

Funerals

1. Historical development : Three stages

1) Hope stage: Early Christian church

A. New Testament
: No Christian burial cited.

B. Roman burial custom
: Followed it.

C. Celebration of Hope

were considered as victors.
a. Christians who followed the Lord and died

a) Death = Heavenly birthday

b. Funeral procession
: Triumphant procession to the graveyard.

c. Service at the grave

a) Prayer
b) Celebration of Eucharist

2) Fear stage: Medieval time

A. Teaching

a. Stress on the hell, suffering at the purgatory.

B. Funerals

a. Used to scare the people and straighten out a living.
b. Burial = Awe

3) Denial stage: Modern Christianity

A. Part of culture

a. God-centered ---> Me-centered.

a) We don't like to deal death.

Avoid any thought about death and avoid to use to word "death".

B. The church do not talk about death either.

2. Rituals for the passage in the life

1) Crossing boundary and giving a meaning and equilibrium for the transition.

2) Three phases

A. Separation

: Face the reality: Viewing, burial

B. Transition

a. Funeral service helps us to pass the transition in grief.

b. Time of education

C. Reincorporation

: Into normal church life and everyday life.

3) Three things to do in the Funeral Service

A. To command to see to God to His care

: Remind ourselves for death and resurrection.

B. Console the bereaved

a. Family, neighbors, members....

b. Grieving process as legitimate one

express it.

a) Recognize the feeling and give a chance to

b) Sometimes give permission to grieve.

c. Should not be afraid to mention about death.

a) Christ is present even in death.

b) Hope of the gospel shines

: Resurrection

- c) Acting out faith
: Trustworthiness of God even in funeral.
- d) Sermon

and hope of life in Christ we have.

Christianity.

1. Discuss about death and finiteness of man
2. Teach them the meaning of death in

C. Challenge unbelievers in there.

3. Practical Considerations

- 1) A Christian funeral should be in the church.
- 2) Train your people to call you early that you may make funeral arrangement in advance.
- 3) Approach as a worship service and focus on God as well as on the deceased.
- 4) Sometimes avoid using eulogy.
: Rather try to find a suitable Bible which can represent that person's life and weave into the sermon.
- 5) Address reality of
Death, grief and deep feeling, God and hope in Jesus Christ.
- 6) As much as possible, discourage funeral flowers.
: Idea - make it a mission fund.
- 7) Prepare people through your teaching and preaching ministry.
- 8) As much as possible, avoid displaying the body during the funeral service.
- 9) Encourage them to have service at burial site.