

Preparing for danger...

“The prudent see danger and take refuge,
but the simple keep going and pay the penalty.” *Proverbs 27:12*

What are some examples of when the simple don't prepare for danger and they end up "paying the penalty"?

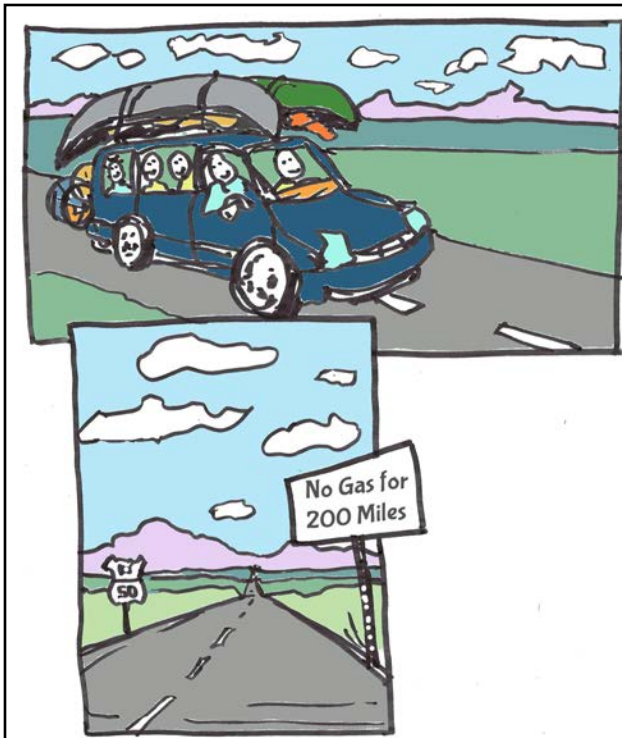
Why do people sometimes not prepare for things?

**Some day, your life and my life on earth will end.
*Maybe decades from now, or maybe today...***

“Death is the destiny of everyone;
the living should take this to heart.” *Ecclesiastes 7:2*

Prayer: Show us how to live given that we will certainly die

1



Joy-filled Readiness

Luke 12:54-13:9

bib.ly/Lu12.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts

2

What happens when we die?

Some claims people make:

- Everyone ceases to exist as a conscious person
- Everyone goes to “a better place” and is “at peace”
- We begin another life based on how we lived this life

Interesting claims → What is the evidence and rationale? Why believe it?

- Fideism: believing something just because I believe it

Jesus taught:

- When we die, **we meet God**
- Jesus might return before we die, and then **we'll meet God**
- When **we meet God**, He will judge each one of us
 - **Heaven or hell, with variations in each**

Interesting claims → Why believe Jesus?

- He claimed to be God and He gave believable, solid evidence
- He claimed to be able to come back to life after death → and He did!

So what did Jesus say about life and death?

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“I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those [people or things] who kill the body and after that can do no more. **But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.**” *Luke 12:4-5*

- **The most rational and fact–based understanding of our world is to believe that there is a personal, moral Creator (“God”)**
- **If there is a God, dealing with God is the most fundamental and important question of our existence**

**Lesson: The most important issue for facing death
(and so also for living life) is dealing with God**

4 Illustrations...

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Luke 12:54-56

He said to the **crowd**: “When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, ‘It’s going to rain,’ and it does. And when the south wind blows, you say, ‘It’s going to be hot,’ and it is. Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. **How is it** that you don’t know how to interpret **this present time?**”

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*Luke 12:54-13:9***54-56: Planning ahead for life but not death is stupidity**

- Wisdom = working to predict and prepare for the future
 - Weather → especially for farmers!
 - Retirement and finances, careers, vacations, ...
 - Not also planning for death is **hypocrisy**: why?
 - They worked to live life well, and likely prided themselves in it
 - Yet they were not taking the biggest issue in life seriously
 - Why weren’t they planning for death?
 - Foolish + disregarding God = stupidity
 - The separation between us and meeting God is paper thin
- 57-59: • God “watches all who live on earth—he who forms the hearts
 1-5: of all, who considers everything we do” *Psalm 33:14-15*
 6-9: • Our end can come at any time

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Luke 12:57-59

“Why don’t you judge for yourselves what is right? As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled on the way, or your adversary may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.”

magistrate = government authority

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Luke 12:54-13:9

54-56: Planning ahead for life but not death is stupidity

57-59: Failing to prepare to meet God our judge is stupidity

- They knew that making peace with adversaries is wise
- It is even important when dealing with God!
 - We are invited to be reconciled with God now
 - If we wait, it will be too late
 - Life is a “class” you can’t re-take
 - If life doesn’t go well, you can’t change your major or find a different career path!
 - Failing life ends everything good!
- Hypocrisy: they know what is wise (making peace with one’s adversary), and they claim to be living wisely, yet they have

1-5:

6-9 : **decided** not to deal with God

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Luke 13:1-5

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”

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Luke 12:54-13:9

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1-5: Others' disaster & death should be a warning to us

- People reported to Jesus about Galileans whom Pilate killed
 - Jerusalemites looked down on Galileans
 - Perhaps an illustration of needing to settle before seeing judge
- Jesus' response
 - Those who died are a warning to others, not a sign of their evil
 - Same for Jerusalemites who died: no worse than others
- Death comes to every single person
- Death is so often sudden, and it is always irreversible

6-9 : **“Unless you repent and turn to God, you also will lose everything!”**

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Luke 13:6-9

Then he told this parable: “A man had a **fig tree** growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

“‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and **I’ll dig around it and fertilize it.** If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

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1-5: Others’ disaster & death should be a warning to us

6-9: The exceptional patience of God still has an end

- Fig tree: used as a symbol for God’s people
 - This teaching applies to individuals just as well
- Exceptionally kind care for a fruitless tree!
 - A sign of God’s exceptional kindness, NOT of our goodness
- Patience...with a limit
 - Description of Jesus’ ministry: “The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” *Luke 3:9*

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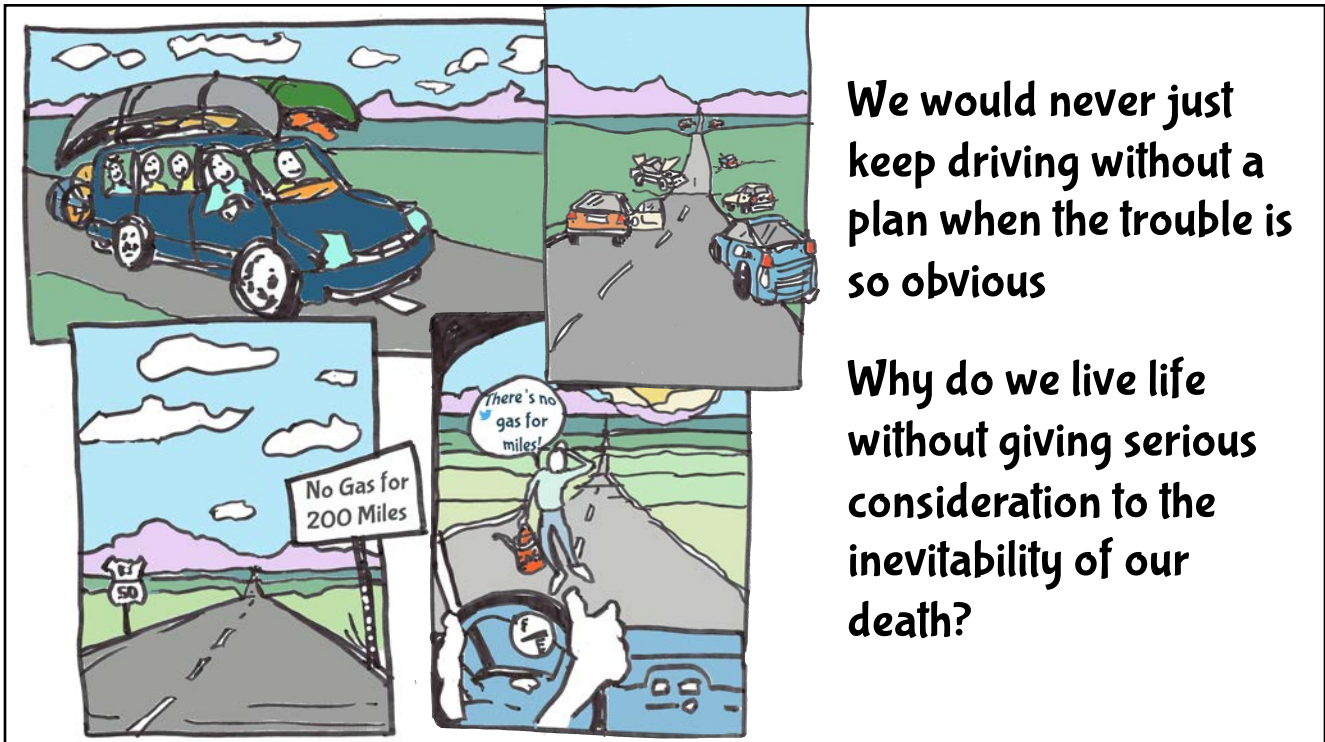
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The Big Idea

**Since death is inescapable and there is no do-over
it is stupid to fail to prepare for it!**

**Those who have made peace with their Maker
can live life and face death with joy and peace
no matter what comes**

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We would never just keep driving without a plan when the trouble is so obvious

Why do we live life without giving serious consideration to the inevitability of our death?

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The Big Idea

Since death is inescapable and there is no do-over it is stupid to fail to prepare for it!

Those who have made peace with their Maker can live life and face death with joy and peace no matter what comes

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Application

Make peace with God in Christ

- **Death is inescapable, unpredictable, and without “do-overs”**
 - Tolstoy: “What meaning can a person’s life have which would not be annihilated by the awful inevitability of death?”

annihilated = completely wiped away

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Application

Make peace with God in Christ

- **Make peace with your adversary before you meet the judge**
- **Jesus is the one with whom we are to make peace**
 - “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and **will not be judged** but has crossed over from death to life. ... For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.” *John 5:24-27*
- **Jesus is the ONLY one who can give peace with God**
 - Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.**” *John 14:6*

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Application

Make peace with God in Christ

- **Genuine trust in the life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Jesus Christ brings life with God now & forever**
 - **Head:** believe Jesus' claim to be God, and in His resurrection
 - **Heart:** put genuine trust in Jesus and in His death in our place
 - **Hands:** begin the journey of fully following His teaching
- **We can then meet our judge and maker with confident joy!**
 - “On this mountain (where Jesus died) he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; **he will swallow up death forever**. The Sovereign Lord will **wipe away the tears** from all faces; he will **remove his people's disgrace** from all the earth. The Lord has spoken.” *Isaiah 25:7-8*

shroud = cloth for covering a dead person

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Application

Make peace with God in Christ

- **Genuine trust in the life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Jesus Christ brings life with God now & forever**
- **It is a choice you can make today**
- **It requires faith, yet it is also a very reasonable faith**
- **It requires faith, yet it is also incredibly beautiful**
- **It requires faith, yet it is also incredibly good**
- **Have you made peace with God in Christ?**
 - **The BEST preparation for the future you can ever do**

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Application

Make peace with God in Christ

Live life with constant awareness of our peace with God in Christ

- Jesus said: “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but **has crossed over from death to life.**” *John 5:24-27*
 - A past event (making peace with God in Christ) that has unending benefits (life with God in Christ)

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Application

Make peace with God in Christ

Live life with constant awareness of our peace with God in Christ

- **Whatever disaster we may encounter, whatever human judgment we may experience, we have peace with the One who matters most**
 - “O, sing hallelujah! Now and ever we confess: **Christ, our hope in life and death!**”
 - “What, then, shall we say in response to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” *Romans 8:31-32*

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Application

Make peace with God in Christ

Live life with constant awareness of our peace with God in Christ

- **When we encounter trouble, we can say: "God..."**
 - **"A" (beginning): The creator of the universe and of me**
 - **"Z" (end): The judge of every human being, and the one who is forming the new heaven and the new earth**
 - **"B–Y" (everything in between): The sustainer of every breath of every human life, who constantly sees my heart and my actions**
- **is personally with me and for me in every step and season of life**
- **and He is preparing my home and life and work with Him forever"**

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**Since death is inescapable and there is no do-over
it is stupid to fail to prepare for it!**

**Those who have made peace with their Maker
can live life and face death with joy and peace
no matter what comes**

Getting sued for \$1,200,000

➤ **The joy of settling out of court...and they paid us!**

Oh the joy of being given peace and blessing with God forever!

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