

What Is Life?

The attitudes of a great number of people who live on this planet suggest they have a real fantasy that they will live forever on this earth. The reality, my friend, is that no one lives forever in this physical body. All things on earth, including human life, are temporary, and pass away. This is what the great musician and songwriter, King David, said about life: “As for us. Our life is like grass. We grow and flourish like a wild flower; then the wind blows on it, and it is gone—no one sees it again” (Ps. 108:15-16).

As the Psalmist tells us, life is just like a wild flower: we are here today and gone tomorrow. We are born, we grow old, we die, we are buried, and our bodies decay. That’s the way it is. Millions before us have died, and if the Lord tarries long enough, millions after us also will die. Let’s not fool ourselves, my friend, this is the reality of human life. Death is one appointment which must be kept by every single human being; no one will be able to escape.

Life is a journey, and like any other journey, it has a beginning and an end.

Life also is an investment—it can be an investment in life itself, or it can be an investment in death. The choice, my friend, is solely yours.

At midnight on December 31, 1999, the whole world celebrated the dawning of a brand new century, some with much anticipation, many with hope for the future, and the majority with fear for the uncertain. Whatever your frame of mind was on that night, the hard cold fact is this: Not one single person who welcomed in the new century on December 31, 1999 will be here on this planet to herald in the twenty-second century on December 31, 2099. There is absolutely no doubt—we will all be dead by then.

September 11, 2001 was a beautiful Tuesday morning in New York City and Washington, D.C., but this date will be permanently etched in the minds of people all over the world for many years to come. More than 3,000 Americans were destined to die that day. These people woke up as usual, and went to their jobs in the World Trade Center and at the Pentagon, not one of them having the slightest idea that they would be approaching their final hour on planet earth. Before their coffee break, they were all dead! The terrorists had struck—the worst peace time terror attack in the history of the world had unfolded. Over 3,000 Americans went down that day. Many of their bodies are still not found: some were blown into bits by the force of the blast, and others were instantly pulverized into dust as the buildings fell. The site of one of the great architectural wonders of the modern world was transformed into rubble within one hour.

These people, with all their hopes, dreams, and aspirations, were gone—just like that! Human life therefore, is nothing at all.

I really want you to realize, my friends, that life is very brief. These sentiments were expressed by Moses in the Psalms: “Our life is cut short by your anger; it fades away like a whisper. Seventy years is all we have—eighty years, if we are strong; yet all they bring us is trouble and sorrow; life is soon over, and we are gone” (Ps. 90:9-10). It is laid down then, in the laws of nature, that human life should average about seventy years, and if we take care of our bodies, we might enjoy about forty good ones. All of us who are over

forty should appreciate that after the age of forty, the visible signs of aging definitely begin to creep in. Yes, the hair begins to gray or to thin out, and wrinkles begin to appear all over the face, and so on. If you are over forty, take a look in the mirror and compare what you see with a photograph you took maybe twenty years ago, and you will see that I am telling the truth. Let us take a look at a typical man. Today you see him reaching his peak at age 35: big, strong, energetic, filled with dreams and aspirations, ready to conquer the world. Check him out fifty years from now, however, and you will see him old and gray, weak and feeble, just like a baby. You will see him unable to even help himself—just waiting for death to come calling. That's what human life is all about. The inevitable must happen: you will die, your body will decay, and it will go back to the earth from whence it came. There is absolutely nothing that you or anyone else can do about it. Let's not fool ourselves, my friends, there is only one certainty in life: death. It doesn't make the slightest difference who you think you might be on this earth, or what you might possess; when your time comes, you are still going to die.

With this in mind, why, then, do we spend so much of our time and energies in this somewhat useless quest for material prosperity if all the things that we take so much pride in owning today, will one day belong to someone else who did not even work for them? Yes, my friend, we are all mortal beings, and in the light of God's infinity, our earthly possessions are really of no significance at all.

No matter how rich you are and how important you think you may be on this planet, you will never be able to defeat the laws of nature. When your time comes, you will die, and your body will decay. Yes, that day is coming for every single one of us, when we will cease to walk upon the surface of the earth. Instead, we will be lying beneath it. That day might be sooner than many of us think. As the Psalmist tells us: "A man's greatness cannot keep him from death; he will still die like the animals"(Ps. 49:12).

If this was all that life had to offer us, it would be totally useless, and would really make no sense at all. Fortunately, my friend, life can mean so much more than this, and there is a bright hope for every single human being.

When you come right down to it, life is really a matter of choices; it's all about making the right choices. If the right choices are made, life can be full of meaning, because every single human being was put on this planet for a purpose, with each person given the opportunity to make a positive contribution to humanity. Some people discover that purpose, whereas many do not. To discover one's real purpose in life, one has to look towards the spiritual things—the things of God. These things are eternal, but also serve to enrich this life of mortal existence.

Contrary to the teachings of many religious organizations, the Bible teaches that after the body dies, the soul of man continues to live, and will exist throughout eternity. Man tries to put everything into his seventy years of life, but what is seventy years in the light of all eternity? It is like a grain of sand of the seashore, like a drop of water in the midday sun in a tropical country. It is of total insignificance!

It is a biblical fact that the soul of man will live forever, but it can exist only in one of two places: heaven or hell. Many people choose not to believe in the existence of hell, but the Holy Bible teaches that such a place exists. This fact is found in the Old Testament, in

Daniel 12:2, which reads: “Many of those who have already died will live again: some will enjoy eternal life, and some will suffer eternal disgrace.” It is further corroborated in the New Testament by our Lord when he spoke these words: “So if your hand makes you lose your faith, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life without a hand than to keep both hands and go off to hell, to the fire that never goes out” (Matt. 9:43-44). The writer of the book of Revelation also confirmed the existence of hell when he declared: “Whoever did not have his name written in the book of the living was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15). Hell, my friends, is indeed a very real place.

At the end of the day, my friend, it is the choices that you make in this life here on earth which will determine the eternal destiny of your soul. It is written in the Holy Scriptures that every single human being, without exception, will one day have to stand before the Eternal Judge to give an account for all the things that he has done in this life.

Only two requests have been made of man by the Almighty: love him, and love your brother. We can only express love for God when we accept the gift of his Salvation, which he has made freely available to all mankind through the death of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was stretched out on a Roman cross for six hours. We can only love God when we surrender our lives to him and live in obedience with his Word, which is contained within the Holy Bible. When we surrender to God, we will automatically be able to love our brother. Why do we find this so difficult to do?

If you have foolishly chosen to reject the sacrifice that God has made for you through the death of his Son, then when you die, you will be judged unworthy to enter into God’s kingdom. Your destiny, beyond the shadow of any doubt, will be eternal damnation, and you will have no one to blame but yourself. You will end up spending eternity in Hell, regretting the fact that your time on earth had been all wasted, and that you had lived your life all in vain; all this because you made foolish choices. Does it make any sense at all to sacrifice the eternal joy of living in God’s presence for all eternity for just a few years of worldly temporary pleasure?

Be smart then, my friend: making the wrong choices will result in regrettable tragedy. Look into your life today. Repent of your sins. Ask God for his forgiveness. Turn away from your lifestyle of sin today, and start serving God by accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. If you fail to do this before you leave this life, then as sure as night follows day, you will spend eternity in hell with Satan and his demons.

The future is very uncertain, my friends, so please do not procrastinate. This is what the Scripture says: “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2).

Can anyone guarantee that he will live to see tomorrow? No. Death respects no man, and can come calling at any time, even right now. This is the truth, my friend! So, instead of foolishly wasting this seventy years of life in the fruitless quest for wealth and pleasure, why not invest them more fruitfully in glorifying God, loving your brother, and discovering the real purpose for which you were born?

The Holy Scripture plainly warns us that “it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the Judgment” (Heb. 9:27).