

A Funeral for an Alcoholic

This past Saturday I had the opportunity to do a funeral service for a family that had no church connections. The man who died was only forty-six years old, and the cause of his death was related to his persistent alcohol abuse. The man was in his forties, yet in the casket he looked like a man in his sixties or seventies. A hard life of sin can sure age a person.

The music at the funeral was anything but traditional or spiritual. Four songs were played—one by Aerosmith, one by Leonard Skinnard, one by Elton John, and one by Pink Floyd. These are not your typical Southern Gospel singers or hymn writers. In case you don't recognize these bands, these are rock singers. Inwardly, I ached as one of the songs kept repeating the refrain, "Lord, I can't change." The songwriter was saying that he could not change his lifestyle. This was true of the man who died. He abused alcohol to the very end.

I had a funeral message prepared, but in light of the unique situation I improvised quite a bit. I ended up sharing my personal testimony during the funeral. I told them how I too was addicted to alcohol and drugs at one time and how miserable an experience that was. Yet, I also told them how Jesus Christ set me free from my addiction and made me a new person. It was a great opportunity to share with the family and friends, many of whom were unsaved, that Jesus can save them from their sin.

This funeral experience reminded me that there are so many people out there who are hurting, lost, and bound in their sinful habits. I have compassion on such people. I have no stones to throw at them, but I do have a message to share with them. That message is a message of hope and redemption. It is a message that God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. Do you need Jesus to set you free today? He loves you more than you will ever know. Even in your sin he still loves you, but he wants to help you get free. Why not ask Jesus to come into your life right now and forgive you of all your sin? Acts 2.21 says, "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

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