

# Finishing Well

We all have a life that is measured in years, days, hours.....

*But even the hairs of your head are all numbered.* Matthew 10:30

We do not know when we will be called home.....

*But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.* Matthew 24:23

We are reminded to be ready.....

*Therefore you also must be ready for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect*  
Matthew 24:44

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We are people who have hope .....John 3:16

This is a time of preparation.....

- Spiritual Examination
- Health Examination
- Legal Affairs
- Funeral Plans
- Comfort and Faithfulness

# Beware of Anticipatory Grief.....

- **Anticipatory grief** is the “beginning of the end” in our minds. We now operate in two worlds; the safe world that we are used to and the unsafe world where a loved one might die. We feel that sadness and the unconscious need to prepare our psyche.
- Anticipatory grief is generally more silent than grief after a loss. We are often not as verbal. It’s a grief we keep to ourselves. We want little active intervention. There is little or no need for words, it is much more of a feeling that can be comforted by the touch of a hand or a silently sitting together. Most of the time in grief we are focused on the loss in the past, but in anticipatory grief we occupy ourselves with the loss ahead.
- When a loved one has to undergo preparatory grief in order to prepare for the final separation from this world, we have to go through it too. We may not realize it at the time. It may be a strange feeling in the pit of the stomach or an ache in the heart before the loved one dies. We think of the five stages of death occurring for the dying person, but many times loved ones go through them ahead of the death also. This is especially true in long drawn out illnesses. Even if you go through any or all of the five stages ahead of the death, you will still go through them again after the loss. Anticipatory grief has its own process; it takes its own time.
- Forewarned is not always forearmed. Experiencing anticipatory grief may or may not make the grieving process easier or shorten it. It may bring only feelings of guilt that we were grieving before the loss actually occurred. We may experience all five stages of loss (**denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance**) before the actual death. We may experience only anger and denial. Not everyone experiences anticipatory grief and if they do, certainly not in the same way.

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- A time of preparation in Fall – That we might end 2020 with peace of heart, mind and soul!
- Next Week: *Navigating the Medical Universe*