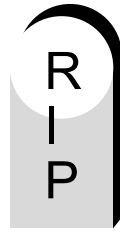


SOME GRAVE THOUGHTS



Last week Gail and I visited the Old Sacrament City Cemetery where her great-grandparents and great-great grandparents are buried. Later we went to see my step-mother in Vallejo and visited my Dad's grave. While there, I had some time to reflect on what I saw.

First, there were grave sites in the older cemeteries (before grave liners were used) where the earth had settled down a foot or so. This indicates that the coffin underneath had deteriorated to the point it would no longer hold the earth above and it was crushed. This just proves what God has already told us, *In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.*"

Genesis 3:19

I try to not give much thought to the state of the body below. I take comfort in knowing that what is buried in the ground is no longer of any use to us. *So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.*

I Corinthians 15:42

When the Lord comes for us, we will receive new bodies, bodies more well suited for our spirits. As the epithet on the grave of Jonathan Peas reads:

**This is the grave of Jonathan Peas,
But Peas is not here, only his pod;
For Peas has shelled out,
And gone home to God.**



What I find depressing in a cemetery is coming across a grave where the cement is cracked and sinking, weeds and grass cover most of the stone and you know

the no one ever comes to see this site. I guess we would like to think that, a hundred years from now, descendants would be flocking to our grave to pay respects. This is not so. It is not in God's plan. We read, *Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."*

Matthew 8:21-22

It is proper to pay last respects when someone close to us dies but it is wrong to expect that the grave site will be perpetually cared for and respected. We will not be there, we will be with Christ.

Then there are the markings on the stones. I wondered why so many had things such as "PFC US ARMY WW2." Why would someone want that on their stone? Daryl, having been in the business, informs me that, if you are a qualifying veteran, the government will pay for your gravestone. Gail's grandfather's stone in Reno is inscribed: *"He is not dead, He is sleeping."* This is a nice sentiment but it is unscriptural. The Bible does not teach "soul sleep." When we die, our spirits go directly to be with Jesus.

It seems we should have something on our stone that bests reflects what we did in life - but what? Gail has given us instructions that she wants the same thing on her stone that the great missionary, (William) Borden of Yale, had - *"A believer in Jesus."* Now, one could put that he was a great lawyer (if that is possible!) or that he was President and CEO of Microsoft. One might come up with such a noble thing as being a missionary to Siberia and a great preacher. These may all be good things but, when it comes down to it, the most important thing we can do in our lifetimes is to become *"a believer in Jesus."*

Then, as Paul wrote, *So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"*

I Corinthians 15:54-55

Wayne

C:\WPDOCS\bible\wwws\www3n15.wpd, ©October 1, 2005 by Wayne E. McMorran

