

4. Life (2Q 2009—Walking the Walk: The Christian Life)

Biblical material: Gen. 2:7; Ps. 139:13, 14; John 1:1–3; John 3; John 10:10; 2 Cor. 5:17; Phil. 2:1–5.

Quotes

- Dream as if you'll live forever, live as if you'll die today. *James Dean*
- Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending. *Maria Robinson*
- Life is full of beauty. Notice it. Notice the bumble bee, the small child, and the smiling faces. Smell the rain, and feel the wind. Live your life to the fullest potential, and fight for your dreams. *Ashley Smith*
- The doors we open and close each day decide the lives we live. *Flora Whittemore*
- The most important things in life aren't things. *Anthony J. D'Angelo*
- *Carpe diem!* Rejoice while you are alive; enjoy the day; live life to the fullest; make the most of what you have. It is later than you think. *Horace*
- Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile. *Albert Einstein*
- True religion is real living; living with all one's soul, with all one's goodness and righteousness. *Albert Einstein*
- The personal life deeply lived always expands into truths beyond itself. *Anais Nin*
- Too many people are thinking of security instead of opportunity. They seem to be more afraid of life than death. *James F. Bymes*

Questions

Why bother reflecting on life and its meaning—for what difference does it make? How does our outlook on life and ourselves relate to our ideas about God? In what sense is God both the beginning and end of our lives? How much freedom do we have to live our own lives? What is this life for? How does this fit into the cosmic conflict?

Bible discussion

It was God himself who breathed life into us (Gen. 2:7). He put us together in the womb (Psalm 139:13, 14). He is the source of life and everything (John 1). He came to give us abundant life (John 10:10), and gives us new life (2 Cor. 5:17) so we might have “the mind of Christ” (Phil. 2:1-5). God is both the source and the destiny of our lives, as we choose him in our lives. And if we choose to live our lives apart from him, we will surely die. That's the harsh reality of life—that in the midst of life we are in death. Without God there is no hope for our lives—but with God we already have eternal life!

Comment 1

GET A LIFE! Who me? Yes you! Sorry? Don't be! Just get a life! What do you know anyway about my life? I just know you need to. Need to what? Get a life!

And it can be anyone and everyone of us! For deep down in us all is that chilling fear of meaninglessness, that no one cares whether we live or die, and that there's no point anyway... Don't tell me you've never felt that—in that stark cold greyness of the morning as you look into that anxious face in the mirror. Of course the easiest answer is to do nothing.

Think nothing. Be nothing. Those sad people who appear in every poll. Those who didn't have an opinion. Those who had no idea. The "Don't-knows" of life...

Ever played Trivial Pursuit? You sit round a board with a circular counter trying to fill the sections with pieces of "pie." The way you get those pieces of pie is by answering pointless questions like who won the Superbowl in 1932 or what is the specific gravity of mud. All so pointless; all so trivial. Which is just like some peoples lives. People actually live out the game of Trivial Pursuit! Life has to be lived like some sort of crazy game, in which you try to win—fun, money, happiness, power...How tragic!

For what did Jesus come to do for us? "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10). He came to bring us full life, the life of God now and eternally. This means that most people today are not really fully alive. They are only playing at being alive, says Jesus. You know how kids play. Imaginary ideas, fantasy games that usually begin: Let's pretend. How do people play that game with their actual lives? Let's pretend that all is well with us when it's not. That's what Jesus came to end—the idea of this pointless game we play with our lives. For the "let's pretend" idea comes from the Devil. Let's pretend is lying, and the Devil is a liar from the beginning, for he said: "You will not surely die." And that is the greatest game of all, pretending that we shall never die, that we shall live forever. How ridiculous! But how many actually do indeed live that lie? Jesus came to end that lie. To give meaning and purpose to our lives. Without him we shall die eternally. But with him we have full life—and eternal life!

Comment 2

Just remember, the same as a spectacular *Vogue* magazine, remember that no matter how close you follow the jumps: Continued on page whatever. No matter how careful you are, there's going to be the sense you missed something, the collapsed feeling under your skin that you didn't experience it all. There's that fallen heart feeling that you rushed right through the moments where you should've been paying attention. Well, get used to that feeling. That's how your whole life will feel some day. This is all practice. None of this matters. We're just warming up. *Chuck Palahniuk*

Ellen White Comments

All created beings live by the will and power of God. They are recipients of the life of the Son of God. However able and talented, however large their capacities, they are replenished with life from the Source of all life. He is the spring, the fountain, of life. Only He who alone hath immortality, dwelling in light and life, could say, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." . . . Christ was invested with the right to give immortality. The life which He had laid down in humanity, He again took up and gave to humanity. {5BC 1113-4}

So there is life in God's word. Christ says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." John 6:63. "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." John 5:24. In every command and in every promise of the word of God is the power, the very life of God, by which the command may be fulfilled and the promise realized. He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God. {COL 38}

It is our safety, our life, our joy, to dwell upon the truths of the plan of salvation. {CE 77}

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