

## My Last Requests

*John Isaac Edwards*

Since “...thou knowest not what a day may bring forth” (Prov. 27:1) and “...ye know not what shall be on the morrow...” (Jas. 4:14), any given moment could be our last here on earth. I am making a list of my last requests.

### 1) **Know There Is A God.**

The book of Genesis affirms, “In the beginning God...” (Gen. 1:1). “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God...” (Ps. 14:1; 53:1). “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Ps. 19:1). The Psalmist declared, “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...” (Ps. 139:14). Paul preached, “For in him [that’s God] we live, and move, and have our being...” (Acts 17:28). There is sufficient evidence in the things that are made to make us without excuse for not accepting the fact that God is (Rom. 1:20).

### 2) **Honor His Word.**

Realize the Bible is more than just words in a book and more than just a good book among many. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be

perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The Bible is the living word of the living God! “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). The Bible is able to do for you what no other book can — “...able to save your souls” (Jas. 1:21). Honor God’s word by reading and studying it (Eph. 3:4; 2 Tim. 2:15), believing and obeying it (2 Th. 2:12; 1:8-9). Remember the “very grievous hail” plague of Exodus 9? “He that feared the word of the Lord...made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses: And he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field” (vv. 20-21). How about us today?

### 3) **Recognize There Is No Other Way But His.** Jeremiah the prophet exclaimed, “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23). Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (Jn. 14:6). Peter made known, “Neither is there

salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Paul taught, “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all...” (Eph. 4:4-6). Jesus exhorted, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Mt. 7:13-14).

### 4) **Understand What The Church Is All About.**

Jesus promised, “...I will build my church...” (Mt. 16:18). He “purchased” the church “with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). The church is not a denomination, not a social club, and as Paul said, “...not meat and drink...” (Rom. 14:17). The church of Christ is “...a spiritual house...” (1 Pet. 2:5). It is a relationship in which Christ is our spiritual head and saviour (Eph. 5:23). The work of the church is spiritual and involves “the perfecting of the saints,” “the work of the ministry,” and “the edifying of

the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12). The church is “...the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15). It is not the pillar and ground of food, fun and frolic. Nor is it the pillar and ground of entertainment and recreation or secular education.

#### 5) *Put First Things First.*

Set your priorities in proper order. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...” (Mt. 6:33). “...love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Mt. 22:37). If your job gets in the way of putting first things first, find another one. If sports keep you from putting the Lord first in your life, don’t play. Remember what it’s all about — “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Eccl. 12:13).

6) *Live For Jesus And For Others.* Remember the rich fool of Luke 12 who “...thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns,

and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry” (vv. 17-19). Did you notice something missing in his thinking? No mention of the Lord or others. “...God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?” (v. 20). We are taught, “And that he [that’s Jesus] died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again” (2 Cor. 5:15). And, as Jesus, who “... came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mt. 20:28), OTHERS, let this your motto be. “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Phil. 2:4).

7) *Be Humble And Thankful.* The downfall of many has been pride. Don’t be “exalted above measure” (2 Cor. 12:7). Don’t think more highly of yourself than you ought to

think (Rom. 12:3). “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth...” (Prov. 27:2). “... be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (1 Pet. 5:5). And “...be ye thankful” (Col. 3:15). You have it so much better than some who have been much better than yourself! Don’t complain or murmur. In about every situation where there is the possibility to grumble, there is the opportunity to give thanks. Be the one who says, “THANK YOU” (Lk. 17:11-18). “In every thing give thanks...” (1 Th 5:18).

8) *Be Ready To Appear Before The Judge.* We have a court date, the day and hour of which is known only to the Father (Mk. 13:32). Thus, we must always be ready for our summons to “...appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body... whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). Ready yourself by hearing, believing, repenting of your sins, confessing Christ, being baptized (Acts 2-19), and being faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 15:58)!

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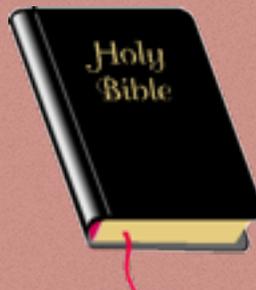
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