extreme. Now today I have some regrets because of the way I thought.

I thought I didn't need typing, yet today I spend more time typing on a computer than doing music. Instead of majoring in study halls in high school I could have been taking typing classes. To this day I regret not taking advantage of certain skill sets.

I thought I didn't need grammar, spelling, and English, yet today I struggle with writing, grammar, spelling, and English when I am involved in typing Bible studies, writing letters, sermons, etc.

I remember when I was 15 years old my Dad wanted me to go to barber school. I refused to go, thinking what do I need that for I am going to be a musician. Then when the Lord saved me and called me to Bible College, while I was standing in line to register for school the academic dean flagged every student whose hair was a bit long and told them before school started they needed to get a haircut. I would have had 1000 customers in my school. Instead I worked in a greasy generator plant rebuilding generators.

Now for the past we have perfect vision, 20/20. The past is like spilled milk and there is nothing we can do about it. But what is it that you should be doing in the present that will avoid regrets in the future?

This morning I am going to share what you need to be doing now so there will be no regrets in the future. Now, I do not have one verse or chapter this morning. We will have to turn to many passages. The title of my message is simply,

DO THIS NOW TO AVOID FUTURE REGRETS

I. THE FIRST THING YOU NEED TO DO NOW TO AVOID FUTURE REGRETS IS GET SAVED!

Now this is the most obvious thing that a person needs to do.

What do I mean by getting saved? I mean to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and ask Him into your heart and life. Make Him first in your life.

The word "saved" is a biblical word that many churches avoid using today. There is a watering down of the gospel until many contemporary churches are re-defining what it is to be a Christian.

The reason people are avoiding using this expression, "You need to get Saved" is because it conjures up negative images about a person's state who is not a Christian. Who needs to be saved, but a person who is in dire danger?

A person who is drowning needs to be saved!
A person trapped in a fire needs to be saved!
A person lost in the woods needs to be saved!

Immediately a person in the world who is doing well in an earthly sense would ask, **SAVED**, what do I need to be saved from? I am doing ok. I have a good job, all is going well for me. Why do I need to be saved.

Luke 9:24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

Luke 9:25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Jesus said, you need to be saved, because we are all born into this world a lost soul without God.

One may ask what do you mean lost? I am doing fine, I am not lost.

No. You need to be saved because without Christ in your life you are lost. You have no hope. Now the reason the contemporary church does not use this word any more is because it will make people feel uncomfortable about themselves.

You see the Bible used this word because the Bible says, if you are not saved, then you are headed to a place called hell. This is what Jesus said,

Luke 9:25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

Cast away where? I have a burn pile, I am constantly burning things that I cast away. So why would it surprise you that God has a spiritual burn pile and that is a place for spiritual castaways. Jesus warned people about this place.

**FIRST AND GREATEST REGRET IN YOUR LIFE WILL BE NOT GETTING SAVED
DO THIS TO AVOID FUTURE REGRETS.**

Listen to what Jesus said,

Luke 12:4 And 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.

Luke 12:5 But 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.

In Luke Chapter 16:23 there is a story about a rich man that went to hell. He had lots of regrets!

He regretted not living for God.

He regretted living only for himself.

He regretted not helping poor Lazarus.

All these regrets stem from the fact that he was not saved!

This is the most important thing I could warn you about.

Have you surrendered your heart and life to Christ, have you cried out to him for the salvation of your soul. If not someday there will be eternal regrets.

Trust Him this morning.

Now for those who are here that have received Christ and are saved, I have a message concerning some things you may regret in the future.

Every non Christian will regret not being saved.

Every Christian will regret not serving the Lord.

FOR THE BELIEVER OR THOSE WHO ARE SAVED:

II. SERVE GOD TO AVOID REGRETS IN THE FUTURE.

1. TO SERVE GOD SHOULD NOT BE AN OPTION IF YOU ARE TRULLY SAVED.

The Bible teaches that each of us will someday have to give an account for the works we have done. The Bible in Revelation with a prediction of judgment day, and the Bible teaches that every one of us will be judged for our works.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Revelation 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

Revelation 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Revelation 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

According to the Scripture every human being that ever lived will be judged some day based on their works.

There are two sets of books. One is called the book of life. Everyone that is saved, that has received Christ has their name written in this book. All those who rejected Christ will be judged based on their sinful works. Their works will condemn them. To get in the book of life we have to receive, by grace, the work that Jesus Christ has done for you on the cross. His work on the cross pays the penalty for all our sins. Once we are saved we now are able to serve the Lord and invest in eternity.

Let me illustrate this as follows: Say your house is your life. Say you have a mortgage on your house and you have gotten so far behind on your payments that between penalties and interest and fines, what you owe is more than the house is worth. Even if you were to sell the house, what you sell it for will not pay back the debt. Now you can paint that house, you can clean that house, you can do all kind of things with that house but no matter what you do that is not going to change the fact that you are going to lose the house in foreclosure some day. What Jesus did on the cross provided a way to pay off your debt on the condition that you sign over that house to him. Instead of foreclosure, when you live your days you can live in that house and take care of it, and he promises to come and take you to a better house.

People who get saved realize their plight and give their heart to the Lord and sign over their house to the Lord with the condition that they live in that house for Him.

Now remember, the house is your body, the house is you. Here is what the Bible says,

I Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

I Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

I Corinthians 7:23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

Now if you are a Christian someday you will have regrets when you stand before God and you did not use your house, your body to glorify Him.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

I am bought with a price, there is no option for me but to serve God.

My hands, I do not own them, they are God's.

My eyes, I do not own them, they are God's.

My feet, are not mine.

My talents, are His.

My assets are His.

I am in His debt, He saved me out of a horrible pit a plight. I was going to be homeless spiritually, I was going to be evicted some day. When my court case would come up I was going to be thrown in jail, and the judge would have sentenced me to life for my transgressions.

Jesus said, To whom much was forgiven the same loveth much. (Luke 7:47) The question we need to ask ourselves is this: Just how bad was your condition, when Jesus saved you?

According to the Bible Jesus has gone away to prepare for us a better house. Someday He will come and take us to be with Him. In that day we will have to give an account for what we did with this house our bodies.

2. *THERE WILL BE A JUDGMENT DAY FOR THE CHRISTIAN TO SEE WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR CHRIST. Serve Him now so there will be no regrets in that day!*

II Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

II Corinthians 5:11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

Every Christian should have a healthy fear for how he will do in that day.

Paul said, knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men:

According to the Bible everything we do is either good or bad!

Just because we are not saved by good works, does not mean we should not busy ourselves by doing good works. We are not saved by good works because of the

illustration I gave about our house being in foreclosure. Just because my house looks good does not change the facts that foreclosure is immanent.

The Bible says, knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men..

Let me take a few minutes to try to persuade you as to why you should serve God.

3. THE JUDGEMENT DAY WILL DETERMINE WHAT KIND OF HOUSE WE CAN LIVE IN FOR ETERNITY.

I recall a fellow was contemplating leaving his wife. I said to him why don't you sacrifice your temporal happiness for the sake of your children and ministry? Now my advice was to no avail and recently I heard one of his children has ended up in jail. Today people suffer earthly regrets because of wrong decisions. How much worse will there be eternal regrets at the judgment seat of Christ.

I do not know why it is Christians have no fear of the judgment seat of Christ. Jesus gave a parable to illustrate how unwise we are when it comes to preparing for that judgment day. Jesus gave a parable to illustrate this.

Luke 16:1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

Luke 16:2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

Luke 16:3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

Luke 16:4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

Luke 16:5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

Luke 16:6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

Luke 16:7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

Luke 16:8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

Luke 16:9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Luke 16:11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

Luke 16:12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

What is this parable all about? It is about a man worrying about impending judgment for his wrong doings and where he is going to live when he is ousted out of his house. We have no concept of servitude in the day we live. We think slavery is abusive. It could be, depending on who owns the slave. Tell me, who is really the slave? The person who lives under a good master who takes care of all their needs and loves them, and cares for them, or the businessman that gives a pay check to you each week which cannot even provide your basic needs? After he writes the check he has no more obligations. You could starve, die, or wind up in the hospital but that is no concern to him.

In Bible times a servant or steward was housed, fed, clothed, and provided for by his master. Now this particular servant abused his liberties and realized he was going to be homeless pretty soon. So he needed to make up for lost time. He needed to do something quick. He needed a place to live so he needed to make friends really quickly of people who might take him in after he was evicted. He did that through his stewardship. He wisely used his stewardship to secure a place to live for the future.

In the parable Jesus said, oh if only the children of light would get busy securing a house for eternity. The children of this world are better in being diligent and wise to secure a temporal house in this world than God's children are about what their eternal house will be like.

Do you really think everything will be equal in eternity? No, based on your stewardship you will be rewarded or you will suffer loss.

The question is what is this loss that saints will suffer? If we are going to be with God what is the loss?

Now listen to me, that loss can be anything from "you really are not saved" or "you will be saved by the skin of your teeth", meaning you'll be there but not have much to show for eternity. The Bible uses this term, "Saved as by fire.."

What are we doing to make up for wasted time, squandered opportunities, for the Lord?

In this parable this unjust steward was worried about how he would fare in this world. So he tried to prepare by making friends with people who would be indebted to him for helping them out.

Yet here we are, some day we will leave this earthly house, and how will we fare when we enter God's house? What have we done to gain His favor? Why are we not seeking to please Him? We will be cast down at His mercy in that day.

Think of it. Someday we will have to vacate our earthly house and what we have done for the Lord in this world will determine our status in the next.

Someday there will be regrets that we did not take advantage of our opportunities for God.

III. KNOWING ALL THIS, WHAT SHOULD WE DO SO WE WILL HAVE NO REGRETS?

1. UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD'S PROGRAM IS AND GET BEHIND IT.

Do you know there are lot of sincere people, but they can be sincerely wrong.

II Timothy 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

I Corinthians 9:24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

I Corinthians 9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

I Corinthians 9:26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

God's program and heartbeat is His church.

The church is made up of building blocks and those building blocks are His people, His saints.

I Corinthians 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

I Corinthians 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

I Corinthians 3:8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

I Corinthians 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

I Corinthians 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

I Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

I Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

I Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

I Corinthians 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

I Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

I Corinthians 3:17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

There are two illustrations that are being used in the passage to illustrate God's mandate and mission. One is the idea of husbandry. Or being a farmer, a cultivator of the land. A farmer is in the business of cultivating a crop, so Paul says, we work together for God's harvest. We plant we water we till the ground.

The other illustration is that of building a building. We are building a building made up of stones so it will last. We don't want to build this building of wood, hay or stubble. It takes longer to build with stone but God wants this building to last.

Right now God is building this body called the church. The church is made up of people who are saved. Jesus has left us here on earth to get behind His program and start adding to this building called the church. That building is made up of saved people who are working together to glorify God.

The best way to do this is to work together on this endeavor.

Paul said, who is Paul, who is Apollos? We all are only servants, labourers together for God.

Someday we will be judged as to how much we got behind this building process. Did we do it with zeal or were we slothful?

Consider what we have in this life.

What are our assets in this life?

- * WE HAVE OUR BODIES.
- * WE HAVE OUR TIME.
- * WE HAVE OUR FINANCES.
- * WE HAVE OUR TALENTS AND SKILLS.
- * WE HAVE MINISTRIES ENTRUSTED TO US.

CONSIDER THE REGRETS WE MAY HAVE SOMEDAY AS WE SQUANDER THESE ASSETS GIVEN TO US!

Let us put our all to the task before us. Let us work together for this great mission.

Today we have this mentality that we want to do it our own way. There is a disdain for being part of something because the devil gets us seeing the faults of the church. Sure the church has faults because people have faults and the church is made up of people. Yet, if Jesus loved His church enough to die for His church, faults and blemishes and

all, who are we to criticize what he has blessed and established? Are you wiser than God?

This reminds me of the fellow that I knew many years ago who would always see fault in every church he went to. He didn't like this or that about every church. However, when he received his eviction notice from his earthly house, when he found out he was terminally ill, he confided in me that he had many regrets. He realized he was going to have to face God and he feared he would be bankrupt and fruitless. I remember him saying to me, warn people not to do what I have done all my life. He said, "I found fault with this one and that one in the church. Instead I should have taught a Sunday School class, been faithful, and did something for God. Now my life is over and I have nothing to show for it." His testimony shows how many a Christian are going to leave this world with many regrets.

Will that be you, a Christian whose life is full of regrets, or will you roll up your sleeves and start serving God through his body called the church?

What is God's plan for your life? It is very simple.

1. Every one needs to be saved.
2. After your saved you need to be baptized.
3. After you are baptized you need to become an active and faithful member of a local church and start learning and growing.
4. After you start learning and growing you need to be consistent and faithful to the ministry God has entrusted you with and gifted you to do.

Someday this earthly house will be dissolved and we will stand before God to receive the things we have done in this body whether good or bad. In that day will there be regrets? If you have been faithful, if you have given your all, if you have served Him, I say to you there will be no regrets.

Oh that in that day we could say as Paul the Apostle:

II Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

II Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Do This Now And There Will Be No Regrets In The Future.