

Series: You ask for It
Title: Two Months to Live
Text: Jer 28:15-17

Years ago on the front page of the human interest section of the Los Angeles Times newspaper was the picture of a lady named Mrs. Agnes Human.

The picture was framed with a heavy black border and over her picture in large black ominous letters were the words, "One Year To Live."

Underneath was the explanation: "Mrs. Agnes Human, 30, of Chicago, has only one year to live. Doomed as a result of atomic poisoning contracted in work at the Oakridge, Tennessee Nuclear Plant, she is pondering the fate of her four children and seeks aid in finding a home for them after her death."

Can you imagine knowing ahead of time that you only had one year to live? How would you respond if you knew that your life was to end relatively shortly?

I heard about a doctor that called a patient one morning and he said, "I've got some good news and some bad news." The patient said, "What is the good news?" The doctor said, "You have twenty-four hours to live." He said, "What's the bad news?" The doctor said, "I tried to call you yesterday."

How would you respond if you knew ahead of time that you only had one year to live?

Suppose God were to say to you today, "This year you are going to die."
December 31st at 11:59pm you would draw your last breath on this earth.

Here is the question.

Would that make any difference in how you would live the rest of this year?

How would it make a difference?

A lot of you are blowing me off right now. What you are saying deep down to yourself is, *"This message doesn't apply to me. I am young. I am in good health. I feel great. I work out. I watch my diet. There is nothing wrong with me and I intend to live to a ripe old age."*

The morning of Dec 26, 2004, the greatest defensive lineman ever to play pro football, Reggie White, died in his sleep at the age of 43.

How many of the 230,000 plus people killed by massive Indonesian Tsunami, thought they would see 500 mile per hour waves taking their life in a split second?

This year about 564,800 Americans are expected to die of cancer—more than 1,500 people a day.

In 2011 - 1,059,0001 patients died under hospice care.

We are all going to die. We don't know when.

We don't know where.

We don't know how, but we are going to die.

For some of us, this will be our last year.

How would you respond if you knew ahead of time that you only had one year to live?

This happened to a man in the Old Testament.
This man was a false prophet named Hananiah.

Not because of his failing health, but because of his sin.
This man was told he only had a short time to live and he was told that by a prophet of God. (Jer 28:10-17)

Israel, enslaved by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.
They were in captivity in Babylon because of their sin.
God ordered Jeremiah to wear a yoke around his neck to symbolizing this captivity.

Hananiah broke the yoke off of Jeremiah & confidently declared in the name of God, that within 2 years, the nation would be freed and all the vessels of the Lord's house would be restored.

The only problem was the Lord did not say that, nor had He told Hananiah to say that.
He lied, God had not really spoken to him.

As a result, God sent Jeremiah, His true messenger to this false prophet.

"This year you are going to die." (Jer 28:15-17)
He did die two months later.

None of us have a promise of life tomorrow, let alone a year.

(James 4:14) *"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."*

(Prov 27:1) *"Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."*

The only thing certain about life is the uncertainty of life.

If today was your diagnosis.
That day when the doctor gave you the most shocking news you have ever received.

What if today you were told, you had 2 months to live?

How would you feel?
How do you handle this news?

What would you change?
How would your attitude toward things change?

Let's consider some important things that will have eternal consequences.

I think you want to attend to,
I. The Matter of Salvation:

If you knew that you had only a short time to live wouldn't you want to be sure that you are really saved? You wouldn't want to leave that to chance, would you?

I read an article about people who were facing impending death and knew they were dying.

People in a car accident or a plane crash knew they were dying.

The first thing that comes to their mind is their family. The second thing they think about is God.
(Amos 4:12b) *"prepare to meet thy God."*

Are you ready to meet God?
Do you know that you have genuinely been saved?
I'm not talking about a hope so, maybe so, think so.
I talking about **a know so** salvation.

Do you know you are saved?

I'm not talking about joining the church.

I'm not talking about being baptized.

I'm not talking about good works.

Knowing you have truly been born again.
That as a child of God, you would go to heaven if you should die before this year is over.

I meet a lot of interesting people, with interesting testimonies of Salvation.

"I saw an Angel"

"I had a near death accident, & I had a funny feeling."

The Bible teaches that You can know for sure.

(1 John 5:13)

(Rom 1:16)

If I were you, I wouldn't let this year end until I had settled The Matter of Salvation.

Eternity is a long time to be wrong about this.

I would like to suggest also that you would want to attend to,

II. The Matter of Congregation:

What do I mean by the congregation matter?

If I had only this year, I would want to be a member of a church.

When you study the NT you will find this pattern.
When people received Christ as their Savior, they wanted to be baptized.

You didn't have to talk them into being baptized.
They wanted to be baptized and they became a part of a New Testament fellowship of believers.

I believe that if I had only two months to live, I would want to be a part of a local church.

Somebody said, "What difference does it make?
What is the Purpose of being a church member?
Christ died for the Church: (Eh 5:25)

God gets His Glory through the church (Eph 3:21) *Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

If this was my last year, I'd be a faithful member of this church.

You need a fellowship of believers around you who can support you and encourage you and your family who will go through the grief of your leaving.

Your family will need some support.

That's why it's important to be a church member.

Not only do you need the church, but the church needs you to be a blessing to people during this last year that you have to live.

A number of years ago I was visiting Miss Betty Teer who was a shut in.

I was trying to comfort and encourage her because she was not able to come to church anymore.

Like many who are shut ins, she had to watch services on television.

I said to her, "Well, I wish you could come to the services. I know you regret not being able to come. But at least you can watch it on television." She said, "Preacher, I can watch it on television. But you can't shake hands with a television set." (Heb 10:24-25)

If you have only one more year to live I think you would want to get involved in a local church.

Some of you who need to come and join this church. Your membership may be somewhere else.

You are living here, not sure you are going to stay here, or for how long. Still, you need to join.

You may not believe you need to be a member of this local body, but I would hate to face the Lord and be in rebellion.

I do funerals for families with out a church.

I ask them why they asked for a Pastor, and their response, is, "Preacher, where do you go at a time like this except to a church?"

Why not the bar tender to conduct your funeral?

Why not the Cashier at Walmart?

Why not the server at the restaurant where you go?

You have spent more time with them than a church.

You need a church when your dead, you need it now!

If I had 2 more months to live, if this was my last year, I think you would want to attend to the matter of congregation.

If this was my last year, I believe I would want to attend to,

III. The Matter of Exoneration:

The matter of forgiveness. (Matt 6:14-15)

Forgiving someone who has mistreated you or that matter of asking someone you have mistreated to forgive you. (Mark 11:225-26)

As we live through life it is very easy for people to get out of fellowship with one another.

(Philippians 4:2) *"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord."*
It means they were having a little spat.

Don't you think if you had only this year to live that you would want to patch up some of these little personal differences you have with someone?

Do you want to go out into eternity and face God knowing that you have cheated someone?
Do you want to go out to meet the Lord knowing that you have lied about someone?
Knowing that you have gossiped about someone?
Knowing that you have mistreated someone?
Knowing that you have been disrespectful of someone?

Young people, you have been disrespectful of your mom or dad. You have smarted off to them.

Do you want to go out into eternity having smarted off to your parents?

You would want to ask somebody to forgive you.
Maybe someone has wronged you.
Don't you think you want to get loose from that?
The word forgiveness literally means to send away, let it go.
"You don't know what people have done to me."
I don't know what they have done to you, but let it go!

"You don't know how unkind they've been to me."
I don't know how unkind they've been to you, but let it go!

It's not worth going into eternity having a grudge or ill will in your heart toward someone else.

Do you really think your offense is worst than Jesus'?

If you had only this year to live, I think you would want to attend to the matter of Forgiveness and Exoneration.

If you knew you had only this year to live I think you would want to take care of,

IV. The Matter of Adoration:

Foundational 5

Bible Reading: (1 Tim 4:13) *give attendance to reading*

If I had only 2 months to live, I would die reading my Bible!

Bible Reading is How I get to know God!
He Talks to me through His Word.

If I had just this year, 2 months to live, how would your Bible Reading habit change?
How important would it be?

Daily Prayer:

If I had only 2 months more to live, I would spend it talking to God. Would you give God the Silent treatment

When Jews relocate to Israel, they spend six months in a language school, learning the Hebrew language so they can converse in Israel.

It is through prayer and it is through Bible study that we learn the language of heaven.

If this were your last year, would you need to go to heaven's language school?

If I had just this year, 2 months to live, how would your prayer life change?

(Matt 26:40-41) And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Let me encourage you this year to have a devotional life. Read your Bible daily and pray.

Church Attendance: (Heb 10:24-25)
How would your attitude toward church change?

If you had just this year, 2 months to live, how would your attendance change?

Would it become a priority?

I would want to be sure I was living faithfully for the Lord.

Jesus commanded, "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

(2 Tim 4:6-7) Paul declared that he was ready to go.

Faithful in My Walk

If I had but Two Months to live, obedience would become foremost in my mind.

Many people seem to put off obedience for one reason or another. But knowing that I am soon to give an account of my life to the Lord would certainly change my perspective.

(Rom 14:11-12) For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Based on this verse, How would your life change in the next 2 months?

Faithful in My Service: (1 Cor 15:58)

(2 Cor 5:10) "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

I think we should take the words of Jesus very seriously He is going to discuss our service with us, when we get to heaven. (Heb 9:27) *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

I would make certain I put the Lord first in my life every day. (Matthew 6:33) *"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness . . ."*

If you had only one more year to live, I think you would want to give attention to,

V. The Matter of Proclamation:

What is that? I think you would want to spend some time proclaiming, or telling others about Jesus.

Sin is the Problem.

Hell is the Consequence.

Salvation in Jesus Christ is the Cure.

Paul said his hands were clean, he was ready to die.
(Acts 20:26) *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the **BLOOD OF** all men.*

If you had only 2 months left, would you Tell someone else about the Lord?

Not everyone is gifted as someone else may be.

But we all are a part of the process.

It is a seed sowing process.

Some of us plant the seed.

Others of us water and cultivate the seed.

Others of us harvest the seed.

We are all to be part of the process.

If we can have literally hundreds of you out in the city of Alexandria every day just dropping a good seed of the Word, telling someone about the Lord, saying something good for the Lord Jesus Christ, witnessing to someone about the Lord Jesus Christ, wouldn't it be a great way to close out your life?

Wouldn't it be wonderful to go to heaven and when you got to heaven somebody said, "I got to heaven because you told me about Jesus."

(Ps 126:6) He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

The reason I think you want to be a witness for the Lord is not only because it may be your last year, but it may be the last year of the person who needs Jesus.

Is there somebody you know who needs Jesus? Is there somebody you would like to see saved?

What you do not know is that...

Maybe they have only one more year to live.

Maybe they have only one month to live.

Maybe they just have a short time to live.

I have a feeling you would want to tell that person about Jesus.

I don't know how much longer you have to live.

Is there any doctor on earth who can guarantee you more than another year?

Is there any preacher, anywhere who can promise you that you are going to be here next year and have plenty of time and opportunity to do what you know you need to do? There is not!

Scores of people will lose their life this holiday season. One moment they were in the car laughing and having a good time. Then there was a crash and it's all over.

Everything seems to be fine & then they are blindsided. In an instant there is the crash of metal and there is the shattering of glass. Then there is quietness. They are in eternity.

Could it be that perhaps you have just been to the doctor and the doctor has given you a clean bill of health?

But that old heart stops ticking and you are in eternity. If this were your last year, what would you want to do in this service?

Every head bowed.

Eventually, it will be my last year on earth. I may not know when that will be, but it will come. Maybe 2016 will be my last.

I hope each of us will be encouraged to live as though it will be our last.

Being prepared for eternity in God's presence should always be our highest priority.