

Four Things A Man Ought To Do

Praise the Lord Saints of God! Let's give God praise and worship this morning. Let's magnify the name of the Lord, for He is good, and His mercy endureth forever! I thank God, and this congregation for the opportunity to bring forth the word of the Lord, for the opportunity to share what he has given to me to preach to you today.

Let us pray that God would have mercy upon me, that he would anoint me to bring forth that which *He* would have me to preach unto you today. Let us pray that God would anoint *your* ears; that you might hear what He wants *you* to hear this morning. *At this time, let us pray..... (Pray)*

What I would like to talk to you about today is the four things that every one of us ought to do in life. See if you can figure out what those four things are as we read our text: **(Pause)** If we would all stand in honor of the reading of the word of God. Please turn with me to the **23rd Psalm**. When you're there say Amen. **(Pause)**

Psalm 23:

1: The LORD is my shepherd; **I shall not want.** 2: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3: He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4: Yea, though **I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:** for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5: Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and **I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**

Now it's time to see if your list of four matches mine: In my humble opinion, the four things which a man or a woman ought to do in life are:

1. **I shall not want**
2. **I walk through the valley of the shadow of death**
3. **I will fear no evil**
4. **I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

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Let's start with number 1

1. I shall not want

Hebrews 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

In this country that is so blest of God; we have a tendency to want **things**. LOTS of things!!!

- Big things,
- Little things,
- Cheap things,
- Expensive things!
- Anything!
- And everything!

We're one of the richest nations in the world. We have access to just about anything a human being could ever want, and most of it affordable. But way too many times we want more than we should. We want toys and we spend our time and money to get toys, and then we spend our time and money playing with our toys.

We spend so much of our time trying to get THINGS; that we don't have time for our relationship with God. We want; and then we get mad if we don't get it, and then we get tired of it quickly, and want something else because what we just bought has already quit satisfying that hunger in our hearts.

As a nation we've bought into the advertising blitz that tells us we need more stuff!

- ◆ We use stuff to help us to feel better.
- ◆ If we're sad, we buy stuff.
- ◆ If we're bored, we buy stuff.
- ◆ If our neighbor has more stuff than us, we buy more stuff to get back on top.

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- ◆ Stuff, stuff, stuff, and more stuff.
- ◆ But stuff just doesn't get the job done!
- ◆ If we're going to feel good, If we're going to feel right, If we're going to feel holy, we don't need more stuff, we need more of **God** in our lives!!!!

We don't spend time with God and:

- We wonder how come we aren't satisfied with our lives.
- We wonder why we aren't happy all the time.
- We wonder how come we're depressed.
- We wonder why the things we buy, and the things we do no longer fulfill us.

We need to be satisfied with the stuff we already have, and **LEARN** to spend time with God. That's the only thing in this life that will satisfy the hunger we feel in our hearts. That's the only thing that will fill the emptiness in our hearts. That God sized hole right in the middle of our being. It's the only thing that will give us that peace which passes all understanding. It's the only thing that will comfort us in times of tribulation. We need more God and less stuff!

You may have noticed that I said "LEARN" to spend time with God. It doesn't come easy; we have to force ourselves to spend time with God until it becomes a habit.

The flesh doesn't like submitting itself to anything, especially if it's God! The flesh doesn't like submitting to anything; and it won't submit to anything but to it's own carnal desires. It craves pleasure, pleasure that's easy to obtain, and ultimately pleasure that doesn't satisfy or fulfill. We have to crucify our flesh in order to get it to submit to the will of God. We have to make up in our minds that we're going to serve God no matter what the flesh wants!

We have to be like Isaiah and set our face like a flint. We have to be a solid rock, unmoveable, unbreakable in our determination to serve the most-high God. But it won't be easy, even the Apostle Paul had trouble bringing his flesh under control. *Listen to what he said in:*

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Romans 7:18-19 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Even the Apostle Paul had a struggle with his flesh. The only way he could defeat his carnal flesh was to bring it into subjection to the spirit that ruled his life. The Holy Ghost! He fought with his flesh through the Spirit until the Spirit won the battle. Because he knew that without the Spirit ruling and reigning in his life, he was destined to defeat in the war for his soul. For the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. So we must be *diligent* to strengthen the spirit at all times lest we fall prey to the flesh. *The Apostle Paul said in:*

1Corinthians 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.

We need to take control of the flesh and get it accustomed to the Spirit. What determines whether the flesh or the spirit rules in our lives, is which one we feed the most! If we feed the flesh, we'll reap of the flesh carnal things. Feed the spirit and we'll reap spiritual things and the spirit becomes stronger. When the spirit becomes strong enough, we won't want the stuff of the flesh anymore, we'll only want more of God, and that can never be wrong!

Once we finally bring the flesh under subjection it will be much easier to keep it there. I didn't say it would be easy, I said that it would be easier. We're still going to have to war with our flesh as long as we live in this flesh. We're going to have to fight that battle until our lives end, and we go home to meet our maker. *Let's see what Paul said in:*

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

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The flesh doesn't die easily, but it can be brought under subjection through fasting and prayer. When we get this flesh to the place where we can do without food. We can much more easily do without anything else in this life. When we spend time with God in prayer, we can learn to be satisfied with the things we possess. And that will allow God to do what needs to be done in our lives.

- He can take away the fears and troubles of this world.
- He can fill the emptiness in our lives with His spirit.
- He can heal our broken heart.
- He can set us free from our sin nature.
- He can heal our land and all that pertains to it.
- He can fill the longing in our hearts that causes us to want stuff. Because that hole was originally designed to be filled only by Him.

Finally, when we learn to want God more than anything else in this world; we'll find that we really don't want or need anything else!

2. I walk through the valley of the shadow of death

Hebrews 9:27-28 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation

At this time in America, we are facing the specter of death in many ways. There are those who have died in the terrorist attacks of 9-11. There are those who have died in the defense of our country in Afghanistan. There are those who have died, and are still dying in the defense of our country in Iraq. There may be others who will die in other countries as we pursue the terrorists to their lair. There may be more that die in this country due to future terrorist attacks or the severe effects of the economy. But regardless of that, one thing we must always remember is that wherever we are, whatever we do for a living, each one of us is only one step, or one breath away from death.

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All we have to do is step off the curb in front of a truck, and this life is over. If our heart stops beating, shortly thereafter, this life is over. If we stop breathing, in a few short minutes, this life is over. We need to understand that while we are all immortal beings, the eternal part of life is spent on the other side of this life. This life is not immortal, only the next one is.... Once we come to grips with the fact we're not immortal in this life, we can take stock of our lives, and discover what in this life is most important.

There are only so many things in life that are important. We're far too shallow in normal times. It's these times that try men's souls that bring us back to reality. Those things that are truly important in life are: God, Family, and Freedom. Everything else in this world is truly of little consequence. Everything else pales in comparison to our salvation, our family, and our freedom to worship God in the way that He requires.

We don't have to go to war to be in the shadow of the valley of death, just go to a Rest Home or a Hospital. There are people that are in sad shape in Rest Homes. They've been beaten and bruised by life. They're young, old and those in between with only one thing in common. They can no longer take care of themselves. Most are of an advanced age and suffer the maladies that accompany that age. They suffer from Arthritis, Alzheimer's, Blindness, Cancer, Deafness, Diabetes, Kidney Failure, Parkinson's disease, and many other problems.

They mostly know loneliness because their friends have gone before them or they're too sick themselves to come and visit. Even their own family won't visit them because it's inconvenient and the building smells. They know they've been left there to die, so they're living in that valley of the shadow of death.

You need to go to a place like that so you can see what living without hope is all about. To see how people that don't have faith in God survive and the attitudes they have. You'll be able to see how people that have faith in God react to their circumstances. You'll be able to see the necessity of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to those who are perishing. To preach hope to those that have no hope.

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We need to visit a hospital and go into the wing that houses the terminally ill. Ones that are looking death in the eye, ones that know their time is short. Ones that know they're soon to meet their maker; that is if they have the good sense to admit they have a maker. You'll find there are very few atheists on a death bed. The problem is most people die before they know its coming.

Ecclesiastes 12:1-3 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

In this passage it speaks of the weakness that comes with age. The knees are weak, the back is bent, the teeth are few, and the eyes grow dim. The next time you think you have it bad, remember those who are old, remember those we have already talked about, those in the rest homes, those in the hospitals, those who are poor, blind, crippled, or mentally challenged.

We need to look death square in the eyes while we're young and healthy, so when the days come that we aren't, we won't be afraid. We won't be afraid because we made we peace with God a long time ago.

3. I will fear no evil

Matthew 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The terrorism that is rampant in this world today lives and grows in the fears of those they terrorize. Without fear they would have no real power, but the fearful in this world cave in to their demands. The media wants us all to cower like sheep in our homes, too afraid to come out into the light of day.

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They want to use fear to control our lives and so they encourage terrorism by giving them front page headlines instead of ignoring them.

The only way to defeat terrorists; is to kill them, or ignore them, then live our lives the way our God would have us to live. We are not to fear the terrorists, but to be strong and of a good courage, to fight like freedom loving men and women of God against the enemy of our country and of our faith.

(Pause)

I don't know if you've realized it or not, but the devil is a terrorist!
Jesus said in:

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Satan tries to rule our lives with fear. He tries to convince us that we can't live for God. Like the terrorists, he says that life is better under his dominion instead of God's. Like the terrorists, he tries to kill us in order to get his way. If he can't kill us spiritually, he'll try to kill us physically. But we can't let that bother us a bit, because God's in total control! **Remember what the Apostle Paul says in:**

2 Timothy 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

God's in control. The devil can't touch a hair on our heads without asking God for permission to do so; you'll find that out for yourself if you read the book of Job. Regardless of what we're going through, we don't have to fear Satan or his minions.

Now, do you remember what I said we have to do to defeat terrorists? The first thing I said you have to do is "Kill" them! If we will crucify this flesh, we will defeat the devil. He can't have any power over a dead body. I don't mean that we physically kill our bodies, but we bring them into submission to Jesus Christ through prayer and fasting.

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We die to the cares of this world as we're filled with the Holy Ghost! The more the Holy Ghost has of us, the less hold this world has on us. That's why it's so important to be prayed up. We have to have a daily time of prayer with the Lord. We have to renew His spirit within us each and every day. If we don't, the flesh will rise up in rebellion and try to kill the spirit that dwells in us just like a terrorist. If we let it succeed we sin, sin causes death, death causes separation of our soul from our flesh, and sin in the soul causes separation of our soul from God.

The second thing I said we have to do to defeat terrorists is to ignore them, and live our lives for Jesus. If we ignore the devil long enough he'll leave us alone. The more attention we give him, the more he hangs around us.

Just like when we first got saved, our old friends tried to talk us into going out with them and partying. The more we said no, the less they came around us. The devil is the same way, if we tell him to get lost, or better yet if we rebuke him in Jesus name, and all of a sudden he doesn't want to hang around us anymore.

The more we live our lives for Jesus Christ, the less we want out of this world and the less this world wants with us. We're a light shining in darkness and the world hates us because they hate the light. Why do they hate the light so much? Because their deeds are evil! Let's live each day to be a shining beacon unto this old world so that they can see that there's a better way to live than the ways of the world.

4. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever

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.

King David in the 23rd Psalm said "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever". Too many people today are lackadaisical about their church attendance. They don't have the love for God and the church that they need to have in their lives!

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- They need to have an overwhelming love for God in their hearts.
- They need to have an overwhelming love for the *house* of God in their hearts!
- They need to have a love for the people of the house of our God in their hearts!
- They need to understand just how important it is for them to be faithful to the house of God!

People seem to think attending church is optional, and it isn't. Not by a long shot!

- Where else are we going to fellowship Godly people on a regular basis?
- Where else is the power of God going to fall in such a powerful way?
- Where else are we going to hear the man that God has set over us, teach and preach the word of God?
- Where else can we find a better place to repent and turn our lives over to God?
- Where else can we find comfort for our souls?
- Where else can we find like-minded people who will help us to pray through?
- Where else can you find the anointing that breaks the yoke of bondage that sin has placed upon your lives?
- Where else can we find a family that is closer to us than our own flesh and blood?
- Where else can we find pure and undefiled friendship with the people of God?
- Where else? Where else? Where else? Where else?
- Nowhere else, that's where!

If we don't love the house of God, then we don't love God. If we don't love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength then we aren't going to want to live with Him forever in Heaven.

John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

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I have to ask:

- Do we really want a mansion to live in?
- Do we really want that mansion to be in heaven?
- Do we really want Jesus as our next door neighbor?
- Do we really want to live forever?

I dare say that some of us don't because we can't find the time to come to church faithfully. If we aren't faithful to God, why should God be required to be faithful to us? If our spouses only came home every now and then, would we really want to keep them as our spouse? Well, those of you who are married will have to answer that question. But I think the answer would be no!

Coming to church faithfully is just as much a part of our relationship with God as our prayer life! If we don't have a personal, intimate, eternal relationship with God, we have absolutely nothing in this life or the next.

Now I certainly understand it if work is getting in the way, that's just life. It's something we have to deal with albeit we don't have to like it! But if we're missing just because we're being lazy, that's a different story altogether. I believe that God will hold us accountable, not only for what we hear in church, but for what we could have heard if we would have been faithful to show up to church.

Revelation 21:1-3 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

If we can't spend a few hours a week in this physical tabernacle we call The Tabernacle of Prayer. How are we going to live forever in Christ? Because Christ himself is the Tabernacle of *God* in whom the Church as his bride will dwell throughout eternity.

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If the Musicians will come at this time, I'm closing:

We've learned tonight that there are four things that a man, or woman, ought to do in their lifetime. In review they are:

1. ***I shall not want:*** Which means we need to be satisfied with what we have and spend more time with God than in the pursuit of things.
2. ***I walk through the valley of the shadow of death:*** Which means we need to take a good look around us at those who are less fortunate than we are and give thanks to God for what he's given us instead of complaining about what we don't have.
3. ***I will fear no evil:*** Which means that we don't have to fear the world or its circumstances. We also don't have to fear the devil or his minions.
4. ***I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever:*** Which means that we are to be faithful to be in the house of the lord every time the doors are open unless we have to work or we're very sick.

ALTAR CALL:

- If anyone is having problems doing any of the four things in this message tonight, then I would love for you to come down to this altar at this time so we can pray for you.
- There's no problem that's too big for God to solve, no extra baggage he can't deliver to the right address.
- Come on down and let us pray for you. That you would fulfill everything that God has planned for your life.
- Don't worry that people will think something's wrong with you. I'm more worried about those stay in their seats than those who come down to this altar.