

“THE SUBJECT OF FUNERALS”

–Gary Colley

Preachers are called upon to speak at many memorial services for the dead. Some of these are an honor and easier to preach than others, due to the life of the passing individual. The only funeral sermon found in the Bible is recorded in (Luke 16:19-31).

This sermon was spoken by Jesus, concerning a rich man, and a man named Lazarus. It is spoken in this manner: “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 Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom” (Luke 16:22-23).

It is indicated by Abraham that the former beggar on earth had listened to Moses and the prophets, repented of sins and obeyed God’s Word, while the former rich man rejected God’s Word for his own selfish purposes on earth. Today we are not subject to the Law of Moses as a law (Colossians 2:14), but in the Christian dispensation, and therefore are subject to the law of Christ in the Gospel (Galatians 6:2; Romans 8:1-2).

The saved are those who die “in the Lord” (Revelation 14:13), because they live in the Lord. The unrighteous dead do not, die into the Lord! Those who live for the Lord here will be with Lazarus in the Paradise of Hades, awaiting the Judgment, but those who reject the offers of the Gospel by not being baptized upon their belief, repentance, confession, will be in the torment compartment of Hades (II Peter 2:4).

Think for a moment what might be said by a faithful Gospel preacher at our funeral.

1. The deceased (was, was not) a Christian, and therefore we (have, have not) a reasonable hope for him/her.
2. This ones family (knew, knew not) this one to be a person of prayer and devotion to God.
3. He was a person who regularly (attended, ignored) the worship services and (could, could not) be counted on to serve to the best of his/her ability.
4. This one was always (concerned, unconcerned) with the lost, the poor, the afflicted, the homeless, and always (encouraged, discouraged) missionary efforts.
5. He (loved, did not love) his fellow man, evidenced by the way he treated him.
6. He was a (true friend, two-faced) to those who trusted him, and always made a real contribution to the (happiness, unhappiness) of people wherever he/she went.
7. His/Her family (rejoiced/dreaded) to see him/her comes home.
8. He/She (possessed, did not possess) honesty, integrity, humility, sincerity, dependability, and love.
9. He/She knew the Truth and (tried, did not try) to obey it.
10. He/She (did, did not) fight a good fight, finish the course, keep the faith; therefore, (there is, is not) laid up for him/her a crown of righteousness.