



FEARS, TEARS & JEERS:

Staying positive
in a negative world, Lesson #2

GOOD MORNING!

- Thank you for choosing to join us today.
- I'm hoping, praying, and trusting the Lord will help you to stay positive!
- Let's open in prayer.

**What's THE most important thing
you need to be positive?**

- We covered this topic last week...

SALVATION!

We are eternally secure in Christ.

In this series...

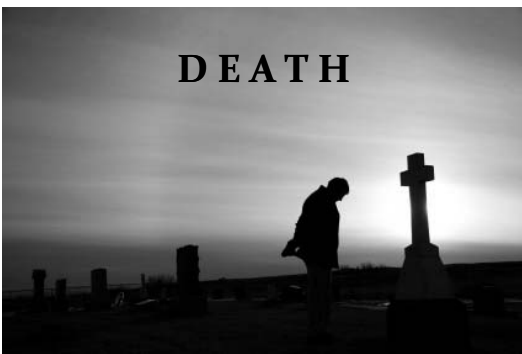
- We'll examine common fears
- Common tears (pains, sorrows)
- Common jeers (mockeries, criticisms)
- And explore how to soar above them!



In terms of human fears...



DEATH





• All other fears pale in comparison with the “Grim Reaper.” Deep inside, death is what we dread the most.

I'd like to dedicate this lesson

To my mom, Jeanne Crandall,
who died 16 years ago tomorrow.

DEATH =



- Cessation of life
- Termination
- Extinction

Life is 100% terminal.



Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 says...

- *“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die...”*

**Remember the song,
“The Circle of Life” in Lion King?**

- It reminds me of Genesis 5:
*And ____ lived...and begat ____...and all the days that ____ lived were ____ years...and he died.
Generation after generation.*

Western culture avoids death



<p>We try to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deny it... • Ignore it... • Stop it... • Sanitize it... • Prevent it... • Defy it... 	<p>We think it's...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repulsive... • Ugly... • Obnoxious... • Gruesome... • Detestable... • Uncomfortable...
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The stark reality is that we all have an appointment to keep.

- *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement.” --Heb 9:27*
- **Martin Luther only kept two days in mind... TODAY & “THAT DAY.”**



Are you a rower or a canoeist?

**Therefore we
mustn't be in denial.**

- ***"It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart..."***



- ***"Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better..."***

- ***"Sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better and gains gladness..."** (Amplified Bible)*



- ***"The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning: but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth."
--Ecclesiastes 7:2-4***

Think back to wakes and funerals

- My first was Uncle Ernie on Long Island, NY. I was about 12. Over the past 41 years, I've been to quite a few. So have you.
- Wakes and funerals are "reality checks," buoys in the ocean of life reminding us of our destination.



In our family...

Over the past 2-1/2 years,
8 family members have died.

- Dawn's father, 89
- Dawn's mother, 90
- Kelly's father, 65
- Kelly's mother, 60
- Dawn's uncle, 90
- Dawn's aunt, 90
- Dawn's cousin, 40s
- Dawn's cousin, 50s

Death truly is unpleasant.

- Some die young, some die old.
- Some die by accident.
- Some die through violence.
- Some die through terrorism.
- Some die through injury and disease.
- If you're fortunate, you'll die in your sleep.

If death is mankind's biggest fear...

- How can you stay positive when it is 100% certain that you will cease to live, that you will be terminated, that you will become extinct?



**As Christians,
we need not fear death!**

- In the process of dying, we are sealed and comforted by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption.
- In the act of dying, Psalm 23 says we are ushered into death by our great Shepherd.

- *“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake...”*

• ***“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...”***

• ***“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over. 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.”***

**Death does not mean
termination or extinction!
It means...**

Change!

- *“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.*
- *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

- *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*
- *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written...”*

- *“Death is swallowed up in victory.*
- *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*
- *The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law...”*

• *“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*


• *As Derek Prince writes, whenever you see “therefore” in Scripture, look for the reason it’s there for.*

• *“**Therefore**, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:51-58*

Since you’re free from the sting of death...

- You’re free to live a fearless life!
- With your victory over death already assured by Christ...

What now counts is your dash.



Drew M. Crandall
1955 -

Life is fragile and short!

- *“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.”* James 4:14

- *“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”* 2 Peter 1:10-11



Remember the Parable of the soils

- You're given resources—time, talent, tongue and treasure. *What will you do with them?*
- This Scripture impacted me profoundly, shortly after I was saved in June of 1985. I made a tangible, clear “pledge” to the Lord to be fertile soil for the Word, and He has honored that personal commitment.

We all have spheres of influence.

- Circles or networks of people whom we affect and upon whom we have an effect.
- The influence we exert can be negative, neutral, or positive.
- The ripple effect of our influence can far outlast us, for generations.



Let's fast forward to your death.



- Powerful illustrations of the harvest of your life are your obituary, wake and funeral. What will they look like?
- What will people feel, think, and do?
- What can you do to maximize the positive influence you exert between now and your death?

- Do you have a will?
- Have you planned your memorial service?
- Do you know where you'll be buried?
- What will the marker say?
- Do you have "life" insurance or other preparations for loved ones?
- How will you communicate & pass the blessing?
- What kind of influence do you think the Lord would want you to have in the lives of others from today forward?



The wise approach:

- *“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be trodden out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”* (your sphere of influence).





- *“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.”* (your sphere of influence).



- *“Let your light so shine before men (your sphere of influence), that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.”* Matthew 5:13-16

