Spencer Horan

Tuesdays with Morrie

“The truth is…once you learn how to die, you learn how to live.” (82). To me, this is the most memorable quote from *Tuesdays with Morrie,* by Mitch Album. Morrie says this to Mitch on their fourth Tuesday in response to Mitch’s question about how someone can prepare for death. Morrie Schwartz was always Mitch Album’s favorite teacher, at his graduation he promises to stay in touch with Morrie. Sixteen years later Mitch sees that Morrie is featured in a story on the television show “Nightline”. Mitch recognized his old teacher and called him up to see if he could visit. Mitch began visiting Morrie every Tuesday; the topics that they would talk about would range from all kinds of things. Mitch was so intrigued by Morries philosophies that he started taking notes and even recorded Morrie at times. With each session, Morrie became increasingly ill. On their last meeting, Morrie was bed ridden and hugged Mitch for the last time. Morrie dies a short time later. The quote I mentioned at the beginning, Morrie says, means one must accept that they will die before they can truly appreciate what they have on earth. This follows the theme that, we must live every moment to the fullest, and not in regret. Morrie proves this by rejecting culture, looking for the good in every situation, and happiness.

Throughout the story Morrie gradually becomes physically handicapped. He is not always able to walk, go to the bathroom on his own, and sometimes in the mornings, he wakes up and just cries, for the loss of his physical ability. While today’s culture says that this is something you should be embarrassed of, Morrie instead thinks these are ways of life; just because you need help with them does not mean you should be embarrassed. He rejects cultures opinion and makes his own set of ideals. He realizes that he already suffers enough from this disease, so why social acceptance if it makes him suffer more. Morrie does not let the greedy and selfish culture get in the way of his happiness. He ignores the cultures standards, which allows him to focus on the good and fulfill his life.

In the book,Morrie talks to one of his previous students, Mitch, for thirteen Tuesdays. They talk about Morries life and the many lessons he has learned from it. Morrie tells Mitch things he must do in order to truly live. Throughout these sessions, Morrie and Mitch grow closer and form a strong bond and respect for one another. They talk about everything, from today’s society, to death. He tells Mitch that death will come, but to not let the fear of it get in the way of living. In Ted Koppel’s first interview with Morrie, Morrie tells him that he most feared that one day he would have to have somebody wipe him after using the bathroom. Now his worst fear has come true. Morrie sees this as a complete surrender to the disease; he has lost his dignity and now faces total dependency on others. Morrie tells Mitch that despite being totally dependent now, he enjoys being a child for a second time. Focusing on the bad in life just makes it bitter, and Morrie does not want to spend his last days full of anger. Morrie has lost his dignity and control over his own body, yet he still looks for the good in the situation.

On many occasions Mitch is reminded to cherish every moment. I think Morrie best represents this message. He lived for every moment and always searched for happiness. Of course he had his difficulties, but he did not let them stop him. He always did as much as he could and even shared with Mitch what he was feeling and thinking along his painful journey. Morrie does not revel in money or material things, he lives in the moment. On the eighth Tuesday, a local a capella group came to Morries home and gave him a private performance. Morrie always loved music, but from his illness it has had an even bigger impact on him. He was moved to tears during the songs. Those are the things that make him happy. His house is not fancy and he has not bought anything since he was diagnosed. His house is made a home by love, not new objects. Morrie urges Mitch to help others, to devote himself and his time, not just money. With those words that Morrie tells Mitch, he realizes that even though he gained financial success, he cannot gain happiness in money.

In conclusion, I think that Mitch Album is trying to say that you should not let life pass you by. Do what makes you happy and do not dwell if people disagree. *Tuesdays with Morrie* shows the hardship that one down to earth ill man and one financially successful; yet unhappy man face together. They form an unbreakable bond. They share wisdom, hardships, and love. Morrie and Mitch both learn to not let life pass you by, to live for love not money, and to always seek happiness first.