Daily Devotion #197

**Are You Ready**

**Matthew 1:21 (NASB)** *"She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."*

Years ago, my first job was a lifeguard at one of the local public swimming pools. I can remember being there and working that job as if it were yesterday. In fact, I remember I was sixteen because that was the age required to sit in the lifeguard chair. The fun of that job was that I could be outside the whole day and swim on my time off. It was a great summer. But I remember one day very well that was not so fun. I was in the chair on my shift scanning the pool as it was particularly crowed that day. And I noticed a young girl struggling. She had her hands raised over her head and was coming up and down out of the water. I watched for just a moment, then sprang into action. I blew my whistle then jumped in the pool to get her. For anyone who has been a lifeguard, you will remember that going in for someone is the last thing you are supposed to do. First, you are to throw something for the victim to hold on to, then row out to them if you have a boat or some craft that they can grab onto. The last thing is to go in after them yourself. That’s because drowning victims or people who think they are drowning don’t care what they hold on to; they just want air. So you, as the lifeguard, become a float or boat or whatever else they need to survive. Many times the rescuer becomes the victim as they are pushed underwater trying to save the drowning one.

That day taught me two things. First, I realized the how quickly life can change. For that little girl, she was not thinking that day about having to be rescued. She was just having a good time and enjoying the water. But she was also not paying attention to her environment. So, she became a victim of a potential tragedy. Secondly, I learned very that we all are at risk of dying. I learned that death is real. That was why I was there as a life guard. That may sound too simplistic, but the truth is that people don’t live their lives aware of the fact that they can and will die. They just go through their days oblivious or pushing it to the back of their minds,pretending death is not a part of life. The difference on that day at the pool was I, as the rescuer, was prepared for the possibility of death or of someone needing help. The little girl was not. I was trained to look and respond. She was just living life, but living life in a way that was ignorant to the possibility of what could happen.

The truth is that everyone in this life dies. Death is reality. It is not something you and I can remove from our existence. As much as people want to pretend it is not reality, it is. Not one soul will miss their appointment with the day of their death. So when we find ourselves in the midst of something like COVID-19, death is reality. It is a very real possibility for all of us. Certainly, we should take precautions and be wise. And we should not venture into the deep end of the pool, so to speak, if we are not prepared for the possibility of death. Even the greatest swimmers know they must respect and be careful of the fact that they could drown. But that doesn’t keep them from going in the water. They understand the risks, and they prepare for the possibility.

The point is that you and I need to be prepared to die. We need to know that Jesus came to this world, not just because He wanted to prove to us who He is. He came because we needed a Savior. And we needed a Savior because of sin which causes everyone to die. Jesus didn’t come to stop death. He came to deliver us from death. Not our physical death but our spiritual death. He came to give us a way to live eternally with Him and the Father in a place where there is no death.

Things like COVID-19 remind us that death is real. So, we need to always be ready. Because the reality is, you and I don’t know when the day of our death will be. So, like a well-trained swimmer is not afraid of the deep end of the pool, you and I don’t need to be afraid of death. We just need to be ready for the day it does come. Being ready means putting our trust in Jesus, the One who came and is prepared to save us. We only need to recognize that we’re drowing in sin, and call to Him for help.