

Why We Do Not Cremate

by Timothy Tow

The sermon discusses the Christian perspective on cremation, emphasizing the importance of burial and the hope of resurrection through Jesus Christ.

Duration: 25:09

Scripture: John 11:25

Topics: "Cremation"

Description

In this sermon, the pastor focuses on the topic of cremation and why Christians do not practice it. The sermon is prompted by a request from a church member named Bethlehem. The pastor references the story of Lazarus being raised from the dead by Jesus to emphasize the belief in resurrection and the hope of everlasting life. He also highlights the importance of Jesus' resurrection in the Christian faith and how it is the basis for salvation. The sermon concludes with a mention of the garden tomb in the Holy Land as a symbol of the empty tomb and the belief in Jesus' resurrection.

Transcript

For our scripture reading, let us turn to John chapter 11, verse 17 to 27. Then, when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in a grave four days already. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem about fifteen furlongs off.

And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary still sat in the house.

Then said Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wouldst ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus said unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

Believers, thou this. She said unto him, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which shalt come into the world. Let us pray.

Eternal Heavenly Father, how we thank Thee this morning, the best of the week. Because this is a day that now has risen from the dead. Every Lord's Day commemorates Your rising from the grave.

So give us the newness of life. Take away all our sins. Help us to come with a clean heart as we enter Thy house.

As You have told us that we should pray for those that are outside Jesus Christ. To pray for all men. And once again, we realize there are so many non-Christians in our country.

Help us that we may go out to tell them that it is our duty each time we have an opportunity to bring some soul to Christ. And we are also to pray for kings and governors. Once again, we commit to Thee the onerous burden of our Prime Minister.

In these days of terrorism and many, many troubles. All the more we uphold Him and we pray that He may guide the country in a righteous way. We even pray for His salvation.

That He should come to find Jesus Christ who is the Son of God. Who is the Savior of the world. And we pray to Him that this gospel may go out without hindrance from our government.

Freely. Because now there is one to hasten the gospel. In Matthew 24, verse 14.

That it may be a witness unto all nations. And then shall the end come. Now Lord, as we look into Thy Word, we pray Thee to help us to speak the Word of Truth.

We ask all this in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. The title of my message this week is Why We Do Not Cremate.

And as it has been introduced to you by Elder Mahadevan. We are going to thank God for a sister. I guess she has got all the copies from our book room.

Cremation Is It Christian? I hope every family will have a copy. And you will thrill to the knowledge that you obtain from a good Christian booklet. Why Do We Not Cremate? This is the title of my message this week.

And it has come as a result of a request from Betty Tay. A very strong member of our church. Upon the home going of his father.

Who has lived up to 101 years. So, there are many members in this family. And most of them request cremation.

But we do not cremate. And we will tell you the reason why as we go along. So all I did was I officiated a vigil service last Friday night.

Cremation is a practice of heathen religions. Such as Buddhism and Hinduism. And even of the Communists.

I remember reading in the papers about Teng Xiaoping. He was cremated. And his ashes were thrown onto the waters.

I believe outside Hong Kong or Guangzhou. Because they don't have any Pope beyond this life. But it is now being asked by Christians.

As becoming a custom. And they think merely that it is for convenience. But this is going astray from the Bible practice.

There is no practice of cremation in the Bible. Only burial is mentioned in the Bible. Such as we read just now in a scripture text.

About the case of Lazarus having died for four days. And he was still in the grave. When you bury a Christian brother.

The pastor was saying. I commit you, your body to the ground. Earth to earth.

Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust. Ensure and certain hope of the resurrection to everlasting life.

As a pastor it is my duty to bury the dead. And I have only one sermon to preach. Always the same sermon.

Because it is the same thing, isn't it? And I use the words of Jesus the mother. I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me.

Though he were dead. Yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me.

Shall never die. Believers thou is. Mother said to Jesus.

Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ. The Son of God. Which should come into this world.

From what we read of Mother saying. We are assured Mother believed with all her heart. These words of Jesus I repeat.

Loudly. To those who follow the coffin to the grave site. To confirm them that they would believe.

I also say this to direct the words to the undertakers and the grave diggers. And usually the grave diggers are Malays. I observe that they submit to the word.

They who dig the graves will surely not join those who cremate. Because they believe in the resurrection. If there are Malay Christians.

Yes, well we thank God. We have a Malay Christian in Life Church. In the Indonesian service.

But I believe it is among the grave diggers that they hear the pastor say all the time. And they also in their heart they yearn for the resurrection. They will be saved.

Paul has written the whole chapter 1 Corinthians 1-58. On the resurrection. But it is interesting Paul quotes.

If the dead rise not let us drink. Eat and drink. For tomorrow we die.

This is the reasoning of non-Christians that Paul refers to. Well let us see how it is so. Once I engaged a Jewish teacher of modern Hebrew.

To teach a large class of students of Far Eastern Bible College. Because I paid her very well. When she was returning to Israel.

With her husband. Who also came to work in Singapore. And they came to say goodbye.

Because I had a deep desire in my heart. To bring her to Christ. I presented her a Jesus Saves clock.

And preached to her. But she was of a happy-go-lucky spirit. And she just laughed it off.

She rather talk of enjoying life. And when they died. That would be the end.

This is the same answer. That every non-Christian friend would say. Whether they would be buried or cremated.

Why should they care? Because they have hope only for this life up to that point of death. Coming back to 1 Corinthians 15.1-58. We now enter the realm of mystery. In the same chapter.

We shall not all die. But we shall be changed. Do we know that when Jesus Christ comes.

We will not die. We will be changed. In this.

We surely have hope. In these very last days. When we should remember Jesus Christ is coming.

The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. But we shall be changed. But the most important factor concerning the raising of the dead.

Is the raising of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul says in Romans 10-9. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus.

Confess what? That he died to pay for the penalty of our sins. And then we believe in our heart. That God has raised him from the dead.

Thou shalt be saved. Christians often think. We must do good.

And do good enough to be saved. Of course we must do good. That is part of our duty.

But we are saved. Based squarely on the rising of Jesus Christ from the dead. I preached this message at one of the Easter sunrise services.

I think it was two years ago. And how happy were the members. Who went to the sunrise service.

Because the reason is totally on Christ. Whether he rose from the dead. If he did not rise from the dead.

We are still in our sins. So that is the main point. Whenever we visit the Holy Land.

One site that we never miss is the garden tomb. The empty tomb. And all of us who went there believe we are saved.

We believe the Lord is not here. It is an empty tomb. You go to Shantung you can see the tomb of Confucius.

And of all the sages of old. But Jesus is an empty tomb. Why would you not cremate him? Is that we believe that he is risen.

And we are to rise with him too. Cremation leads us to a hopeless end. Cremation leads us to a hopeless end.

Better leads us to an endless hope. I pray that you will get hold of this booklet. Which is much richer than my short sermon.

Many many good reasons are given. Cremation leads us to a hopeless end. Better leads us to an endless hope.

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