

Give Flowers To The Living

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On the occasion of the funeral of a loved one or friend we customarily place flowers around the coffin and over the grave site with them after they are buried. This is all well and good and is appreciated by the family members, but the deceased know nothing about it. How much better it would have been if we had given them the flowers while they lived.

I lost my mother; Mrs. Jeskah Nandwa aged almost 90 years. I stood by a coffin which contained her lifeless body and looked at her closed eyes; they could not see. Her cold hands could not hold anything. Breath that is stilled could not gather the sweet breezes blowing from the flowers that members of the family held into their hands. I was thinking how much I had given to my mother when she was still alive.

Each day that we live, we have the opportunity of bestowing flowers upon someone in need. The apostle Paul tells us in Gal. 6:10, “...*as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*” These words from Paul would cover a broad range of service we might render. There is always a brother or a neighbor who need encouragement. And giving encouragement to one who is disheartened is just as much our Christian duty as reproofing the disorderly (1 Thess. 5:14-15)

Why should we wait until someone is dead to express how we felt about them; “Let us give them our roses while they live.” This would apply to all those who have meant something to our lives — Mother and Dad, if we are fortunate enough to have them still living, elders in the church, former teachers and preachers, and friends who have helped us to take courage and make the right choices in life. Let us stop and think; each of us is indebted to so very many, please don’t wait until they die; express appreciation while they are still living! The Bible says, “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right, Honour your father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*” (Eph. 6:1-3). If there is anything that will make “ones blood boil,” is to hear children speak in a disrespectful manner to their parents, especially their mothers, who almost suffered to the point of death to bring them into this world.

One day, you, the young people, will stand by the coffin and remember when it is too late to say, “I am sorry” when parents are too old and unable to do for themselves and the children, whom they have

sacrificed so much to raise, stand by do little or nothing, will one day have occasion to regret it, perhaps eternally. Over the years, whenever I had an opportunity to attend to burial of the aged parents, I have noticed that, as a rule, the ones who take it the hardest are the ones who have paid the least attention in life.

Husbands and wives, the time will come when one of you will stand by the lifeless form of the other one and speak kind and loving words that their ears will not hear. Now is the time you have opportunity to speak those good words! Why wait till they are dead? They are hungering now to hear you say, "I love you!" Husbands, how long has it been since you told your wife how pretty she is? Paul said, "*Husbands, how long has it been since you told your wives how pretty even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.*" (Eph. 5:25).

Again, "*Husband, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.*" (Col. 3:19) wives, your kindness will go long way in getting your husbands to give you the attention you wait and deserve.

There are more and more, but these are just a few of the multitude of opportunities that come our way daily to give flowers to the living. It is my prayer that they may serve and remind us of the importance of making the most of the opportunities which come our way every day that we might truly "redeem the time" and use each day as fully as possible to God's Glory.

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