

## Outline of Lecture

### Chapter Nine: Ray Anderson, *On Being Human* In Life and in Death

p130 Becker: Fear of death is intrinsic to our nature, and denial of this yields "sickness of the soul" (≠ mental illness)

Shepherd: death is part of life; to deny death is to deny life. Yet the denial of death is operative in our society:

- 1] we don't live on farms, don't have granny living with us
- 2] the undertaker disguises it all
- 3] church funerals manage to avoid mentioning "death"
- 4] people assume a body-soul anthrop. in which the soul doesn't die
- 5] we are angry at MDs when granny dies at 97
- 6] (R)omantics speak of "intimations of immortality" (Wordsworth)

Still, death penetrates every aspect of our existence: intellectual (senility), physical, spiritual.

p131 Fear of death isn't an illness that psychiatry should attempt to cure. I.e., we shouldn't pathologize fear of death. Fear of death is not an abnormality.

(CREATURELINESS AS NATURAL LIFE) p132

We and the animals are "6<sup>th</sup>-day" creatures: we die alike. However, death threatens us in a way it doesn't threaten them.

We are aware [1] of death's fittingness: the life of the elderly *should* end

- [2] of death's obscenity -- in so many circumstances
- [3] that yet in both situations {[1]&[2]} death doesn't "fit" our total nature: it doesn't "belong" in that it seems an inappropriate ending whether life has been easy or difficult.

p133 In all of this Xns insist on the body as essential to human existence and identity (See Shepherd on reincarnation). Still, we mustn't equate *bodiliness* with *physicality*.

- 1] bodiliness includes physicality but can't be reduced to it
- 2] on earth bodiliness and physicality are identical, but not in heaven (NB X's R'n body)
- 3] my body isn't mine to do with as I please
- 4] anti-bodiliness always lurks in the church (e.g., Basil of Caesarea: bodily pleasure is the slime in which the non body-deniers shall be buried!)

Shepherd: we have to come to terms with our body and its God-ordained pleasures, always aware

- 1] of the fact that we can become addicted to pleasure
- 2] our body is essential to our identity
- 3] we have to make our peace with our body image
- 4] we may and must glorify God *in our bodies* (1<sup>st</sup> Cor.)

1] we are mortal, not possessed of immortal souls p134

- 2] "after-life" "experiences" don't overturn this fact
- 3] this doesn't deny that we can be "caught up to the 3<sup>rd</sup> heaven" in this life as a result of life in Sp
- 4] the death of the body means the death of ME : nothing is left over, nothing survives

## (THE DYING OF THE BODY AND THE DIGNITY OF THE PERSON) p135

"Some theologians distinguish between 'dying' and 'death'." Yes

- 1] dying is an aspect of our creatureliness
- 2] "death" is a spiritual condition (of loss) arising from God's judgement upon us
- 3] "sin is the sting of death": Why does death 'sting'?

Elizabeth Kuebler-Ross and her celebrated "five stages." p137

NB: it takes approximately two years for most people to die today.

p138 be careful: Jesus resisted death because of the looming horror of the dereliction

p138 death is "Mr BIG" in Mark's gospel, where Jesus is characteristically VICTOR.

p140 Yet in all of this "the 7<sup>th</sup> day reaches back into the 6<sup>th</sup>." Yes

Note how important it is pastorally to admit

- 1] *this* person, with this unique history, is dying
- 2] this person is *dying*
- 3] this person's *dying and death* are comprehended in him who is r'n and life

## (CONTEXTUALIZING DEATH IN A COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND HOPE) p140

- 1] judgement means that our life in the body was exceedingly important; crucial (vindication!)
- 2] what befalls us in the body and what we do in the body are important
- 3] the limitations in our life that are rooted in the limitations of our body (e.g., disease, handicap, encumbrance) will not be limitations in the life to come
- 4] we treat a corpse with dignity: we don't pretend that the corpse is the person; but we honour the departed person by respecting remains p142
- 5] because we lose control over our bodies in the course of dying, we must accord the dying as much dignity as possible
- 6] artificially maintaining bodily functions doesn't guarantee that *this person* is present
- 7] the disposal of the body indicates what a society thinks of people
- 8] the event of death should be understood as a processional, a transition
- 9] (Shep) the church building is proper venue for funerals
- 10] to flee the dying, to flee death, is to flee ourselves

Never be afraid of ministering to a corpse.

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- 1] people often hear when they can't respond
- 2] so what if the person is dead (God can make time run backwards)  
[ask me about Sally K---]