

3-2-96

“For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away”. (James 4:14). A railroad crossing near our home has a red triangle sign with 3296 on it. Often it has caught my attention and for some time I have guessed at its significance. Recently a friend told me what happened. A man, his wife, and children were killed at that railroad crossing. They were on their way to “Sunday school”. A number of thoughts came to my mind. How could the parents and grandparents continue to live? The answer to that question is they had no choice. We have to continue to live and realize tragedies occur and we can do nothing after they happen.

We must have the attitude of Job. In one brief day he lost his livestock, his servants and most importantly his children. (Job 1:13-19). Job’s response can be read in Job 1:21. “Naked I came from my mother’s womb And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.” NKJV. If a loved one dies, we must carry on. At most funerals I try to encourage the family to live their lives so as to go to heaven. If their loved one is judged faithful by God and enters heaven then in order to see them again they must be faithful to God and go to heaven.

A second thought to mind is one day all of humanity will stand before God in the judgement. “For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” (Corinthians 5:10). I do not presume to know exactly how this will be occur but I know each deed committed will be remembered. Each sin recorded unless washed away by the blood of Christ, Acts 22:16. What if the dates of those sins were also recorded?

5-21-57 may represent the date of one’s birth or wedding. Let me introduce some dates that may have meaning to different people.

As one man stands before God, he may see the date **2-3-73**. This man died a drunkard. He lived the greater part of his life with only one goal, to get another drink of alcohol. At the time of his death, he was homeless and helpless. His clothes were old and dirty and matched his hair. Yes, a sign with the date **2-3-73** could be the testimony to the power of alcohol.

A woman who died a prostitute may notice the date **10-12-65**. This was the day when she was first introduced to drugs and pornography. She was not born a

prostitute and as a young child she had no idea that such a sin existed. Yet she learned that men would pay money for the use of her body. She also learned to wear revealing clothing to attract the attention of men. She may have died as the result of her lifestyle and sin.

Another man may have the date **12-31-81**. This was the day when the man committed adultery. He had been faithful to his wife but while at a New Years party he gave into temptation. Later, this man left his wife and married another woman. He lived the rest of his life in an unscriptural marriage.

One person may see the date **4-10-00**. This was the day when he/she decided to not worship God any longer. They had obeyed the gospel earlier in their life but grew lukewarm in their commitment to God. Other things just seemed more important. Rearing their children, going to work, recreation, or going hunting were all more important than going to "church". They had always planned to go back but it never happened. Now they are judged as unfaithful to God.

Lastly, one person may see the date **6-4-87**. This was the day he/she obeyed the gospel. They lived their life trying to do what God commanded. At times they stumbled and sinned against God. They would turn back to God and ask for forgiveness. God always forgives a humble heart and forgets the offense the dates it happens. Like many others they received the grace and mercy of God and now were being told to enter the narrow gate which leads to heaven. (Matthew 7:13-14).

The list of important dates for each one is almost endless. They do exist and God knows they all. HE understands the choices we made and the trials we endure. HE also knows the dates that go on our tombstone and the Day of Judgement. If we are really ready to die then we will look forward with hope on that Judgement Day. - -
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