

WHAT ARE WE HERE FOR?

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." "For God shall bring work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccles. 12:13-14.

"Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." John 18:37.

These Scriptures answer this big question which has engaged the thoughts of philosophers in all ages. It is a serious and also a glorious answer. It is a challenge and a command.

Life, fraught with such vast opportunities, must have a chief end. There must be some reason for existence or living. The first question asked in the shorter catechism of the Presbyterian Church is: "What is the chief end of man?" That question is answered, "To glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

Every creation and product of man's hand is made for some specific purpose, e. g., the electric light, automobile, radio, telephone, etc. Each was designed and invented for a specific purpose. Thus, God has a purpose when He creates life. Unless life is a humbug, there must be a reason for every individual life. Have heard about group of students who tried to play a joke on an old biology professor. Wings, legs, tail, head of different bugs and put them together. Found this strange specimen and want you to help classify it. "This is a humbug." But life is not a humbug or a farce. To discover chief end of life and make it purposeful is a long step toward making life worth while. God has definite purpose for every life. Let us look at:

I. What We Are Not Here For.

1. To live for self

I am a member of a family, a member of a church, a citizen of a city, a state, and a nation. See how our relationships widen and enlarge. Being a member of a family gives me domestic obligations. Citizens -- civic obligations. Church member--moral and spiritual obligations. If my family needs my thought, time, money, or energy, I would be a poor sort of a husband and father if I did not give freely of what I have. If my church needs me, or what I have in thought, time, money or energy, it has a full right to expect me to help supply its needs. There are far too many giants in the business and social world and too many pigmies in the religious realm. We are debtors to all people who need our ministry. We can make our lives channels of blessing, or they will become poisonous and bitter, dead seas. There is entirely too much suffering and sorrow for people to draw themselves in and become as close as a clam.

Life is too complex and too closely related for any man to live to himself. Head cannot say to the foot, I owe you nothing. All are related. Rich landlord cared only for collecting rent from poverty-stricken tenants. Had beautiful daughter -- planned elaborate wedding. Order given merchant for fur coat. Work on coat farmed out to poor seemstresses. Wedding day girl deathly sick with spinal meningitis. Wondered where terrible disease came from--traced germ---learned widowed seamstress who lived in his house had worked on it. Her child had high fever and then chills. Threw coat over her to make comfortable. She had meningitis. Germ carried. Related.

2. To live for pleasure.

Pleasure is like butterfly, weary ourselves in chase and rarely catch it. Will become tired and weary of dizzy, dazzling, mad pursuit after pleasures of this world. Nerves crack and be left a wreck when should be in prime of life. Many ride social merry-go-round but get off right where they get on.

II. What We Are Here For.

1. To get right with God.

By nature and practise in a state of alienation from Him; breach between Him and us is of our own making. Our prime concern should be to get that breach healed.

2. To do His will.

For this, He has given us life, physical strength, mental endowments, spiritual nature. He has placed us here that we may do His will. This should be our continual aim.

3. To witness unto the truth.

John 18:37. By lip and by life.

4. To serve mankind.

Spend all of life in doing good.

5. To make a life.

Making a life is primary, making a living is secondary. Many making more than a living who are failing utterly in making a life. Life is not made by satisfying every whim of the soul, indulging every desire of the body, and surfeiting every sense of the flesh. Life is made by working out every problem, bearing cheerfully every burden, and being true in every relationship. Hardships may be transformed, and often are, into untold blessings. Life is not a long holiday affair. There are crosses, sorrows, and disappointments. How do you take your hardships and trying experiences?

Again, life is made by being faithful in the little things. All must begin with little things, but our fidelity here means much in the future.

Two young men, college mates, found work in a great garden seed packing plant. Their work was filling small paper packages with garden seed. Wearisome work. Soon one said, "This is no sort of work for me. I am quitting." He quit. Anybody can do. It does not take brains, brawn, courage, or strength. Other stayed on. Didn't work by clock but by job. Not making a dollar a day, but was growing a life. Ten years passed by. One who quit was a secretary with a meager salary of \$600. Other a high official in garden seed business with a salary of \$10,000 and dividends as a stockholder. Life is made as we are faithful in small tasks and little duties. Prove faithful here and some day, the call, "Come up higher," will sound like sweet music.

Life is made or marred by meeting adequately the crises in life. These crises often come suddenly. Be ready when crisis comes. Crossroads in life are critical — marriage question, business decision, spiritual choice. What do then will largely make or mar life.

Life is found in its fullest when one is true in every relationship. Must measure up in every direction.

Life in all its glory is found in doing right. We are to do right, not because it is pleasant or convenient but because it is right to do right. Big word in life is not selfishness, pleasure, nor riches, but DUTY.

6. To win others to Christ.

We find life sweet, joyous, and worth while as we invest it in others and for others. Here to serve and as we serve life will become rich, abundant, and full.

7. To glorify the Lord.