

YOUR NEXT OF KIN

Ecclesiastes 9:10 ... "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going."

The phrase "next of kin" is what we use to identify your closest living relative. It is most often used in the context of your death or a disabling injury. Doctors want to know who to contact should you be injured enough that you cannot communicate, or if you pass away. As a practical measure, I suggest you put a note in your wallet or purse that gives emergency responders information about who to contact in the event you are seriously injured or die. It could be your spouse, a parent, sibling, son, or daughter.

Your next of kin is also a consideration in your spiritual life. When people find Christ and get saved, they often do so alone without their dearest and closest relatives. Perhaps you have become a Christian, but your parents or children or others in your family have not followed you; they are still living in a lost state in which they might someday be eternally separated from God. You have done your best to witness to them, to share the love of Jesus with them, and to invite them to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior but they continue to reject the offer. Eventually, you will die and be taken to Heaven, and your voice will be silenced.

May I suggest that you do something to give your next of kin a final chance at redemption, even after you die? Today's verse warns us that after we die, we no longer have any influence on our loved ones. So, write them a letter to be read at your death mass, funeral, or interment. Tell them again of your love for them, your concern for their future, and your desire to share eternity in heaven with them after they, too, die. Perhaps at the moment of sadness for them as they gather around your casket, your words of love will resonate better than they did when you were alive. Funerals force us to look death in the face and be reminded that we will one day die ourselves. The friend or relative you tried witnessing to during your life, may see things differently when they see you in death. So, be sure to have the last word.

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