

## Life is a Bridge!

### I. Announce:

A. **Slide#1** Jeremiah & Brittany: Machaca, Belize.

### II. Slide#2 Intro:

A. Are you afraid to die? Do you have a fear of death? Are you afraid of death/afterlife or afraid of dying/i.e. the way you'll die?

B. **Slide#3** Old Indian proverb says, "Life is a bridge. Cross over it, but build no house on it."

C. **Richard Baxter**<sup>(Puritan)</sup> speaking of his constant sickness said, "(it) made me study and preach things necessary, and a little stirred up my sluggish heart to speak to sinners with some compassion, as a dying man to dying men."

1. He also said, "Man always knows his life will shortly cease, Yet madly lives as if he knew it not."

2. The 3 crosses behind me will always remind us that, "The bad thief is crucified, the repentant thief is crucified, and the Son of God is crucified."

3. **Death** is one thing that faces all men, "*rich & poor, astronaut & prostitute, infant & teen, grandparents & parents, you & me*".

4. **Slide#4,5** Each one of us has been given "2 dates & 1 dash!" (1900-2001)

D. Man has done everything to soften the impact of death...especially by coming up with different theories to either dismiss it entirely or at least soften its blow!

E. **Slide#6a** The 3 most popular are:

1. **Reincarnation** – is a new birth into another body.

a) They believe we are **recycled eternally**. Reaching higher levels of happiness IF you've lived a good life, lower levels of misery IF you haven't.

2. **Slide#6b Soul Sleep** – *aka* Intermediate sleep. They have no conscious existence from the time of physical death until the day of resurrection. A hibernation if you will.

a) This leads to despair, or you develop the attitude of "*Eat, drink, & be merry, for tomorrow you die!*" [no, 2 Millennia of Siesta!]

3. **Slide#6b Purgatory** – (root=*purge*) Means "a place of spiritual purging."

a) Basically, death moves into a temporary state where others can pray to **free us** from punishment.

b) *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, defines it, "an intermediate place between heaven & hell, where the unfinished business of earth is settled."

c) This doctrine is built from **2 Maccabees 12:39-45** where it says, "thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be free from this sin."

- (1) There are definitely some contextual problems, & even my Catholic bible says in its foot notes & I quote, "His belief(Judas) was similar to, but not quite the same as, the Catholic doctrine of purgatory."
- (2) This is of course an **apocryphal book** ("hidden things") which we do not see as part of the Canon of scripture. [These books do not claim for themselves the same kind of authority as the OT writings; They was never part of the Hebrew bible; They are never quoted in the NT, nor by Jesus; They contain teachings inconsistent w/the rest of the bible]
- (3) This was excepted into the canon in 1548 – The Catholics actually prefer **Deutero-canonical** (deutero = 2nd-cannon)

- F. Let's answer 8 questions & we'll start by launching from 2 words in 4:18...temporary & eternal.
1. Remember, "Life is a bridge. Cross over it, but build no house on it."

### III. Slide#7 IF A MAN DIES WILL HE LIVE AGAIN? (1)

- A. That's what Job asked, *If a man dies, shall he live again?* Job 14:14a
  1. Then he answered himself, *All the days of my hard service I will wait, Till my change comes.* Job 14:14b
- B. The writer of Prov. 23:18 said, *For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off.*
- C. When it comes to theories about death you hear, "we think"; "we believe"; "we hope"; yet the bible says, *We Know!* See vs.1.
- D. Tents are fun to **camp in**...but they are not a **home!**
  1. A tent is only a *temporary place!* [Even Gods Tent/Tabernacle was Temporary, till Temple]
  2. We will one day set aside this **Earthly Tent** in exchange for **Heaven's Suit!**

### IV. Slide#8 IS IT NATURAL TO LONG FOR HEAVEN? (2)

- A. *For in this we groan* - we groan because we are *weary, rain-soaked campers* longing for home.
- B. *Do you get upset when the waitress takes away the 1st dish of a 7 course meal?*
  1. **No**, because you know they are going to replace it with something better.

### V. Slide#9,10 IS THERE SUCH THINGS AS GHOSTS? (3)

- A. No, there is no such things as **ghosts!** [or as Ray Parker Jr. Sang, *I ain't afraid of no ghosts*]
  1. Ghosts are defined in Webster's as, *The supposed disembodied spirit of a dead person.*
    - a) We will **not** be kicked out of this tent *to roam homeless!*
  2. (Lyrics) *If there's something strange - in your neighborhood - Who ya gonna call? - GHOSTBUSTERS.* **No, don't need to. No such thing as Ghosts. Demonic**

manifestations, yes. [Not going to call: Bill murray, Dan Aykroyd, nor Harold Ramis]

## VI. Slide#11 WHAT IS STRONGER THAN DEATH? (4)

A. **Life** not *death* swallows the believers up!

- 1 Cor.15:53,54 For this corruptible must put on **incorruption**, and this mortal must put on **immortality**. So when this corruptible has put on **incorruption**, and this mortal has put on **immortality**, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

## VII. Slide#12 HOW DO WE KNOW GOD WILL DO THIS? (5)

A. God has already placed a down payment on our eternal home.

1. And if the H.S. is just a **down payment** imagine what the **full payment** will be?
2. **Story:** A little girl was taking an evening walk with her father. Wonderingly, she looked up at the stars and exclaimed: "Oh, Daddy, if **the wrong side** of heaven is so beautiful, what must **the right side** be!"

## VIII. Slide#13 SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO? (6-8) [the Clash, English Punk Rock Band]

A. **Ever have a relationship from a distance?** (Kelly, at San Diego State/dating/Train)

1. Whether writing letters, calling them, emails, Facebook, sending each other digital pictures, or Skype...*still nothing compares with being with them in person!*
2. **Same with our relationship with our Lord!**

B. (7) Paul drops in a **Parentetical**.

1. This verse instructs us **how to live in the meantime**.
2. **Slide#14** Most **Hindus** have a desire to visit the city of **Banares** at least once in their lifetime. It's also called *Varanasi* (on the banks of the Ganges/1 of the oldest cities of the world). It's a holy city to them, with 1500 temples. The road encircling the city is 36 miles long. To walk all the way around the city with devotion is deemed a very holy thing!
  - a) **But we believe**, that **how you walk** is far more important than **where you walk**.

## IX. Slide#15 WHAT SHOULD BE A CHRISTIANS #1 AIM? (9)

A. **Our aim** – our goal, our ambition?...**to be well pleasing to Him!**

1. (LKGNT) "to devote one's self zealously to a cause."
2. Remember the old game *Trivial Pursuit*? May that not be used to define your life.
3. **What's your aim in this life?** (Some set their sites on riches. Yet "riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.")
4. **Is this your one passionate aim to please God wherever you're at?**

- a) Remember, we have dual citizenship!
  - b) Paul determines to **please God** in both bodies!
- B. **Pleasing** –used in Titus 2:9 of slaves who give satisfaction to their master.
1. **Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back.** Titus 2:9

## X. Slide#16 IS GOD A FRUIT INSPECTOR? (10)

- A. We must all not only **appear**, **but** have our **whole character** made manifest.
- B. Jesus will look beyond **Quantity** & inspect **Quality**!
  1. LAX Customs demands, “No bad/foreign fruit is welcome in our country”.
    - a) They have specific trashcans with signs on them to dump the fruit before inspection.
      - (1) You might do the same. **Go ahead & dump your bad fruit now!**
- C. He’ll look at our **deeds**, both good or bad
  1. 1 Cor.3:13-15 **each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it **endures**, he will receive a **reward**. If anyone's work is **burned**, he will **suffer loss**; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.**
- D. He’ll look at our **Motives**
  1. 1 Cor.4:4,5 **For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but **He who judges me is the Lord**. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.**
    - a) “We are **making** or **marring** a destiny, **winning** or **losing** a crown.”
- E. **Slide#17a 3 Things** in life are sure: [not death & taxes]
  1. **Birth** starts our life! (true both physically & spiritually)
    - a) “You’re not ready to live **until** you’re ready to die.”
      - (1) And you’re not ready to die **until** you’ve been Born Again.
    - b) You couldn’t do anything to prepare for your **birth**, **but** you have everything to do w/preparing to **die**!
    - c) **Are you prepared?**
  2. **Slide#17b Death** ends our earthly life!
    - a) **Are you ready to die? Ready to meet your Maker?**
    - b) **Have you made your reservations?** No one can book the flight for you!

c) **Illustration:** E-Tickets! - No paper tickets necessary now. No lines. Just a **confirmation #** is needed.

3. **Slide#17c Opportunity** is limited to our life here!

a) Purgatory, Reincarnation, & just *Ceasing to Exist* are **not** biblical options.

b) There are no 2nd chances in the hereafter. Remember, **it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.**

c) The impact we make **here** ripples through the **hereafter**.

(1) **This is the testing ground for eternity!** William Barclay

F. **So what is death like...does it hurt?**

1. Read quote from Catherine Marshall, "A Man Called Peter".

G. **A Christian is of 2 worlds:**

1. We are not to despise this world; **but instead** find it **shining** from the reflection which is to come.

H. **Slide#18,19** "Life is a bridge. Cross over it, but build no house on it."

To the unbeliever heaven is...Unbridgeable!