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picture of Michael Douglas in a newspaper the other day - the article went on to tell us that he had had liposuction, a tummy tuck, a reduction in the number of wrinkles, his eyebrows have been lifted, the skin around his neck and chin has been pulled back, all in an effort to look younger, to try to defy age and death.

People are afraid of death, they are afraid that they don't know when they're going to die or how they are going to die or what happens when they die. It's the fear of the unknown. Would we actually want to know when we're going to die? – would Bobbie have wanted to know she had two weeks left, it could be more terrifying to know when. As for how - the young girl fighting for her life after being attacked whilst taking her baby for a walk in what has been called the safest part of England - would she have wanted to know that?

For Christians though we can give some answers to what happens when I die?

Here in the gospel passage Jesus gives us words of comfort, he says 'do not let your heart be troubled' he's giving words of reassurance to his disciples and to us also. Jesus says 'I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me'. That's a very exclusive claim. He doesn't say I can show you the way to God, He says I am the way, He doesn't say I can point to the truth, He says I am the truth, He doesn't just say I can point to life, life can be found in him. He claims to be God. Jesus alone claims equality with God, He claims He is the way to salvation, eternal life is through Him. Jesus is going to prepare a place in heaven for us. Heaven is waiting for us. Elsewhere we're told in heaven there is no more suffering, pain, sin or evil. In heaven there will be nothing to worry about and no fear.

It's the belief in an after life which gives us hope. It's when we come to terms with death that we can see our earthly life as a preparation for what is to come. Death somehow throws life into perspective doesn't it?

'My bags are packed' Pope John Paul II said a few years ago when he was asked about old age and dying. When we are planning a journey we pack before we go - we get prepared - we're all journeying towards death have we packed our bags? To put it another way - are we prepared for death?

We might want to prepare now with practical arrangements such as writing a will. It seemed odd when Mark and I wrote our will nearly twenty years ago, but once we had children we felt a responsibility for getting our affairs in order should we die. Maybe you might like to think even now about your funeral, what hymns or bible reading you want – and perhaps consider writing it down. It's a great help to those left behind to know what your wishes would be.

In some cases packing our bags might also mean repairing broken relationships, that's not always possible, but at least we can do all we can to ensure we have made efforts to heal past tensions. We are all one day going to be accountable to God for the way we have treated others during our time on earth.

If we are going to spend eternity with God then it might also be an idea to develop our relationship with God while we're on earth - by prayer, reading the bible, growing in holiness.

Maybe not going so far as the lady who announced that at the age of 80 that she was going to learn Hebrew so she could speak to God in his own language.