

Fewer People Considering Eternity

by Wayne Goff

I read this past week that fewer people are now considering the possibility of their eternal destiny of heaven or hell.

Perhaps that is true in this time and age, but I've noticed all of my preaching life that people are pretty good at putting off "*undesirable thoughts*." And it certainly is not enjoyable considering one's eternal fate! It fits right in there with major surgery, root canals, and buying life insurance. We may need these things, but it's so much easier to put off dealing with them until absolutely necessary.

Biblical Examples

Let's take **Felix** for an example. He was privileged to hear the great apostle Paul preach the Gospel to him! Paul's selection dealt with the issues of *righteousness, self-control, and the judgment*. While those subjects are very important, they're not a happy choice for a corrupt politician like Felix! So he replied to Paul: "...Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you" (Acts 24:25). So you see, people have been trying to avoid eternal issues for a long time!

Then there is that wonderful Old Testament example of **King Saul**. He had been privileged to become the first *earthly* king of Israel. He was tall, handsome, and had the look of royalty. The people loved him, and he became the epitome of what kings should become. Furthermore, he had the grand privilege of having the prophet Samuel as his spiritual and political advisor for most of his life.

Sadly, Saul took it all for granted, and after *repeatedly* sinning against God, Saul lost his fellowship with God and with God's prophet, Samuel (1 Sam. 15). It grieved Samuel so much that he cried for Saul. Eventually Samuel died, and King Saul was left totally alone. God would not speak to him any longer.

Desperate, King Saul went looking for a *medium (witch)* and found one at a place called Endor (1 Sam. 28:5-8). He asked for the medium to call up Samuel from the grave. On this occasion, God allowed Samuel to come forth from the grave in order to give Saul one last message:

"So why do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? And the LORD has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines" (1 Sam. 28:16-19).

All those many, many times when Saul could have gladly heard the Word of the Lord from Samuel and obeyed implicitly! But he wasted every opportunity until it was too late! The very next day, Saul lost his life. He waited until it was too late to consider his eternal destiny.

Consider also those wise men assembled in Athens, Greece on Mars' Hill to hear an apostle of Jesus Christ speak (Acts 17). By inspiration Paul spoke to them of "**THE UNKNOWN GOD**" whom they were *ignorantly* worshiping. They were told that God now commands all men everywhere to **repent**! But "... when they heard of the **resurrection of the dead**, some mocked, while others said, 'We will hear you again on this matter.' So Paul departed from among them" (Acts 17:32-33). It seems that this audience was not ready for something as serious as life after death. So you see, our generation is not the first to put off considering their eternal destiny.

How About You?

Dear reader, the real question is "**What are you going to do about it?**" Preparing to meet God in eternity is a difficult, serious matter. But the wise among us will realize the brevity of life, the solemnity of the matter, and the importance of making preparations for eternity as soon as possible. **Let us help you prepare!**