

10-9-22 Message
LESSONS FROM KEN KNAPP'S LIFE

Intro: Friday night I got a call from Debbie Knapp that Ken Knapp had passed away. My wife and I rushed to the hospital that night to be with the family.. Yesterday we meet with the funeral director, and decided to have his funeral this Wednesday morning at the church.

I got to know Ken Knapp December of 2006. That was about 16 years ago. In 2006 I have a record of Ken Knapp purchasing from my Website a CD of Scripture Choruses I had for sale. I asked myself who is this Ken Knapp... he, I think, was one of a hand full of people that ever bought a CD from my website. The website was called FreeScriptureSongs.com

After that Ken came to my store in Olyphant and bought a Keyboard from me. I remember I had a credit card back then that you could apply for through my store. It would do a credit check and Ken was looking at a keyboard that sold for \$995.00 so I put his credit through and he was approved for \$10,000. I said to Ken maybe I should sell you something more expensive. Few People got approved for that much money.

So Ken became my only CD customer, and a good piano customer. Then we became friends. I found out he was pastoring a small American Baptist Church in Waverly and he started visiting our church now and then. He often called to share things that were happening at his church. He often called for advice.

Then as years progressed he lost his job in Binghamton, and I found out that he was pretty knowledgeable about electronics and older tube style radios and amplifiers. I mentioned that I was traveling all the way to Annandale, New Jersey to get my Vintage Hammond organs repaired and rebuilt and he said he would be interested in learning more about fixing Hammond organs.

So I took Ken to meet my tech in Annadale, New Jersey and observed as we repaired these older Hammond Organs. On the way home Ken said, he thought he could fix the organs as well as my tech in Annandale. So I paid my tech to teach Ken some of the things he was doing. In time Ken started do all my organ repairs and surpassed even what my old tech was doing.

I had been working and playing vintage Hammond organs since I was 15 years old and in time Ken knew more about the internal workings of the organs than I did. So we established a business together. I would send him all my work and the jobs that came in for organ repairs.

Then in the process of time Ken decided to resign his church and came over to our church and became a deacon in our church. He was in charge of our website, and prayer chain, and did numerous other ministries in the church. He was a great blessing.

He often volunteered to do our dinners. He catered our Valentine's dinners and other dinners. I used to call him Chief Boy R Ken.. I said it is said never trust a skinny cook.. and I used to say I have complete confidence in Chief Boy R Ken.. Ken became my secretary.. I often would joke that the church never had to worry about me running off with my secretary. Because Ken was my personal secretary. He used to proof read my messages and edit our audio messages and put them on line. He would update our prayer chain.. he would contact people through our email contact ministry. He'd post things on Facebook prayer chain.. send out visitor letters and also helped prepare the bulletin every week. What a blessing he has been all these years. My wife would say.. he was like the smile of our church.

Ken had a sharp mind and often would remember things better than I could. He could remember the organs I had, in inventory that I had at his shop.. He inherited a building in Pleasant Mount and renovated it, and I would take parts and organs there.. he knew where the parts were, which were his and which were mine. He was an invaluable asset to my business.

Ken's health started to deteriorate the last 3 years and a few years back he developed a brain tumor. Things started to go seriously down hill when they treated the tumor with radiation treatments. Not long after that he started to have seizures and he was pretty much bed stricken ever since then. His life has been confined to his bed and his recliner. This has been going on now for over a year and a half.

The last month brother Ken has been really getting worse and worse.. He called me Friday morning at 3:46 AM. I got a call from Ken and he left a message... it was Ken being kind of funny.. because I say on my answering machine, leave a message with the purpose of your call and I will get back to you.. In the message he just rambled on about the purpose of his call was of some purpose..

Ken was a bit confused in the end. I talked to him Friday night at about 7-8 PM and he thought he came to Choir rehearsal at the church and threw up on some of the choir members. I think that choir member was his wife. She told me that that night she was with him and he burped up some of his dinner. Maybe she was talking about choir when he did that.

That night around 11:30 PM I got a call from Debbie that Ken Passed away.

Ken is going to be greatly missed, but one thing I can say, is that this past year he has greatly suffered and the last few months Ken was not the Ken we would have known. I could not imagine how bad things would have gotten if the Lord did not in his mercy take him home.

As Paul said,

Philippians 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

Philippians 1:24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh [is] more needful for you.

To be with Christ is a far better thing than to remain here in the flesh.

Now the question is.. do we really believe that?

Do we really believe that????

Paul said, the reason he was still here on earth was that is was far more needful for others.

Ken was a giver, even in his confused state he was thinking about others. He called Ray Taylor and was concerned about the inspection on one of his cars and said, he wanted to take care of that for him. This was Ken...

I remember working with him in his shop and admiring a cart he built with all his tools. So for a birthday gift at the church .. he went out and got me a cart just like it and stocked it with similar tools just like he has.

He was always trying to help people however he could.

Often he would come to me and say, someone has a need and he wanted to donate money anonymously for that need.

Now the last few months, Ken in his mind wanted to meet the needs of others but the truth is because of his condition, he could not be that. So I think according to the Bible, it was far better for him to be with his Lord.

Now I think it comes to a point in our lives as we get older that we all will cease to be needful for others. So I think at that point it is far better for us to go on and be with the Lord.

Now I ask myself, where are we going to find another Ken Knapp.. who tried to be useful to others. I really think Ken learned how to fix Hammond Organs for one purpose, and that was to be a help to me.

He was profitable for the ministry also... I have people who come to our church because of his ministry of uploading messages and maintaining our website.

In the end we were praying and praying Ken would get back on his feet, however, there comes a time when the Lord knows that our purpose on earth is complete and it is better for us to depart and be with Christ.. for we no longer are able to be profitable down here on earth to others or for the Lord.

Now each of us have a story to tell in our lives. Our lives tell a story. We are frail human beings living our lives here on earth and our strengths and weaknesses, our victories and defeats all speak and teach lessons for others. These lessons speak to family members and in our case Church members.

Wednesday I am going to preach a message on Ken's life directed to unsaved family and friends.. This morning I am going to speak to church members.

When I think of Ken Knapp's Life's Story To The Church I think of the following points..

- I. Ken's Life Teaches Us That We Are Frail..**
- II. Ken's Life Teaches Us That Our Labor Is Not In Vain For The Lord..**
- III. Ken's Life Teaches Us That A Good Family Is Important..**
- IV. Ken's Life Teaches That Church Family Is Important..**
- V. Ken's Life Teaches That The To Be In Christ and With Christ Is Our Hope..**

I. Ken's Life Teaches Us That We Are Frail..

Isaiah 40:7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people [is] grass.

Isaiah 40:8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

These past 2 years have been difficult for Ken...

I saw a man who mentally was sharp, could remember things far better than I could, go to the point that he didn't know night from day, didn't know what day it was. He called me Friday morning 3:46 AM and thought it was Saturday.

All it would take is for some little thing to break loose in your body and it could disable you. Ken's physical weaknesses weighed him down to a fault. It also humbled him.

Ken and I used to joke with one another about aches and pains of getting older and I used to say to Ken you know none of us are getting out this alive. We are frail.. we are weak. In the flesh we are weak. Like grass withereth like the flowers that fade so are we in the flesh.

Isaiah 40:30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

In our flesh we are weak and faint and are frail, but the good news is this even those who are young and healthy in the flesh are frail and weak. Those who think they are

strong in their flesh will be surprised when that strength fails. My wife and I like looking at a reality show where people are tested for their endurance in hard situations. What we have noticed is that young people who should be the strongest and most enduring are usually the ones who quit the fastest. EVEN YOUTHS SHALL FAINT. They are quick to boast, but also quick to faint.

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew [their] strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; [and] they shall walk, and not faint.

Our strength is in the Lord. God knows our weakness.. God knows our limits. God knows what we need.

Ken had a great job in Binghamton, he was in management, he was let go and didn't really have the health to get another job, but he was able to learn a new trade and did pretty good fixing organs. As weak as he was, as frail as he was these past years, he still did great and made a living.

If you trust in your own strength you will faint, you will fall.

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew [their] strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; [and] they shall walk, and not faint.

Ken's life speaks to how he went through a lot of physical trials and difficulties, yet through them all God was with him and helped him. It amazes me how well he did get along. Maybe because he was so smart and could always get around his infirmities with his weight he never got the victory over this problem.

When something goes in our body, we learn how frail we are. When you're young you think you are invincible.

I don't understand how it is that a man who was sharp as a tack suffers physically and it affects so much of his mind and life. It could effect your ability to walk.. to think.. to function. It shows just how frail we are. Ken's life should teach us all that in the flesh we are like the grass that withers and the flowers that fade..

II. Ken's Life Teaches Us That Our Labor Is Not In Vain For The Lord..

Ken decided to follow the Lord and his labor was not in vain..

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all [men], especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

If Ken had something to give he would give it. He was a giver not a taker. He did well.. He especially did good to the household of God.

Now what ever he did, he is today reaping the benefits in eternity.

I Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

What we do for God is not in vain in the Lord. Our prayers are not in vain, our giving is not in vain, our service is not in vain.

In due season we shall reap if we faint not.

1. SOME OF THE BENIFITS OF SERVING THE LORD ARE ON THIS SIDE OF THE GRAVE.

The fellowship that we have with God's people is something that is a blessing given to us in this life. God promises to take care of us if we serve Him.

Luke 12:6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

Luke 12:7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Mark 10:29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

Mark 10:30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

Ken was well liked by everyone. He had many brothers and sisters in Christ. People found him easy to talk to and befriend. That was a benefit that a child of God receives on this side of the grave.

2. SOME OF THE BENIFITS OF SERVING THE LORD ARE ONLY REALIZED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GRAVE

....and in the world to come eternal life.

I Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

The first funeral we had in the church (of someone who was close or within the inner circle of the leadership of the church) was that of Selwyn Schmitt. I remember at his funeral sister Gertrude Lewis sitting downstairs eating a huge piece of apple pie. Now Gertrude Lewis was a bad diabetic. I looked at her eating that big piece of pie and I said sister Gertrude you're not suppose to be eating that. Gertrude looked at me with a big smile on her face and said, "Well Pastor this is brother Selwyn's Spiritual Wedding Day..

Then Gertrude said to me, "Pastor is envy a sin.." I said, well I don't know what are you envious of.. She said, I am envious of what Brother Selwyn is seeing in heaven right now. Then I said, well sister Gertrude, I don't think that is sin.

Then three weeks to the day Gertrude went home to be with Jesus and we were celebrating her wedding day. In fact it was rare back then but the funeral hearse was all white and all the funeral cars were white. It was our revival week and we had Gertrude's funeral the Friday night of our revival services. I preached a message entitled.. "ARE YOU READY FOR THE FLOOD.. " I preached how Selwyn was just walking along and God took him .. and then Gertrude was like our Methuselah she was the oldest member of our church. The Ark was made of wood and pitch.. Selwyn Reminded me of wood because he helped get the wood for our addition.. and Gertrude of pitch or tar because her son black topped our parking lot.. So I preached from that verse that says, as it were in the days of Noah so shall it be in the days of the coming of the son of man. So I preached about getting into the ark.. and that ark is Christ.

So when you serve the Lord your labor will not be in vain. Some benefits you get on this side of the grave some you get on the other.

The truth is I believe that if I continued in the world and never got saved at the rate I was going I would not have lived as long as I have. This next year I will officially be stricken in years as it says of King David..

I said to my wife that when I hit 70 I will need to get an Abishag like King David... she said when you get that old she can have you...

The other day.. Lee Mynyk said, that Friday was an official holiday.. It was called Give Your Husband Anything He Wants Day.. I said I like Lee Mynyk he is like my Domestic Manager.. He is looking out for me. Ken's life should teach us, that it is not in vain to serve the Lord. There are benefits in this life and the next in serving Jesus..

III. Ken's Life Teaches Us That A Good Family Is Important..

Ken had a tough time of it these past two years I got a call a while back that Ken was working on our church Website, and suddenly was unresponsive and shaking.. he had a seizure and they had to rush him to the hospital. Ever since then his life consisted of trips from his hospital bed to his recliner and back.

Now.. if it were not for his wife and two daughters he would have been gone a long time ago. They helped him and took care of him. I used to joke with Ken and ask him if he called his wife his Abishag.

The Lord in his word talks about family. The family is the back bone of everything. The family is the back bone of the church, our country, and your very life. Marriage is good.. children are good and a blessing.

I Timothy 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

Ken could not have survived these past two years without his family. He provided for them all his life and these past few years they provided for him.

There is a natural love and affection that takes place in a family and this is good.

When two people get married, they take a vow.. The vow goes something like this .. I take thee to be my lawful husband or wife, for better or for worse, in sickness and in health till death do us part.

I think a lot of people don't take that serious. My mother took care of her mother till she died, she took care of her father till he died.

Children are a blessing. Debbie and Alison took turns helping Ken. It was not easy. It was a lot of work. But God will bless them for their sacrifices.

Family is important.

Having Children is important. Today children are considered a curse. I remember a time when politicians would have been ashamed to admit on TV they were for abortion. Today it may cost conservatives the election. People are bold about killing babies. They call it choice. They make it sound like most abortions are because of the health of a mother and those who against abortion put a woman's health at risk. The truth is very few abortions are because of the health of the mother. Most abortions are because woman got pregnant and don't want the baby!!!

Aaron Judge just broke the world record for home runs.. Two days after he was born, Aaron was given up by his biological mother for adoption. Aaron Judge was an unwanted baby.. and was adopted by his parents Patty and Wayne Judge, who were school teachers from Linden, CA.

In the day that we live, his mother who was having problems, would have probably found it easier to abort him than give him away for adoption. Today because of how many abortions we have couples are finding it very hard to adopt a new born baby!!

Judge attributes his success in baseball to the loving parents he had.

Children today have become a curse.. when the Bible says this they are a blessing..

Psalms 127:3 Lo, children [are] an heritage of the LORD: [and] the fruit of the womb [is his] reward.

Psalms 127:4 As arrows [are] in the hand of a mighty man; so [are] children of the youth.

Psalms 127:5 Happy [is] the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

Children are a blessing, and a strong family is a blessing. Without a strong family Ken would have been gone a long time ago. They were there to call for the ambulance when he needed one. They were there to care for him.. They were there to help him. Some encouraged them to put him in a nursing home. They did not.. and I believe God will bless them for that.

The Bible teaches us how to have a good family..

The Bible teaches men how to be husbands..

The Bible teaches wives how to be good wives..

The Bible teaches.. children how to be godly children..

Ken's life is a testament to the value of having a good godly and strong biblical based family. They all come to church and they all are faithful.

You never know if you have a good family until you are tested with sickness.. and difficulties. Anyone can seem to have a strong family when things are going good.. but when things are going bad for you if your family sticks with you .. you know you have a good family !!!! Ken's life teaches the importance of a strong godly family!

IV. Ken's Life Teaches That Church Family Is Important..

Not only is personal family important.. but church family is important. Ken loved our church. Ken was involved in the church.. Ken was faithful to the church. He even came to church when he could not walk. In fact when his mind was going he was dreaming about coming to church. He called me everyday from the rehab we would often talk about our church..

Ken also was loved by our church people.

Of late.. Debbie has taken over Ken's ministry of putting messages on line. She is a blessing. But she is following in her father's foot steps.

Church is important.

Church support is important. When Ken talked about funeral arrangements, he wanted it to be in the church. He wanted people to give a memorial to the church instead of

flowers.. Ken invited people out to church. Ken had Bible posters all over his property.. he handed out tracks...

We are one in Christ. When I think of Ken's life story I think of someone who loved church. We have gone through extra efforts to have Ken's funeral at our church. We need about 12-14 pallbearers to do this. Some say it would be easier to just have his service in the funeral home. No.. Ken would have wanted his funeral in the church. Today we have too many people just conveniently getting rid of their dead loved ones.. Burn them up.. get them out of the way.. disregard their remains it doesn't matter.. Listen to what the Bible says about a person's departure from this world.

Ecclesiastes 6:3 If a man beget an hundred [children], and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also [that] he have no burial; I say, [that] an untimely birth [is] better than he.

Do you know God made sure that Jesus was buried in a rich man's grave. He died like a common thief but was buried like a nobleman!!! We should honor his memory because he served his Lord faithfully. We will give him a proper Christian farewell..

V. Teaches The To Be In Christ and With Christ Is Our Hope..

Philippians 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

Philippians 1:24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh [is] more needful for you.

Ken is in a better place. He wanted to abide here to be a help to others. He was a guide to his kids and wife. He had wisdom in many areas and knew a lot of people and directed his house accordingly. However, in the end, he was not the same Ken. His mind could no longer focus on reality. He ceased to be the support, and needed support, so it was far better for him to go be with the Lord, and the Lord made that decision. We were praying for the old Ken to stick around.. We were hoping he would come out of it, and get back on his feet. We liked having him around.

Yet, Ken's life should teach us all the someday the silver cord will be broken. Someday the appointed time will come. Someday we all will have to meet God. If you lived for Christ and served Christ that will be a glorious day. If you lived only for yourself and did nothing for the Lord that will be a sad day and a day of darkness and loss.

But I have good news for you.. Ken's story shares the fact that in Christ there is something better after death.

You may be asking well how do I know that? You can know it because the Bible says so.

1. JESUS SAID SO..

He alone died and came back and he said, he has gone to prepare a place for all those who love him.

Look we will spend a infinite amount of time in the next life. Why would you sacrifice that for the pleasures of sin for a season?

Why do people fear to give their lives to Christ? There is only one reason and it is a foolish reason. PEOPLE LOVE THE PLEASURES OF SIN MORE THAN CHRIST!!!! How stupid.. is there anything in this life that could compare to the eternal. You may not believe that, but the reality is this, you will be dead for a much longer period than you will be alive. Will you take the chance of not believing the Bible to gain what sinful pleasures that are keeping you from receiving Christ.

When Midgy died, Elaine's cousin came and shared how she one time was talking to my mother and she just could not understand how I traded my career in music for serving Christ. After they observed my life and saw what I was doing for the Lord they changed their minds. One of my musician friends became a legend in our town. He was a beloved musician.. The attorney general of New Jersey wrote a book of his life. In the book Danny Degennaro was writing a biography of his life and mentioned that the two best musicians he ever played with in his career were Frank Bissol and Ronnie Butko.

I did not know it but at that time, Danny was toying around with some serious drugs. He was experimenting with heroin. Now he was murdered because he owed some people money for drugs. He died popular, a legend in my home town, but he is dead! Not only is he dead physically but he died without Christ for eternity.

Now I have a family.. a good family.. children who are all doing well and love the Lord..

I have a good marriage.. a happy marriage.. a wife who even said to me she had to give me anything I wanted because it was a national holiday called give your husband anything he wants day..

I have out lived all my musician friends.. when I didn't think back then I would live to be 50 years old the rate I was going with all the drugs and alcohol around me.. If I ever got into some serious drugs that would have been the end of me.

Now in this life I have had a better life because I gave my heart to Christ. Maybe I am not as well known or famous.. but I have had a better life..

Now also .. I have the promise of eternal life. WHAT MORE COULD I HAVE?

Ken and I will be fixing Hammond organs and singing and praising Jesus in heaven.. soon...

This is Ken's life's story. I think it is a good story. I think it is a story worth preaching.

What will be your life's story some day?

- I. Ken's Life Teaches Us That We Are Frail..**
- II. Ken's Life Teaches Us That Our Labor Is Not In Vain For The Lord..**
- III. Ken's Life Teaches Us That A Good Family Is Important..**
- IV. Ken's Life Teaches That Church Family Is Important..**
- V. Ken's Life Teaches The To Be In Christ and With Christ Is Our Hope..**

Is this your life story.. if not better make your life story before it is too late.

It is never to late to live for Christ..