

Jeffrey Donald Price

Memorial Service

Tonight, we are gathered here to memorialize the life of Jeffrey D. Price and to be instructed from the Word of God as a normal part of our Wednesday night meetings, and tonight neither of these tasks is very difficult given the circumstances God has providentially provided us. If you have your Bibles please turn to the words of King Solomon in:

Ecclesiastes 3:1–8

¹To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

²A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

³A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

⁴A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

⁵A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

⁷A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

⁸A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Jeffrey's death caught the church by surprise. Jeffrey was not terminally ill. He did not get hit by a car; he was not shot on a battlefield. Instead, his final days were routine in many regards. He was at church Sunday. He was with friends Sunday night. He enjoyed time with family on Monday night and went to bed in anticipation of a quiet celebration of his 60th birthday on Tuesday, but when he woke up the next morning, he was not well at all, and by Tuesday morning Jeffrey was for all practical purposes gone. In spite of all the medical developments and advancements of the last 100 years Jeffrey's time was appointed by the Lord.

And no one knows his or her day.

And once again we as a church family received a healthy reminder of the truth that is found in James 4:14.

James tells us: **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.**

We know that the older we each grow the more real the truth of that text is to each of us. Some of us have lived more years than we have left to live, and Jeff's surprising and unexpected death reminds us of just how important it is to redeem the days.

Psalm 90:12 tells us to ask God to **“teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.”**

Since I have so few days to live and since I do not know how many days are left, I must seek to diligently make the very best of that which God has given me in the form of both time and talents for the glory of God and the cause of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Only one life to live twill soon be past; only what’s done for Christ will last” must be our Christian creed.

What do we know about Jeffrey that can serve as an encouragement to each of us?

#1 Jeffrey had a healthy, reverential fear of the Lord.

At times Jeffrey expressed and lived in a fear of meeting his Maker. But today all fear is gone. While he was secure in his relationship with Christ, Jeffrey still knew that God was holy and God expected Jeffrey to be holy. His fear did not always keep him from sin, but it did keep him confessing sin and seeking God’s forgiveness.

This used to be called “keeping short accounts with God.” It is an old expression that seems to have gone out of use but it was a good old saying. The reality that none of us knows the day, nor the hour of our departure should drive us to stay close to God—short accounts involve frequent trips for confession of sin to the Lord and others.

The same wise man who reminded us that there is an appointed time of death for all felt that **it was better to go to a house of mourning than a feast** (Eccl 7:2). How’s that? Yes! King Solomon said that “it was better to go to a house of mourning than a house of feasting” and then he explained why. King Solomon said, the reality that all will eventually die needs to be something we think about throughout our entire lives. I need to attend memorial services and go to funerals. I need to be reminded that I am not going to live forever.

I need to be reminded that **“it is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment”** (Hebrews 9.27). This awesome truth concerning the brevity of life should drive me to live for Christ and not for me.

Paul tells me in Colossians 4:2 that I am to walk in wisdom toward those outside the body of Christ, **“redeeming the time.”** The ESV translates the same phrase as “make the best use of your time.”

Each day I am given only 24 hours and each day may be my last fully functioning day. I seldom ever think of that. Tonight, at Berean, we are all being reminded through Jeffrey that today could be our last fully functioning day. Each week, I am given only 7 days, and this year I have only 52 weeks. It is my responsibility to make the best use of my time and the truth that may seem ever so trite is also so very true.

Only one life to live twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last.

That's all I knew of this poem until my desire to give credit to whom credit is due motivated me to Google the poem in search of an author. And I found much more than I expected.

“Two little lines I heard one day,
Traveling along life's busy way;
Bringing conviction to my heart,
And from my mind would not depart;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one,
Soon will its fleeting hours be done;
Then, in 'that day' my Lord to meet,
And stand before His Judgment seat;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, the still small voice,
Gently pleads for a better choice
Bidding me selfish aims to leave,
And to God's holy will to cleave;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, a few brief years,
Each with its burdens, hopes, and fears;
Each with its clays I must fulfill,
living for self or in His will;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

When this bright world would tempt me sore,
When Satan would a victory score;
When self would seek to have its way,
Then help me Lord with joy to say;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Give me Father, a purpose deep,
In joy or sorrow Thy word to keep;
Faithful and true what e'er the strife,
Pleasing Thee in my daily life;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Oh let my love with fervor burn,
And from the world now let me turn;
Living for Thee, and Thee alone,
Bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne;
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.

Only one life, yes only one,
Now let me say, "Thy will be done";
And when at last I'll hear the call,
I know I'll say "twas worth it all";
Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last. "

Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.
And when I am dying, how happy I'll be,
If the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee."

By CT Studd

What do we know about Jeffrey that can serve as an encouragement to each of us?

2 We know that Jeffrey was a sinner saved by grace because of his faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jeffrey knew:

1. There is a God.
2. He was a sinner.
3. Christ died for him as a sinner in need of forgiveness.
4. The only acceptable response to this truth is faith in Christ and what Christ did for Jeffrey on the cross of Calvary.

And this is precisely why, though we sorrow, we do not sorrow like those who have no hope. Our hope is in the promise of eternal life to all who will believe that God sent his son to die on a bloody cross, so that all who believe may have their sins forgiven and be granted eternal life.

Do you believe?

Are you living as though today could be your last fully functioning day?

I don't suppose any of us do that as full as we should but today we have been given the gift of a reminder of the preciousness of this things we call life.