

Involving the Church in Funeral Arrangements

Written by Steve Marr

Monday, 03 December 2018 14:25

For centuries when a church member died; the funeral service was held in the church, the deceased was buried in the church cemetery out back, and friends and neighbors gathered together to share memories and a good meal together at the church. This practice honored the departed, comforted the family and didn't leave excessive expenses to be paid later.

Today most of these interactions are handled by a funeral home. The funeral home sends the hearse to pick up the body. The funeral home meets with the family and makes arrangements, generally very expensive arrangements. Under stress, families are not in a good position to think through their best options to work out an appropriate cost structure for the funeral. It isn't unusual for the family to feel guilty because they didn't buy the best. According to the Huffington Post the average funeral costs over \$11,000.

Today, the church's role has more to do with locating affordable funeral homes. A church leader should be able to help the family eliminate extras that are not particularly important. A church leader who knows the family is in better position to discuss these areas with the family.

Church leadership can also be a great go-between for the family to help remove a lot of stress and anxiety. Their involvement can also prevent future stress and guilt for the family because they didn't make decisions alone nor did the decisions rest on one family member.

A better option and ministry opportunity is to recruit church elders, deacons or board members to assist families with funeral arrangements. The surviving family is simply not in a good position to negotiate anything.

Funeral directors are businesspeople. While they can offer a great deal of comfort and solace during a difficult time, being businesspeople they have to make a profit. A church leader will be in a stronger position to intercede for the family and make sure that services offered are necessary, meet the family's budget, and truly honor the wishes of the family. While services of a funeral home are important, I've always held a strong view that the church should be more important at the end of life rather than an outside facility.

Involving the Church in Funeral Arrangements

Written by Steve Marr

Monday, 03 December 2018 14:25

Paul wrote, "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55, NIV) Funerals are a topic we tend to avoid until absolutely necessary. We know the Bible is very clear, those who place their faith in Christ will not experience death but everlasting life. However, a poorly planned funeral can provide a serious financial sting to a family, particularly if they are unable to afford the cost.

Subscribe to the free Business Proverbs e-mail here: <http://bit.ly/ncixc1>