

1-24-16 WHY GOING TO CHURCH IS IMPORTANT

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting [one another]: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

As we enter this new year 2016 we need to take the admonition and command in this verse to heart..

We are living in a day when every man .. seems to want to do what is right in his own eyes.. Everyone has their own opinion about worshiping God.. everyone has their own ideas about the importance of Church.. The Bible is clear..

It says to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is...

I could name person after person who at one time assembled themselves together, came to church regularly .. and then little by little they slipped away.. they miss one week .. one week here.. another week gone.. 2 here 1 away. 2 away one here.. some used to attend regularly .. all three services.. and then little by little ... they would miss Wednesday evenings .. and then missing Sunday evenings.. then little by little they were here and gone..

This morning I want to talk to you about the need to be faithful in your Church attendance. The command is simple. WE ARE NOT TO FORSAKE THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER ... That means that we need to attend Church services with regularity. There are many people who drift and fall away.. Boy, they make it to baseball, wrestling, basketball, and all kind of sports activities. but they neglect coming to church.

The nation Israel got that way just before God destroyed them and sent them into captivity.

Hezekiah was one of the last great Kings who tried to rally the people together to keep the passover of the Lord.. but we read this sad commentary of the times..

II Chronicles 30:10 So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: **but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.**

They laughed about keeping the Passover, that glorious ordinance celebrating the birth of the nation. God, by a mighty hand, brought His people out of Israel. He killed all the first born of Egypt to bring their deliverance. He overpowered the super power of the world..

AND THEY MOCKED!!

But yet the Bible says we have a greater covenant. That was the old covenant.. when it called for the slaying and sacrificing of animals to cover the sin of the nation. The Passover is often referred to as the Feast of Unleavened bread. This feast of unleavened bread was a time when the nation was to remember back to the time when the children of Israel had to flee Egypt. They were in such a hurry to leave they were not able to eat leavened bread ... but had to eat their bread unleavened. So the Lord told them to eat unleavened bread during that week! But now

the New Testament covenant is a great covenant. Each week on Sunday we celebrate a greater truth .. FOR WE READ

I Corinthians 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

Through His death, the Angel of death, even Satan, has been defeated,,.

Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

Now that Blood is applied to the door posts of our heart when we ask Jesus to come into our hearts.. The Lord will pass over His judgment of condemnation and damnation that we deserve. And now He asks us to commemorate this great truth by assembling ourselves together .. Tarrying one another. Obeying His ordinances of Communion .. and Baptizing others who follow him and breaking not only physical bread but also the bread of life.. Every Sunday .. we digest the Word of God.. we read it .. we meditate on this book.. We hold a great feast unto the Lord.. Remembering what He did for us

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

Now will we make light of that? Will we neglect that? We think this trivial, unimportant. We skip this great ordinance in order to play games! What is more important than Christ? What is more important than honoring Him?

This morning I want to talk to you about why it is so important to assemble ourselves together..

I. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE GOD SAID IT IS IMPORTANT

II. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO PROMOTE UNITY AND LOVE AMONGST GOD'S PEOPLE

III. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE THE FAILURES OF THE NATION ISRAEL SHOULD CAUSE US TO FEAR FORSAKEING THIS GREAT COMMAND. OTHERWISE GOD WILL PUNISH US..

I. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE GOD SAID IT IS IMPORTANT

Do we really need anything else?

It was the devil that whispered into Eve's ear.. who is God to tell you you can't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?! Adam and Eve may not have known why it was so important to obey God... but today we are still suffering the effects of their disobedience. How many families and how many children are suffering the consequences of disobedient parents who just don't see why it is so important to assemble themselves together?

IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE GOD SAID IT IS IMPORTANT! Do you need anything else?

Way back in the early church people were saying, "I think it is not so important if I go to Church.. I don't see why it is so important that I assemble together with God's people.. Why can't I just pray on my own? why can't I just read my Bible on my own?"

Assembling ourselves together is part of the overtones of REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY! What was the purpose of the Sabbath? Its purpose was to give God's people a day off from work so they could worship the Lord!

How do we fulfill this command today? We assemble ourselves together on the Lord's day which is Sunday. And why Sunday? We assemble on Sunday because Jesus Arose from the dead on Sunday - the first day of the week. And Christians have been assembling themselves together the first day of the week since the book of Acts. Paul said, in Acts 16:1-2 that Upon the first day of the week when the saints assembled they were to take up an offering.

And in Acts 20:7 we read:

Acts 20:7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Christians since the days of the book of Acts have assembled together the first day of the week. And so, we assemble the first day of the week.

So Paul was saying there are some people who are forsaking the assembling of themselves together.. and you folks need to make sure you don't do that.

It is important because God said it is important.

But it is also important because of the benefit you receive by obeying this command.

II. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO PROMOTE UNITY AND LOVE AND DOING GOOD WORKS AMONGST GOD'S PEOPLE

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

1. We need to assemble ourselves together so we can be encouraged to love each other..

HOW ARE WE PROVOKED TO LOVE:

How can we love each other when we never see each other?

How can we express love to each other?

When we gather together we learn about each others needs..

When we assemble ourselves together

We learn how to pray for each other..

Someone says.. no one cares for me.. how can people care about you when they never see you in church? No one knows what is going on in your life..

We are commanded to assemble ourselves together so we could learn to love each other..

2. We need to assemble ourselves together so we can be encouraged to do good works

What are some of the good works that people can do?

I Timothy 6:18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

Good works and giving go hand in hand..

When we help others in their needs it is a good work..
In church you learn about needs people have.. whether missionaries or people who have emergency needs..
People who need help in this area or that..

When we give of our money to the Lord's work this is a good work..
In the church we have opportunities to give.. if we don't attend church we are not going to give..

I John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

In the assembly we learn about the needs of God's people and we have opportunity to do good works!

A few months back we went on a missions trip to help a preacher's widow who was in need. We went together and we did a good work.

3. WE ASSEMBLE TOGETHER TO PROMOTE UNITY AND ONENESS

The beauty of the church is seen when a group of people work together in love and unity to serve the Lord..

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

God established a Church and gave men who could officiate in the roles of spiritual leadership to direct and teach and guide so that God's people could be joined together in unity of the faith..

There is an ocean of ideas out in the world that could toss us about. We need to be focused and directed in the Word of God. So that we do not enter into a state of spiritual confusion.

God ordained Spiritual teachers are given to the church for this purpose. In the Church we open the Bible and read and teach the Bible and say, This is what the Lord says about this subject and that subject, let us not be tossed to and fro by the liberal media and atheistic educational systems. They are not going to teach the word of God. It is the church's job to teach and direct according to the Scripture.

ASSEMBLING OURSELVES TOGETHER IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE GOD SAID SO

ASSEMBLING OURSELVES TOGETHER IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT WILL PROVOKE US TO LOVE GOOD WORKS AND UNITY

ASSEMBLING OURSELVES TOGETHER IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE FAILURE TO DO SO WILL BRING GOD'S JUDGMENT!

III. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE THE FAILURES OF THE NATION ISRAEL SHOULD CAUSE US TO FEAR TO FORSAKE THIS GREAT COMMAND. OTHERWISE GOD WILL PUNISH US..

Hebrews 10:26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

Hebrews 10:27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Hebrews 10:28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Hebrews 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Hebrews 10:30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

I believe the Apostle Paul wrote this.. and he said, Remember how when the children of Israel came out of the land and then began griping and complaining, and how they despised Moses and the law of God .. How the Lord consumed them in the wilderness. How many fell in the wilderness, how many were destroyed and chastened!

All because they despised Moses, they murmured against Moses. They were not grateful for what the Lord did for them in Egypt.. They forgot how God delivered them from Pharaoh, they forgot about how the Lord delivered them from the angel of death, they forgot how the Lord parted the Red sea..

Now how much more will the Lord chasten those who trod under foot the blood of the New Covenant, when we despise the New Testament covenant?

We make light of His ordinances in the New Testament. He said do this in remembrance of me but you say..

I don't think that is all that important..

He said if you love me keep my commandments and one of them is not to forsake the assembling of yourself together..

But you say.. I don't see why I need to do that...

I Corinthians 16:22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

Hebrews 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

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Where is your fear of God? I would fear for my well being..

I would fear to despise His ordinances.

I would fear to dishonor Him.

DID NOT THE EARTH SWALLOW UP KORAH AND HIS REBELS. Numbers 16:32

DID NOT 24,000 MEN DIE WHEN THEY FOLLOWED BALAAM'S ADVICE Number 25:9

DID NOT THE 10 SPIES WHO BROUGHT UP THE EVIL REPORT AT KADESH DIE FOR THEIR TRANSGRESSION NUM 14:37

Now the Bible says..

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So we really think that we can be blessed if we dishonor His New Covenant. And how do we honor Him in the New Covenant? We do so by assembling ourselves together and doing what He commanded us to do!

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WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ASSEMBLE OURSELVES TOGETHER?

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Do we really think that God will treat us any differently than His covenant people?!

Romans 11:19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

Romans 11:20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

Romans 11:21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Romans 11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

The Bible says.. we need a healthy fear of what God may do if we stray and if we despise this great salvation which he intended to us through his son..

What more can be done for those who have tasted of the guidance of the Kingdom? Do we really think we can be blessed in this life when we have trodden under foot this great covenant?

Hebrews 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

Hebrews 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

Hebrews 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

How many people are there.. who at one time were witnessing for the Lord.. telling people how great He is ..

.... but now they no longer witness

.... will Christ be crucified again for them ..

.... can they be saved all over again.

Have they not put our Lord to open shame.. Be careful..

The Bible says. we need to fear .. remember Judas himself was one of the 12 and the Lord said of him it were better he were never born.

THE BIBLE SAYS

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

DID YOU HEAR THIS?

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Peter gives this severe warning..

II Peter 2:20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

II Peter 2:21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

II Peter 2:22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

The doctrine of eternal security ought not be a blank check for debauchery..

WE NEED A HEALTHY FEAR ...

II Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

I Corinthians 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

FEAR FEAR FEAR...

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THE FINAL REASON WE NEED TO ASSEMBLE OURSELVES TOGETHER IS THAT WE CAN CLEARLY SEE THE DAY APPROACHING.

1-24-2016 Evening Service
DO YOU SEE THE DAY APPROACHING?

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

The Day is approaching. what is that day? That day is the day in which we will meet the Lord. That day is approaching sooner than you think!

A few weeks back I woke up with a fever and I had the worst pain that I ever had in my life. I honestly thought I was going to die. It was so bad I even called to go see the doctor. I even told my wife call the doctor. I had plans, I thought I was going to put in a full day of work, had plans to rent a machine at Barhite rental to do the work.. And suddenly I found myself not able to work and in bed for three days.

Praise the Lord I am doing better now.. but one of these days I will not be so fortunate. One day something will strike me down and you as well ... for each of us that day is approaching and we may not get back up.. and we will find ourselves facing God. Some day each of us are going to have to meet our creator and in that day we will give an account for the things we have done in this life, whether good or evil. Whether in life or in death we will meet the Lord. All of us are hoping we will meet him in the air and not have to cross the river of death to meet him.

Ken Knapp called me and told me they took his dad to Hospice Care in Dunmore. He said, Medicare will foot the bill completely for Hospice, where as for other treatment they won't. Reason being when you go to hospice your saying I am not coming out alive! I went to see Ken's dad and prayed with him, when he was at Ken's Daughter's.. I asked him to make sure of his salvation and gave him some literature and explained the gospel to him.

That day is going to come all too soon for all of us.

Consider

I. THE DAY IS APPROACHING OF HIS RETURN..

Jesus said behold I come quickly...

Why is it we are nearer to His return than any other generation before us, but we act like his return is further than those who lived 1900 years ago!

There is no doubt that we are in the end days. And in that day, our Lord is going to come for His bride.

Matthew 25:1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

Matthew 25:2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

Matthew 25:3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

Matthew 25:4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

Matthew 25:5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

Matthew 25:6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

Matthew 25:7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

Matthew 25:8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

Matthew 25:9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

Matthew 25:10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

Matthew 25:12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

Matthew 25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

This parable speaks about the state of God's people in the day that we live.

The church is pretty much at sleep. We are living at the midnight hour and at midnight people go to sleep. For the most part when people are asleep you can't tell if they are saved or lost. They are all called virgins. I believe this means that all were part of Christ's church. But half of them lacked oil in their lamps.

I believe when Jesus comes to planet earth to take His bride to heaven about half of professing Christians will not be going. Why?

The reason is simple..

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Without this oil the spirit of Christ you are not His..

There are many a person who thinks having just prayed a prayer will save them..

It may have gotten them into the church..

It may have qualified them for Baptism and Church membership..

BUT WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT OIL IN THEIR LAMP THEY ARE NOT GOING TO GO AND BE WITH THE BRIDEGROOM. THE DOOR WILL BE SHUT TO THEM!

Unless ye be born of flesh and spirit ye cannot be born again..

That which is flesh is flesh .. that which is spirit is spirit

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

When that day comes there are many who will not be taken in the clouds..

Like I Thess 4 says

I Thessalonians 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

I Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

I Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

I Thessalonians 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

I Thessalonians 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

I Thessalonians 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

I Thessalonians 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

I Thessalonians 5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

I Thessalonians 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

II. THAT DAY FOR MANY OF US WILL BE THE DAY WHEN THE LORD TAKES US HOME IN DEATH...

Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

After death comes the judgment..

And for some they will close their eyes in this life and open their eyes in hell in the next..

Luke 16:22 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;

Luke 16:23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

IN HELL HE LIFTED UP HIS EYES,,

Years ago I was working in a Mall talking to a customer. Somehow the conversation came up that I was a preacher. he fellow looked at me and said, I hope you're not one of those hell fire damnation preachers. I said, "well hell is mentioned in the Bible.." He said yeah, but people don't like hearing about it.. and you will offend people by talking about it. How sad.. but that is the mentality of a lot of people in this world.

The rich man when he wound up in hell, asked if Lazarus could go back and warn his 5 brothers about the reality of hell. Amazing how all of sudden he got a burden to warn loved ones about this awful place..

Years ago when I first heard the gospel, the good news that anyone who truly would receive Jesus as Lord and saviour could have the gift of eternal life.. I said I can't believe that.. the reason I said that was because the logical conclusion of the gospel is that if you truly believe that, all a person needs to do to be saved is exercise faith in Jesus Christ! Than what kind of person would you be not to share that simple gospel message with everyone you could.. That is what I reasoned and fear intimidation of telling people about Christ kept me from getting saved..

Matthew 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

Luke 9:26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

That day is going to come all so soon for many of us.. will we be prepared to meet our creator?

III. AS WE SEE THAT DAY APPROACHING WE SHOULD BE MORE DESIROUS OF BEING IN CHURCH WITH GOD'S PEOPLE..

If I knew that Jesus was coming tonight.. I would want to be in church with God's people!

Those who have stopped going to Church always regret it when that day comes and they have to meet God.

I tell the story often about the older fellow I met years ago when I was out visiting one evening. I was looking for someone who visited our church and I knocked on the wrong door. The fellow cracked the door open and asked who I was ,, when I told him I was from the Elkdale Baptist Church, he opened the door wide and waved for me to come in .. he had a pistol in his hand and waved and gestured with the pistol to come in..

When I came in he laid the pistol down next to an open Bible and we began to talk about the things of the Lord. I found out his wife was a Sunday School teacher in the Baptist church down the road but he didn't attend church. When I asked why he began to tell me horror story after horror story about things he thought were wrong about this church and that church that he attended.

He said he just stayed home and listened to TV Evangelists. Well I got him to visit our church a few times but that was about it.. he had strange ideas about church and of course I'm sure he didn't agree with our church either.

Years went by and then one day I decided just to stop in and see this fellow. I asked him how he was doing and he said not good.. In fact I am dying. I have Kidney failure and the doctor has only given me a few months to live. I then said well praise the Lord you know you're saved and going to heaven. He said .. well I don't know about that. I said what do you mean.. You believe Jesus died for your sins right.. He said "Yes" I said you asked Jesus into your heart haven't you, He said "Yes" Then I said .. well whats the problem?

He said, "preacher all these years I have done nothing for God.." I let this thing and that thing bother me..." "I should have ignored all the problems and been faithful to church, taught a Sunday School class and now I would have something to show for my life.." With a tear in his eye he said, preacher I'm afraid to meet God.." I have nothing to show him.

Suddenly as he was facing that day this was a man that was being honest with himself and saying I fear to meet God with nothing to show for my life..

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Then he looked at me and said preacher will you promise to tell people not to do as I have done.. Don't get looking at people, and letting them keep you from serving God and coming to church. Just get busy, and be faithful and serve him. Tell my story to as many people as you can.

So every time I can, I tell that story, I tell people the story about this old man who now has gone on into eternity. And had regrets when the day approached in his life..

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AS YOU SEE THE DAY APPROACHING.

For each of us that day is approaching quicker than you can think!