

# The Old Paths

Volume 13, Issue 15

June 4, 2006

## “The Brevity Of Life”

Jarrold Jacobs

“**T**he living know that they shall die ....” So says Solomon in Ecclesiastes 9:5. I would add that while this is true, many of the “living” are living in denial! Let the living take heed: I have attended two funerals in the last two weeks, one for a man, and one for a woman. Both people died of cancer. The man was about ten years older than the woman who died; yet, neither one made it to the “70 year mark” spoken of by David (Ps. 90:10). This fact alone emphasizes the brevity of life!

Solomon wrote, “*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*” (Ecc. 7:2). Having seen two funerals so close together, one thing I have “laid to my heart” is the fact that one’s life — anyone’s life — is rapidly passing away! The Bible makes this fact plain, and also reveals several other truths concerning one’s life on earth. Let’s study!

### Our Life Is Short.

This fact ought to be apparent to folks of any age. When we recognize that people of all ages die daily, we can appreciate the fact that life is short! Should one live to his/her “age expectancy,” the Bible says that it could be 70, or perhaps 80 years of age (Ps. 90:10). What we sometimes do not notice is that in the rest of the passage, David describes living

70 or even 80 years by saying, “*Yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*” Earlier in this text, he illustrated the brevity of life by saying, “*we spend our years as a tale that is told*” (Ps. 90:9).

Regardless of how long we live, we can appreciate the statements of David who teaches us that life is short!

### Our Days Are Numbered.

Psalm 139:16 shows us this truth. In this text, we read, “*Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.*” The NKJV renders the last part of this verse, “*And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.*” In other words, David is saying that God has numbered our days before we are born. He says in Psalm 90:12, “*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*” God knows our days, but we do not. Therefore, we need to live them wisely. Let us not take our life on earth for granted.

### Our Life Is As A Vapor.

In the book of James chapter 4, verse 14, we read, “*Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*” How important it is that we realize this truth. The next time we watch the vapor rise above

the pond, or the steam above a pot, please notice how quickly this steam disappears. This is just like our life on earth! When people talk about their age, and how swiftly their life has passed, it reflects the truth of this passage. Our life is just like a vapor. We are here only for a little while and then we enter into an eternity of bliss and rest, or torment and pain. Where we spend eternity depends upon how we lived during this “vapor” we call life! This leads us to the following fact ....

### Eternity Is Long.

The Bible assures us that just as this life is short, so also, eternity is long. It is described as “everlasting” and “eternal” when Jesus made reference to one’s punishment, or his rest after this life (Matt. 25:46). Eternity is described as something that has no end. Thus it is with a man’s spirit. At death, it will enter eternity into the Hadean realm (Lk. 16:19-31), and then await the Judgment Day (II Cor. 5:10) wherein he/she will face either eternal rest, or damnation depending on our manner of life while on this earth (Rom. 2:6-11). There is no end to eternity. I believe a good description of eternity is seen in the song “Amazing Grace.” In verse 5, we sing, “When we’ve been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun; We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise Than when we first begun.” Rest assured, you and I will not escape eternity! Eternity is long.

### Are You Prepared?

Knowing that our life on earth is brief, and that eternity is without end, what preparations have you made for leaving this world and entering eternity? In Hebrews 12:1 we read, “*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed*

*“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” (Jer. 6:16)*

about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Let us be prepared for eternity by running life's race with patience, and never giving up! As Peter discussed the end of time, and the destruction of this world, he said in II Peter 3:11, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." Are we being as holy and godly as we ought to be? If not, we need to change and live in a manner well-pleasing to God in this short life, so we can gain Heaven when this life is over.

Preparation for eternity begins by believing that Jesus is the Son of God (Heb. 11:6; Jn. 8:24), repenting of sins (Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30), confessing one's faith in Christ (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10), and being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21). Having done this, we have been born again, and therefore, need to grow and mature in the Lord (I Cor. 15:58), following Him all the days of our lives (Rev. 2:10).

### Conclusion

Remember, your days are numbered by God. It is like a vapor. One day, folks will gather at your casket and then follow the hearse to your grave to say their final "good-byes" on earth. This comes to all men (Ecc. 9:5)! Friend, do not let an opportunity to be saved pass you by as Agrippa did in Acts 26:28. You have no guarantee of tomorrow, so listen to Paul when he says, "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2). Obey God today! You'll never regret that decision. There is no better way to spend our brief lives!

## "THE WORK OF A PREACHER"

Selected And Adapted

**W**e all have limitations, and preachers are not excluded. A preacher could spend 12 hours a day, 7 days a week calling on the lost, spiritually starved, and folks who have never even been inside a church building to worship God. He could spend those hours calling in the homes of the members, the sick, the indifferent and inactive among the brethren. He could spend those hours doing office work, and meeting with various groups. He might spend 12 hours a day with the funerals, weddings, and countless other obligations that appeal for his time and help. He could spend those 12 hours a day in his study preparing sermons and Bible class lessons, with great profit to himself and to the church.

So a preacher -- any preacher -- must remain inadequate. He can only attempt to cover the above five fields of endeavor in part. Devoting only 20% of his available time to each endeavor. Every preacher labors with this handicap. Every preacher doing his job as God has commanded him knows this is true. The preacher realizes that most peo-

ple don't know this is true. Most folks forget that there are others that have the same problems, needs, and demands on the preacher as they do.

However, you need not pity the preacher. He is doing the work he loves. Inadequate, constantly busy, and always behind with work, he still has the greatest job on earth. Pray for your preacher. Bear with him. Let him know your needs and call on him for help. But remember, he is the only member of the congregation that has no minister.

### "Points With A Punch!"

- ◆ Never put a question mark where God has put a period.
- ◆ If you are too busy to assemble with the Lord's people, you are overworked.
- ◆ Some say a little talk with Jesus makes it right, but Paul had a little talk and had to "arise and be baptized" (Acts 22:16).
- ◆ People who are spiritually blind rely on feeling for Heaven.
- ◆ A hundred people will search the woods for a lost boy but won't move an inch to save a soul.
- ◆ Some folks have more of their "thinks-so's" than the Lord's "say-so's" in their religion.

**Past Radio Questions Are Posted At:**  
[www.southside-churchofchrist.com](http://www.southside-churchofchrist.com)



I want the truth, give me book, chapter, and verse!

Come and meet with the church at Southside.

Our address: 2920 New Hartford Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303

#### Meeting Times:

Sunday Morning Bible Study \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship \_\_\_\_\_ 10:20 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship \_\_\_\_\_ 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study \_\_\_\_\_ 7:00 p.m.

"What Is Written": Sunday (12:30 p.m.) on 94.7 & 100.5 FM.

Call: 683-9246 (WBIO) with your Bible questions.

"The Ancient Landmark": airs Monday (9 p.m.), Wednesday (5 p.m.), & Thursday (11 p.m.) on channel 52.

Website: [www.southside-churchofchrist.com](http://www.southside-churchofchrist.com) (Updated weekly!)

Preacher/Editor: Jarrod Jacobs Elders: Paul Dubois & Jeff Lankford

Phone: (270) 683-5386

*"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jer. 6:16)*