**Lita’s Funeral**

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| 01.15.17 | Grace | Ecc. 3:1-8 | Today is a time of … | 10 min |

READ Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

* **It is interesting that several thousand years ago Solomon penned these words that seem so appropriate for us today**.
* **In an instant - in one short sentence the author has expressed how fragile life is**. “There is a time to be born and a time to die.” On a day where we celebrate Lita’s life, there is one answer we need to answer: what time it is?

**We know that we are creatures of time by the way we set our clocks and watches so that we will know what hour it is.** We have schedules and appointments set by dates on a calendar. We know larger amounts of time by measuring the months and years. We also know the seasons of spring, summer, fall and winter.

**We have already mentioned some dates here today**. The date Lita was born—December 24, 1934. The date she died—January 11, 2017. And so we know that he lived 82 years (29,970 days to be exact). We have a measurement of time. And some of us are sitting here thinking that Lita lived a full, long life while others are thinking his life was cut short. But isn’t life more then a measurement of years or accomplishments?

**In the end our lives should be measured by the relationships that we have with others.** That is why you are here today - isn’t it? Because you knew Lita or those she affected. You are family, are friends and you have come to say goodbye to someone you knew. That is important and I commend you for being here today.

**But let me ask, what time is it for you today?** The writer of Ecclesiastes has said, “There is time and season for every event under Heaven. There is a time weep and a time to mourn.” And I would say for you who are family and friends that today is a day of mourning. You have lost a love one— and it hurts. Please do not deny your feelings— grieve long and grieve full. For when you grieve healing takes place.

**Just as there is a few empty bedrooms in your home now, there are is an empty place in your heart.** But because we know Lita loved Jesus, we can rest assured that there is a sweet reunion to come.

**Today also I would say is a time of remembering. I have often told people that funerals are bitter sweet (because they are).** They are bitter because you have lost a loved one - they are sweet because you have so many memories that you can share. I am thankful God has made us with the capacity to remember. Think of the good times, the funny times, the experiences and yes the bad times too and in your remembering you will celebrate the life of Lita. She gave so much to each of you!

**Today is a day to Recognize the true meaning of life:**

**“A good reputation is more valuable than the most expensive perfume. In the same way, the day you die is better than the day you are born. It is better to spend your time at funerals than at festivals. For you are going to die, and you should think about it while there is still time.” - Ecclesiastes 7:1-3**

* **These may sound like dark words, but they contain profound wisdom**. People deny death, refuse to face it, and are reluctant to attend funerals. We often view life as God’s greatest gift, and we regard death as the worst that could happen.
* **There’s a play on words in the text, “A good reputation is better than the most expensive perfume.”** The Hebrew word for “reputation” is shem, and the Hebrew word for perfume is shemen. Though perfume may help make us attractive, a good reputation is better.
	+ **Perfume doesn’t last; it’s temporary, but a good reputation lasts even after we’re gone.** We may not be able to afford a bottle of Channel No. 5, but we will spare no expense to maintain a good reputation. We hope to reach the end of our days with no regrets.
* **Why are funerals better than parties, according to Ecclesiastes?** At parties we escape reality, we try to forget our cares…at funerals we come face-to-face with the meaning of life. A party may be a good occasion to blow off some stress, but a funeral is a place to reflect and learn what life is really about—this is an occasion to prepare for the day when we too will depart and stand before God.
* **The time to live is now--we don’t know what tomorrow will bring.** More importantly, the Bible says that the time to believe, to trust God, is Today, while we hear God’s voice; tomorrow may be too late. God gave us a hope and a way! - JC
* **We must remember, the body is not a home**; it’s more like a hotel, a place where we dwell only briefly. Rather than pursue empty pleasures and seek a comfortable life, we need to pursue holiness and seek God. If we reach the end of our days with faith and a good reputation, it shows that we know the true value of things.

**Today is also a day of comfort.**

* **Comfort isn’t as important as is living well**, with integrity, and that may mean often being uncomfortable--enduring hardship, struggle, adversity. A person with character can truly say that the day of death is better than the day of birth.
* It is a day of comfort because Jesus said, **“I will never leave you or forsake you. I go to prepare a place for you. And I will return to take you with me. *If you believe in me.*”** Even in the midst of death - if we believe in Him, He will never leave us or forsake us. Isn’t that encouraging news? He who faced death himself - and conquered it - will never leave us. Without this we were hopeless!
* **That is the gospel message**! - The tomb where they laid him is empty. There is no-one there. And the scripture tells us that if we believe in him we will be raised also. Isn’t that a thought of comfort?

**And so I ask again. What time is it? It is a time of grieving - it is also a time or remembering, recognizing what we live and it can also be a time of comfort if we trust in Jesus.** I am sure that this Sunday School teacher, Moody Bible Institute Grad and lover of Jesus would want nothing more than for you to come and trust Jesus today.

Now the family would like to express a few words of gratitude and introduce our closing song. After which you may join us for a reception in the lobby.