

Welcome to *Faith Bible Church!*

May 26, 2019

Order of Service:

Opening Hymn: *Virginia Grosskurth*

Invocation

Scripture Reading:

Announcements

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn: *Virginia Grosskurth*

Message: *Drinking, Smoking, Gambling & Other Christian Liberties* (Romans 14:1-15:7)

Announcements:

A blessed Memorial Day as we honor all who gave what President Lincoln called “the last full measure of devotion.”

Our graduates wish to thank you for the cards and gifts and well wishes you showered on them at last Sunday’s party!

If you have a used bike you’d like to sell, see Pastor Kurth.

Our spring picnic is June 9. Mark your calendar!

Midweek Bible Study: Wednesday at 7 but call Steve first.

Our offering box is located just left of the kitchen door.

Pick up today’s cross reference sheet & silence your phone.

Judges 7:25 *Is It Okay For A Christian To be Cremated?*

Cremation is 1/8th the cost of a traditional funeral, so can a Christian consider it? The Bible doesn’t say, but it does give examples of bodies that were burned, which might tell us how God feels about cremation. They’ve convinced me that cremation is all right. But be a Berean and see what *you* think

Achan’s body was burned in Joshua 7:25 as a judgment for his sin (v.1-13), evidently to *dishonor* it. They *honored* the Lord’s body by burying it (John 19:40). The “manner” there was to bury with spices as opposed to some other way, not to bury as opposed to cremate. But even if it was their manner to bury and not cremate, “manner” means *custom*, and customs weren’t ordered by God (cf. Judges 11:39,40).

When the Philistines abused King Saul’s body, “valiant men” in Israel burned it (ISam.31:8-12) because the desert heat had begun to dishonor his body. That means they burned it to *honor it* and undo the sun’s *dishonor*. God would not have called them *valiant* if they meant to dishonor him.

But they then *buried* Saul’s bones (v.13) because bones survive burning. So cremation can be just a different manner of preparing a body for burial than preparing it with spices.

When Jeroboam set up a false altar and a false priesthood, a prophet predicted that Josiah would burn men’s bones on it (IKi.13:1,2), and he did (IIKi.23:16), obviously to dishonor them. So it is clear that burning a body in and of itself doesn’t dishonor it, it’s the *reason* you burn it that decides it

The Moabites burned the king of Edom's body to dishonor it (Amos 2:1,2), and God vowed to judge them for this, since he was the seed of Abraham. But the bodies in Amos 6:9,10 weren't burned to dishonor them. Ten men in one house meant they were probably gay, and so God judged them with some kind of plague. With no family to bury them, an uncle took charge of their final arrangements, burning them to protect the contagion of the plague. Why should a dead body cause misery in the lives of the survivors? But that's what we're talking about with cremation! Why should your dead body be a burden to the family members who survive you by having to pay for an expensive funeral?

Some dislike cremation because God told Adam he'd return to dust and the ground (Gen.3:19), but bodies that are cremated turn to the same dust and can be buried in the ground.

Some don't like cremation because the believer's body is the temple of the Spirit (1Cor.6:19), but that's only true until we die! If our body *continued* to be the Spirit's temple after that, it would be just as dishonoring to it to bury it!

Some dislike cremation because it was once associated with atheism. Christianity teaches that God will someday raise the unsaved from the dead and judge them and consign them to hell for eternity. Because of that, many atheists opted to be cremated. It was their way of daring God to try to resurrect their body and judge it. But God can even raise dead bodies that were lost at sea, and then eaten by fish which were eaten by other men (Rev.20:12,13).

Cremation is getting popular because it is cheaper, but donating your body to science for organ transplant or medical research is free! We know God doesn't mind organ transplants because Paul didn't tell the Galatians they were being sinful or unspiritual for offering him their eyes (Gal.4:15). We also know blood transfusions are okay in God's eyes because there is blood in eyeballs!

But if you can afford a funeral, it is preferable because people pay closer attention to the gospel at funerals where there is a dead body in a casket. There's just something about seeing a dead body that reminds people that someday they will be the one laying in the coffin.

Finally, Romans 14:5 says that when it comes to matters like cremation, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Cremation was around in Bible days, so if God felt strongly about it, He would have said so. Whatever you de-duce from the examples we've seen, remember that what you have decided is *your* conviction. It's good to have convictions, but forcing your conviction on others is called legalism

Faith Bible Church

www.faithbiblechurch.weebly.com

May 26, 2019

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

Thornton Harrison, Dave Stewart

Morning Service: 10:45 a.m.

Pastor Ricky Kurth

Junior Church: 10:45 a.m.

Myrtle Harrison

Wednesday Night Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

Assistant Pastor Steve Schwieger

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