Feb. 22, 2015 a.m.

What Causes Spiritual Death?

**THE SIMPLE ANSWER IS … SIN.**

* It separates us from God and will do so eternally (second death, **Rev. 20:14**) if we don’t seek his forgiveness and live a life of transformation (change/repentance).
* What about a closer examination? An autopsy (to see with our own eyes)? Be a coroner.
* What causes some to become unfaithful? To die spiritually?
* Sometimes the cause is readily apparent.
* Other times, it may surprise us. May not know until after death occurs.

**Some are dead while they are (or appear to be) alive.** {Spiritual zombies?}

* *“But she who lives in pleasure (indulgence) is dead while she lives.”* **(1 Tim. 5:6)**
* She was living in the flesh but dead spiritually. (see**. vv. 11-15**)
* The church at Sardis had a name that they were alive but were dead. **(Rev. 3:1)**

**What do we do when we think we see someone dying?**

* What can be sadder than watching someone die spiritually?
* Warn, admonish, exhort, reprove, rebuke, instruct.

**WHAT WE MIGHT FIND DURING AN AUTOPSY:**

* **Hidden idols in the heart. (Ezekiel 14:1-7) They were still going to the temple.**
* What our real devotion is can be found in what we talk about and how we spend our time and money.
* Love the world like Demas. **(2 Timothy 4:10)**
* Let’s stop accumulating more stuff; sell some things to give to those in need.
* Hardship and sacrifice are things to be avoided.
* Lose interest in bible study, prayer, worship. Our interests change.
* **Hanging on to the *“old man”* or at least some part of him. (Col. 3:5-9)**
* Sin is pleasurable for a moment. **(Heb. 11:25)** Why else would we want to do it?
* If we think only of sexual lust, pride is pleasurable too. (talk about me)
* And *“envy is rottenness to the bones.”* **(Pr. 14:30)**
* Some die a slow spiritual death.
* Sometimes, we may not see it until it’s too late.
* **Bitterness and worldly sorrow/regret.** **(Hebrews 12:15-17)**
* Do we live in the past, the “what if’s” instead of pressing forward? **(Phil. 3:13)**
* “What if I hadn’t persecuted Christians, even agreeing to Stephen’s death.”
* “Think of the good I could have done if I had obeyed Jesus earlier in life.”
* “I wish I hadn’t drank, used drugs, committed sexual immorality, lied so much.”
* “I wish I had said this (or hadn’t said that), tried to talk to them about Jesus, etc.”
* All regret should not be avoided but we cannot live in the past. It will kill us.
* And it will kill the folks around us who need our kindness and joy.
* **The cancer of false teaching. (2 Timothy 2:17-18)**
* “How did they end up going to church over there?”
* Opening up the heart my find a mind filled with the writings of progressive thinkers more than the thoughts of the apostles who wrote for Jesus.
* “It’s all about grace.” (one person to Gary Henry after a lesson on obeying like Noah)
* What’s subtle usually becomes obvious. (statements conflict plain bible truths)
* “God continues to speak to me through the Spirit, my feelings.” (subjectivism)
* There is no pattern, no examples to be followed in the work of local churches.
* Being aware of (warning about) the traditions of men.
* Not the pleasant part of being a disciple but to be like Jesus, we must do as He did.

**When we obey the gospel in baptism, we die to sin, to self, to the world.**

**(Galatians 2:20; 6:14; Romans 6:2, 6, 7)**

* We need to die (the flesh) to be spiritually alive.
* We put to death the old man and put on the new.