

No More Funerals!

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When I die, no obituaries, no funeral, no "burying"/graveside services. Just cremate me!

Use the ashes as fertilizers for roses, trees or feed the fish with them.

If I did not make an impression on you while I was alive.....

In this last year I have watched families grieve AND spend money (even having to borrow money) to cover funeral expenses.

Most of those funeral insurances are a joke.

I have seen anger, bitterness and resentments when one or more family members did not pay their "fair" share.

I have seen soul crushing shame because the families could not afford "better".

Better? Almost \$25,000 in one case, more than \$21,000 in another case.

I have seen terror in the faces of these family members at the thought of no one showing up. I watched people maxing out their credit cards to buy "appropriate" clothing.

I have seen screaming fights between a husband and wife because the husband would not stand up against his family, to make them stop spending huge money. Money that each of the children and their spouses would have to pay.

I have seen little back stabbing parties between family members, where the family members changed side from morning until night.

I have seen family members worry themselves sick trying to figure out where the money for the next death in the family is going to come from.

I have seen ridiculous demands for money from the city, for example \$500.00 per funeral if the funeral is held on a weekend.

This forces many people to lay off from work or miss school to attend the funeral. People who come from a long distance to attend the Friday services have to leave before the next weeks "burying".

It is strange how many resentments that causes!

The funerals were planned for Friday, usually afternoon, so that most people would not miss a whole day of work.

It may come as a shock to know that many people do not get paid funeral leave, especially not if they are not direct family.

Here in America we have a large portion of our seniors reaching 80 and 90 years old and many of them are beginning to die off.

I know of many elderly people who are spending \$200.00 and \$300.00 almost every month, to buy flowers to send to the funerals of their friends.

If the person who just died was your friend would they want you to spend 1/5 to 1/4 of your monthly income on flowers for their funerals? You can buy paper, "silk" and plastic flowers and create a beautiful display for less than \$10.00.

The plastic will last and look good for a long time. Remember, cemeteries have groundskeepers and they remove dingy or wilted displays.

I have seen and heard people sniveling about going to a funeral at a "borrowed" church, because the regular church was already booked.

Funerals are not for the dead. Funerals are for the living, those left behind.

Most of the real greif I have seen has been mostly anger. Anger at having been left behind.

How about having a big picnic, when the weather is nice, sort of a memorial picnic. How about for all of the families who have lost someone over the winter, sort of a memorial picnic for several or many.

A public setting , like a city park, on a weekend, with toilets and trees. Let the children run and play, and the adults can visit and reminisce.

Families could gracefully bow out of a near financial disaster. They could have some time to breath after the death, and something major, warm and alive, to look forward to.

This is something for churches and communities to seriously consider. All too often the numbers of sicknesses, suicides and "natural" deaths rise after the death of a loved one.

I fear two major causes are financial burden and shame.

Usually with death, sudden or expected, our survivors are surrounded by people, for a few days, making all of the preparations, then the funeral, most people begin leaving, then the burial and everyone is gone.

The survivor is alone with the bills and the paperwork, the personal effects and the memories.

The first day, the first week, the first month, the first year slaps them in their faces.

Check back with them, especially that first year. Do not wallow in the past. If they choose to bring up something, let them and in a few minutes direct their attention to the present, to the future.

Yes, people need to greive but we need to live, to live in the present, looking forward.

Many "enviormentalists" will love this decision of mine. One, my ashes will be "returned" to the earth, not taking up space in a cemetary or mauselum and two, no wasted fuel for the funeral processions to the church and to the burying.

About the Author

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