

FUNERAL SERMON OUTLINE

by

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The system I have used is a series of small folded sheets of paper, each containing the notes associated with the scripture in which each note is found. The notes I have used are on pieces of paper, four of which can be made from one standard 8.5 x 11 sheet by folding and creasing it in half, and then tearing off, and then folding in half and creasing and tearing off each half. Then the quarter-size sheet is in turn folded in thirds. Usually I wrote my outlines in pen and ink, and in so doing I used my own system of abbreviating, and even leaving out words such as articles etc.

So that in future use I will know where it begins, I start the first note with the name of deceased and date of funeral. Then, underscored, I write "START". Usually there were at least two of these note-pieces required at the start before turning to the next scripture. In the case I have chosen as an illustration, all three of these slips would be inserted in between the pages where Isaiah 57:1 is found. These notes end with the notation of Job 14:14. The next note has at the top "Job 14:14" and is inserted in between the pages in the Bible where Job 14:14 is found. You will find you can turn instantly to this scripture with this note inserted. The three thicknesses of paper in each of these note is sufficient to cause the Bible to open at that place, but not thick enough to become apparent to the audience. They never see the notes.

Now, when you turn to Job 14:14, *first* read the first sentence of this verse, then the note gives you what you have decided to say in comment on it, and at the bottom of the little page (or reverse side if your notes require both sides) you have plainly written and underscored the next text. Then you have your next note with that text (John 5:28-29 in this case) underscored at the top, inserted between the pages where this text is found. You turn to it, first read that text, then the comment on the note, and so on from text to text.

Following is a sample outline I have used. At the beginning is where I desire to use [Isaiah 57:1](#). I do not use it, but shorten it by going directly to Job 14:14, as I will outline below.

FIRST NOTE: At top, name of deceased and date of funeral. (This also preserves a record of funerals and which sermon outline was used.) Then the word, large and underscored, “**START**”. Then write on the note as follows:

We are sobered this (afternoon/morning) in the presence of death. – Surely life and death are the most important of all questions – and the ones to which we devote the *least* study and thought. – And so it is fitting that we pause from our restless every-day hurry, and consider the solemn significance, to each of us personally, of the most *certain* thing in every life – *death*.

The popular teaching today represents death as our *best friend* – by virtually denying it altogether through the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which teaches that the dead are *not* dead, but living. – Of course, this teaching continues in a futile effort to comfort the bereaved – yet it has never, in fact, softened grief. – It is only the truth that can make us free from grief and give real comfort – and truth is revealed from God – God reveals death as an enemy – the last enemy to be destroyed through Christ in God’s great plan. – Yet it is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this* – the *resurrection*. It is through the resurrection that God will destroy death. – The real truth is comforting. – Many do not realise.

Isaiah 57:1

(Next note, with this same passage underscored at top): We are in, now, a time of world trouble – the prophesied crisis at the close of this age – a time of world war and fear of war, famine, and disease epidemics – and this, according to prophecy, is the beginning of sorrows – of far more terrible trouble in the world. The *end* of the present civilization is near. So God mercifully takes away some from the evils we may have to live through. – We cannot bring the dead back to us in this unhappy world, but we can be with them in the kingdom of God which is to come. – And so, it is not for the dead, but for you *still living*, that we are concerned this (afternoon/morning). – Job asked the question,

Job 14:14 (first sentence)

(Next note, with this text underscored at top): There are many *ideas*, many teachings, about this question. – And most people have blindly accepted and assumed whatever they have been taught. (Following omitted from most funerals, but used if atheists or sceptics are known to be present):

There are two general schools of thought: 1) atheists, who believe “death ends all” – no life, no hope after death, and 2) the various religions who accept the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul – with their various theories as to how and where the soul continues on after death.

But *truth* on such a subject must be *revealed*. There is no other possible source of knowledge. Unless there is the Divine Almighty Creator who brought it all into being, who guides and controls all natural and spiritual laws, and who has revealed this knowledge, then we must, if rational, plead *ignorance*. This question has never been answered by science. It cannot be learned through test tubes, microscopes or telescopes. Neither the atheist nor the pagan conceptions have any *basis* – neither is, nor can be, *proved*. We are left with two alternatives: Accept what God *reveals* in the Holy Bible, or else profess and admit total ignorance. If we reject God’s revelation and we cannot prove it false, we cannot sit in condemnation of those who accept it, for we automatically confess total ignorance. The only possible source of knowledge, then is, God’s revelation in the Holy Bible. (ALL this may be omitted to here.) (This is what I used at funeral of Mr. Christensen, all but two of whose family were atheists who came to ridicule and pick to pieces what I was to say. The above left them speechless. They had nothing to say, after the funeral.)

But God *reveals* the *truth* on this most important of all questions: Job answers his question:

Job 14:14, 15

.....and JESUS said,

John 5:28-29

So, the Scriptures reveal the truth of the resurrection of *all* who die.

When man was first created, God revealed knowledge of His spiritual law which He set in motion to regulate human relationships, and to produce happiness, peace of mind, the abundant, joyful life, and life eternal. This law is merely the basic principle of *love* – love to God and love to fellowman. – What *is* sin? Few today seem to know. – Sin is the transgressing of this inexorable eternal spiritual law, according to

I John 3:4. All have sinned – The penalty for sin is *death*.....*Not* eternal life in some place of torture, but D-E-A-T-H. Death is the last enemy to be destroyed in God’s plan. And so, as we read in I Corinthians 15:22, as

in Adam all die, so in Christ shall *all* be made alive..... The present life is not *really* life – not eternal or immortal life – *not* life *inherent* – it is a mere fleshly existence, which is temporary and mortal, and is so revealed throughout the Bible. God reveals that man is flesh – made from the dust, - *of* the earth – earthy.

Genesis 2:7

Then, verses 15-17.....God here revealed to the first man that the wages of sin is death. Sin is the transgression of God's law – of God's government. Sin is going the way that seems right to human minds. Twice the scriptures emphasize "There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death". Adam and Eve did what seemed right..... *Genesis 3:6* and what was the *result*?

Genesis 3:22-24

....and Jesus revealed this truth that man is only mortal *flesh*.

John 3:6, 3, 5

...man, now, is flesh. "Dust thou art", said God. There is no eternal life inherent in himself.

I John 3:15

....*nowhere* does the Bible teach the immortality of the soul. There are no such words – no such language or expression in the Bible. (Use following if desired, and if there is time, but usually omit:

The word "immortal" occurs only once – and there refers to God. The word "immortality" occurs five times: 1)Christ, only has it 2)He brought it to light through the gospel: 3)we are told to seek for it, 4)and we put it on at the resurrection.

The Bible plainly says the *soul* can *die*; twice it says "the soul that sinneth, it shall die"...So man is helpless – mortal – unable to give himself eternal life – doomed to death – *eternal* death – *eternal* punishment – through sin; for *all* have sinned – and the wages, or punishment, is death – but the *gift* of God is eternal *life*, and this we receive through Jesus Christ our Lord. We do not possess it - it is a gift from God, by His grace. – Man was made mortal, of material elements from the ground – but he was made in the image of God – of the same

form and shape, but not of the same substance or composition or nature. In John 4:24 we read that GOD is spirit. And so,

John 5:26

...and through Him – the Son – we may receive the gift of life eternal.

I John 5:11-12

...Now, how may we gain this precious gift? – We are sinners from birth. Sin is the way of life that has led to all unhappiness, misery, pain, suffering and death. Jesus did not come that we might have eternal life *only*. He came that we might have life *more abundantly*. Living forever in suffering and unhappiness would not be desirable. Eternal life is desirable only in peace, happiness, and joyful abundant life. So the first condition to having the gift of eternal life imparted to us is *repentance*.

We must repent of the way that leads to unhappiness and empty, miserable lives. We must turn to the way of the happy, peaceful, abundant, joyful life – and that is the way of God's law. Second, we must *believe* – on Christ as personal Saviour, we must believe His gospel, the good news of the Kingdom of God – the government – the family of God, which we may enter by being born again. Upon these two conditions, God has promised the Holy Spirit, which is the impregnation of eternal life – the imparting within us of God's nature, His life.

I Corinthians 15:50-54

...and (a word or two in comment)

I Thessalonians 4:13-18

..(word or two comment if desired, and if there is time)

John 14:1-3

...”Come again”. Time of the resurrection. When He *comes*, He is *here!*. Notice the place prepared:

Matthew 25:31,34

God's object is to have us begotten, and then born into His very divine family, as separate individual entities, possessing, each of us separately in himself, holy, divine, righteous, perfect character. To this end, it was necessary that we be given free moral agency – that we ourselves *decide*

the way we shall go. God has made it possible. He *adds* what we lack. He *imparts* His nature, His character, His righteousness, His perfection, *if* we come to want it – to turn from the other way, to recognize the true values, and voluntarily embrace them. What a wonderful purpose God is working out here below! – Let us take one final glimpse into the glorious Kingdom of God – the place prepared:

Revelation 21:1-4

...My friends, *all* have sinned – *all* have come under the death penalty. – But God has a plan of salvation, and imparting divine grace and eternal life that we may be born of Him – as His children, members of His divine almighty family! Soon, now, Jesus is coming to perfect and to complete that divine purpose – to complete the *spiritual* creation, as He completed the physical creation 6,000 years ago! He is now selecting a tried and tested people to reign with Him in the glorious work of His Kingdom. Few understand this, today. But we *shall* understand! Soon Jesus shall return, and we shall be reunited with our loved ones. – Therefore, let us not grieve, but be comforted; and rejoice in the divine wisdom of God's plan.

Let us pray;(Then a brief closing prayer, asking God to comfort the bereaved among other things.)