



A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

- 7054 Winnetka Ave., Winnetka, CA 91306
- Mail To: 7655 Winnetka Ave. #2711, Winnetka, CA 91396
- 818-795-5566 (minister's cell phone)
- W. Bruce Evans, Minister: e-mail to wbe@wolfenet.com

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WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ABOUT YOU?

Over the years it is safe to say that I have done well over one hundred funerals. In fact there was one week several years ago when I had to do five funerals. It is most humbling to be asked to deliver thoughts and observations about one at their passing; to blend in Scriptures and ideally to have those listening reflect on their own mortality while remembering fondly the one recently deceased. Which can at times be more challenging than others, especially when a family member decides to vent in public. At such times it is hard not to bring to mind the words of Solomon as seen in Ecclesiastes chapter seven. *"It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, because that is the end of every person, and the living takes it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter, for when a face is sad a heart may be happy."* (v.2 -3)

Noted author and columnist David Brooks wrote in his book "The Road to Character" that there are two kinds of virtues, those that stand out on a resume and the other are those you would want brought up at your funeral. At times these overlap and even seem to compete one against the other. Notice this quote from Brooks' book, "We live in a society that encourages us to think about how to have a great career but leaves many of us inarticulate about how to cultivate the inner life". Should you ever find yourself in doubt as to which set of virtues to cultivate perhaps a look at 2Peter 1:4-8 might help provide some clarity. *"Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge..."* (v.5)

Going back to what Solomon penned that it is *"better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting..."* and the reason is

that we learn what is truly most important in life. Resumes can be padded but the virtues of which both Solomon and Peter wrote are more than evident and need no false embellishment.



"For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2Peter 1:8)

Paul wrote to the brethren in Corinth encouraging them to *"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."* (1Corinthians 11:1) Can we say that we are following the direction set forth by Paul in our life? What will be said about you at your funeral? Dig deep inside, what would you like to have said about you? You are able to read this, there's still ample time to develop eulogy virtues.

In a concise way what would you like said about you? Ernest Hemingway, the noted author once won a bet in what is now referred to as the Hemingway Challenge wherein the individual has to write an impactful story using only six words. But that challenge has now given way to The Six Word Eulogy, which is a unique way to summarize one's life. An example would be "Never perfect, but always entirely me." Concise. I thought about what my six word eulogy would be and it is "Once lost, then found. Eternally thankful."

Not to be maudlin, but death is the destiny of each and every one of us. As a result we should embrace the courage that it takes to live in such a way so as to exemplify the things in life that matter most. What matters most is laid out by Solomon as he concludes his thoughts on life. *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."* (Ecclesiastes 12:13) (wbe)

THE BULWARK