

**WEEK #3 THE ROAD TO THE CROSS – first stops = DEATH & JUDGMENT!**

**KEY TRUTH THIS WEEK: Our job is to lead people to the CROSS – not get them to pray.**

Consider this – which road looks easier for someone to find their way?



OR

**Keep it Simple**

1. Our job is to lead people to the **CROSS** of our Lord Jesus Christ – **not** get them to pray.

**1 Cor 3:6-9** I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. **So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.** Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For **we are labourers together with God:** ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

**Colossians 1:13** - Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and **hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:**

Only God can transform a life. However, He has chosen to use **us** as His voice.

2. We are **not to strive**, but be gentle unto **all**, apt to teach, patient, and in meekness **INSTRUCT** those that “oppose themselves.”

**2 Timothy 2:23-26** - But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must **not strive**; but **be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing** those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Remember – their logic does not make sense – so help them **think** their way to the cross.

3. We are giving people **DIRECTIONS** to Heaven. When you are giving directions on earth to people, what is the most helpful way to ensure they reach their destination?

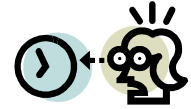
**Answer:** Provide key **LANDMARKS** or milestones along the way so that there is no doubt they will arrive there safely.

Think about the way you share the Gospel with someone today. Now, consider this illustration. If you were on an airplane that was going down and you only had **60 seconds** to share the Gospel with someone you knew was lost before you crashed, what would you say?

Let's try it out and see how easy it is. After all, **how hard can it be** to share the Gospel...☺

**Scenario** You are on an airplane that is going down and you only have **60 seconds** to share the Gospel with someone you know is **lost** before you crash, what do you say?

## The “**60 Second**” Gospel Witness...



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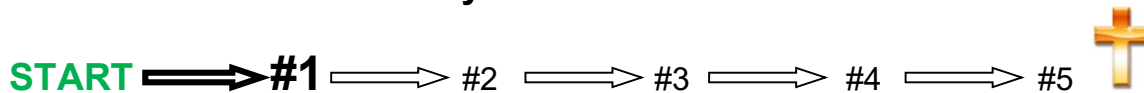
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**Time is up – they are now *dead!***



## LANDMARK #1: The Reality of Death



*“Men have been helped by remembering that they must die.” - Charles Spurgeon*

The Bible discloses an often-overlooked tool that we can use to reach the lost. That tool is the “**FEAR** of death.” For the Christian who may find such an approach to be negative, it may be viewed in a positive light by calling it “the will to live.” Every human being in his right mind has a fear of death. He does not want to die.

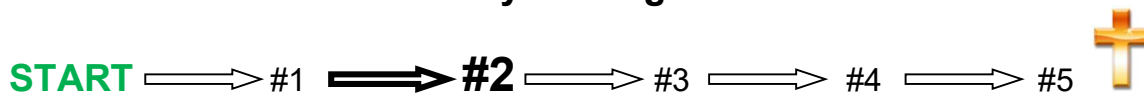
**Hebrews 2:15** – And deliver them who through *fear of death* were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

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

Here is how to use the fear of death as a tool when speaking to an unsaved person:

- Every person has an appointment with death. It is the only thing guaranteed in this life.
- **10 out of 10 people die.**
- Can you **guarantee** that you will wake up tomorrow morning?
- If the person is young and thinks he is invincible, ask him this:
  - If you were to die tomorrow, how old does that make you – young or old?
  - It makes you **very old**...life should be measured based on **# of years left!**
- If the average person dies at 70 years old...
  - At age 30, you have just 2,000 weekends left to live...unless they die early.
  - At age 40 it is 1,500; at age 50 it is 1,000; at age 60 it is 500

## LANDMARK #2: The Certainty of Judgment



Judgment is the key to align your message with God’s message.

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

**Romans 2:16** – In *the day* when *God shall judge the secrets of men* by Jesus Christ according to *my gospel*.

**KEY** The fact that there is a Day of Judgment coming is the very reason **why** God now commands people to **repent**.

**Acts 17:30-31** – And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but **now commandeth all men every where to repent**: **Because he hath appointed a day**, in the which **he will judge the world in righteousness by that man** whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

People often ask why the Old Testament shows a God of wrath and the New Testament shows a God of mercy. Have you ever heard or thought that?

The reality is that the God of the New Testament is the **SAME** as the God of the Old Testament. The Bible says that He **NEVER** changes. He is just as merciful in the Old Testament as He is in the New Testament. Read Nehemiah 9 for a summary of how God mercifully forgave Israel, again and again, after they repeatedly sinned and turned their backs on Him. The Psalms often speak of God's mercy poured out on sinners.

He is also just as wrath-filled in the New Testament as He is in the Old. The Book of Acts records that He killed a husband and wife simply because they told one lie. Jesus warned that He was to be feared because He has the power to cast the body and soul into hell. The apostle Paul said that he persuaded men to come to the Savior because he knew the "terror of the Lord." Read the dreadful judgments of the New Testament's Book of Revelation. That will put the "fear of God" in you, which incidentally is "the beginning of wisdom."

**2 Cor 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.

**Proverbs 9:10** – The *fear of the LORD* is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

The world at times seems to believe the gospel. They enjoy gospel music, they will listen to popular prosperity and positive-principle preachers – but they seek to shut us up the moment we speak of a coming judgment. John the Baptist preached judgment for sin. He told Herod that he had transgressed God's Law in taking his brother's wife, and that cost John his life (Mark 6:18). In the eyes of the world, there is nothing popular or positive about preaching the reality of Judgment Day.

When the preaching of Judgment Day is **NEGLECTED**, people *do not see a need to repent*.

Why should they, if they are not *warned* that there is a fearful consequence for *sin*? If sinners are not aware of the Day in which they will *give an account* of their lives *to God*, they will not see a need to heed God's *command* to repent. When they take their last breath...wow!

**Acts 17:30-31** – And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but *now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day*, in the which *he will judge the world in righteousness by that man* whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Don't be concerned that, by referring to the Judgment, you are causing sinners to fear. They have sinned against God and His wrath abides on them. In fact, the Bible calls them "children of wrath." **Shouldn't they then fear Him?**

**John 3:36** – He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but *the wrath of God abideth on him*.

**Ephesians 2:3** – Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and *were by nature the children of wrath*, even as others.

It cannot be stated enough, the Day of Judgment is the **REASON** men are **commanded** to repent.

If we don't preach that God will judge the world in righteousness, we shouldn't be surprised that men and women are passive about responding to the Savior. If we tell them that they need only believe, then neither should we be surprised when the church fills up with false converts who believe but don't even have enough fear of God to obey.

Judgment Day is the climax of the ages. It is a day that the whole of creation eagerly awaits, an event for which the very ground cries out. It has done so from the blood of Abel and will continue to the end of this age (Rev 20:11-15). God loves **JUSTICE** – and He will have it.

**Psalm 96:11-13** – Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the LORD: for he cometh, **for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness**, and the people with his truth.

Therefore, we must remember that it isn't enough to preach the Moral Law (also called the 10 commandments). It must be preached in conjunction with **future punishment**. It has been well said that Law without consequence is nothing but good advice. We must instead preach that those who commit adultery, those who lie and steal, etc., will be punished on the Day of Wrath. **It is the preaching of future punishment that produces fear**, and it is through the fear of the Lord that men depart from sin.

**Proverbs 16:6** – By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and **by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil**.

*“Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of God upon earth.” - John Wesley*

Have you ever heard someone say this...?

*“I will take my chances.”*

With what, **ETERNITY**? Eternity is a long time to be **WRONG**. Why would you want to take a gamble on something as important as your eternal destiny? It takes only a moment to trust Christ for salvation. There will be an eternity of pain and regret if you don't.

You don't take chances with guns, do you? You don't take chances and run red lights, do you? Why would you take a chance on something that is far more important than these? Don't take a chance on something **eternal**. It isn't worth it.

Jesus said He was the only way to God. He forgave sins, walked on water, calmed a storm with a command, raised people from the dead, and rose from the dead Himself. No one else in all of history has done that.

If He can do all that, don't you think you should listen to Him?