

S. N. May 22, 77 AM

WHAT IS YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE

Ecc. 2:11

I would like to pose this question to each of you today. It is really a certain thing in this daily realm in which we live. Many church folks often speak of mountain-top experiences. I read about a country fair, a farmer took a ride on a merry-go-round. When he got off his wife said, now look at you. You spent your money but you got off where you got on, and you ain't been no where.

Now when church people talk about mountain-top experiences the mount of transfiguration did something, to Peter, James and John. And the experiences we have in our church may lift members up. But remember, after the transfiguration - those men went back down to the level place of reality. They went down to the everyday problems staring them in the face. When we have been on the mountain-top and we have been down in the deep valley - we must eventually return to the everyday living and take up our place with old familiar tasks. But we must do so in the new spirit.

Some people think life is like a golf game. A golfer goes around the course - perhaps with a score of 100, or less. Depending upon who is keeping score! Making ordinary dug shots. Then comes the miracle - he hits a clean hard drive in the middle of the fairway. That is just like music in a golfer's ear. He lifts his head and squares his shoulders and he is ready for the doxology. Now I am getting my true form. This is the real me. And then his memory goes back that he is just ordinary. He hooks, he slices, and he completely misses.

Life is the same way with a fisherman. He casts dozens of times without a strike.

We are on a course in life and life is not for bargaining with God but to trust God. We either must trust God or we must collapse. Faith follows through on everything.

There are several things about the attitude of life.

I. THERE IS A PLAN FOR LIFE

I was impressed to think about this subject - out of one's attitude. It is an eternal matter. And what you conceive to be the answer is something that is very important. Because you may be on the stage of life for only a little while. And then you'll pass off into another land. What do you think about life. What is life all about.

If you had traveled in my footsteps for this week, you would have gone to view and to help in several trips to the city of the dead. There was a man who worked hard with his hands - he left very quickly this life. There was a woman who was the wife of a policeman in our city, many years back. And he was killed in 1941. But this woman got a look on life and her attitude was that God would provide. And he did provide for her, all of these years. There was a farmer who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow. And there was a woman who was from Liverpool, England. Who quietly slipped away while she was in her bed asleep. And then there was a young woman who had struggles with the battles of life. And as I thought about all of these - I thought about the plan of life that

maintain - ch'ism for

pr: go attend

*Remembrance -
for Tom & Rose Bell*

our Fellowship Miss - Talented Person

Never a Time when God has not set work in my life -
God has. Stand back & say He said it!

Jesus reminds us that he has a plan for every life. To every man who will work. Not some work but his work. To every woman her work. Have you found the plan for you. God has a plan for every life. And it is not by chance or accident. God made you and put you here for what purpose. Have you found out what that is. He has one for you. Have you found the work that God wants you to do - some definite work in life.

There is a text, in Ecc. 2:11. In which he asks some questions (is life worth the battle.) (is this all life is - the work of my hands and the labor which I have done. All of this vanity and vexation. There is no profit unto the sun.

II. LET US LOOK AT THE ATTITUDE OF A MAN EXPRESSED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND ONE IN THE NEW

First, Solomon. Our text is from Solomon. He was an outstanding man in the Old Testament. Through the years Solomon made disastrous abuse of life. He became very pessimistic about the world. He recovered out of this before his day was over. And before death took him. He wrote - then I looked upon all the works that my hands hath wrought. And on the labor that I have labored to do. And behold all of this was vanity and vexation of the spirit. "And there was no prophet under the sun. He was right in the hey day of his worldly surroundings, when these words were written. And it reveals the spirit and the attitude of life, during those years. While Solomon was in the grip of this despair - his life and his outlook on

life was certainly dark. Now I am a citizen of this world for 50, 60, 70, 80 years. And then I go to be a citizen of another world forever and ever.

Now the doctrine of immortality is not a dead doctrine. It is not simply some vague philosophy. The doctrine of immortality is a great moral dynamic. And it should lift life to a high level.

What is my attitude towards life today - we step on the stage today. Now before next Sunday, or maybe before tomorrow's sunrise - we could be in the great beyond. What should be my attitude towards life.

Solomon was self-centered in his life for years and years. As you read the story of his remarkable life, you read that he began to build, he began to carry forward, he began to plan. He acted with his eyes upon pleasure. He looked to his own honor and his own ease. As you read the book of Ecc. - it is perhaps one of the most pessimistic books in the Bible. You read of Solomon's awful plight but in the final discovery of his wise conclusion - he said, "let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man." Now this is the voice of a man and this is what man lives for. The fear of God, reverence, keep his commandments. And be faithful.

Think of Solomon's personal life. He went the length of life and he said, I have tried all of it.

He was a learned man. He was called the wisest man of his day. He was an author. He searched near and far to gather sources of information. He went through the libraries of this day. And he says, this is weariness of the flesh. All is vanity and vexation of spirit.

He then devoted life to pleasure. You can read the story about how he spent his life. He went through all the gates of evil. He looked upon all the evils and pleasures that man had in existence in the world. He gave his whole life - to it.

He turned to the dissipation of his body - the life destroying . . . drink. Finally he was able to write - wine is a mocker. Strong drink is raging - and who so ever is deceived by it is not wise. What folly, what madness, Solomon said.

v. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (stealing pools) - 7, 8 (murder)

He went through all the doors of pleasure. Every door of pleasure. His house was full of wives, of all kinds - from all lands and from all faiths. And he comes back to say all is vanity and vexation of spirit. He went through the doors of power. He gathered wealth unto himself. A great kingdom. He built one of the most powerful armies in his day. He was surrounded by servants. He had a mighty company of world rulers that were unto subjection unto him. And yet he came back to write - all is vanity and vexation of spirit. His reaction was - I hate life. It were better never to have been born. He looks back over his life - this man of tremendous ability, power, and wisdom. Had missed the concept and the meaning of life. He had gone to sin and recklessness. And there was vanity and vexation of spirit. He realized that God had set eternity in the heart of the human. And in his old age Solomon became conscious of the fact that he was a citizen of two worlds. He then could say - "let us give a conclusion of the whole matter. Keep his commandments - this is the whole duty of man". He was recovered by the power of God. Before his day was done - and that was wise council for any person today.

12:13-14

Second, the Apostle Paul. How different was the attitude of Paul. He looked upon life as vast and beyond. As he traveled through life. When we think of him as the mightiest man in the New Testament, a great man of Christianity. He started out as a notable unbeliever. Guilty of sins of all self-righteousness and as a Pharisee. He led in a blood persecution. He went too and fro seeking to

exterminate all Christians. One day on a trip, the Scripture says, on the Damascus road he met Christ. And the words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me. He was astonished - who art thou Lord. Is it possible that I am persecuting the promised Messiah. And Jesus said I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. And Paul's says, Lord, what will you have me to do.

There is little doubt that Paul was one of the most joyful men who ever lived. His tribulations were unbearable. ~~If you look in (Cor. 2:11)~~ - he tells you he was beaten five times with 40 stripes, save one. Each time, he had been shipwrecked over and over again. He had been in prison many times. He was scorned, despised, and had been hungry. He had been in fastings. He had been betrayed. And he came through it all saying, I am more than conqueror. "The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is layed up for me a crown of righteousness. Which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me, at that day. And not to me only. But to all of them who love his appearing." What a contrast. The life of Paul and the life of Solomon. He is more than conqueror.

Over and over Paul writes the words - rejoice, rejoice, and I again I say rejoice. When Solomon was saying, I hate life - it is all vanity. Paul was saying, I rejoice in Christ. Solomon had a long season - it is all for me. I am going to get out of life everything I can for myself. But Paul said, all that I am and all that I can be, I am going to do for other people.

How vastly important is your attitude towards life. What are you living for Paul. I am living to pay a debt. Why I owe everyone a service that I can everywhere.

I owe the Jews and I have a debt to the Gentiles. And if I am wise, I owe a debt to the ignorant masses - the Barbarians. I owe a debt to the poor. I owe a debt to the wealthy. I owe myself. I must do all the good I can to all the people I can - as long as ever I can.

*Solomon looking for New Things - like Church looking New Methods - Trying do a Heavenly Task with Hollywood Techniques.
People say churches lost touch with World - NO*

This was the attitude of D. L. Moody. A great man of the past.

Problem is church has lost touch with God!!

No power in self - Paul our sufficiency is Christ. Turn your eyes on Jesus

III. WHERE DO OUR (ATTITUDES TOWARDS LIFE BEGIN)

First, they begin in the home. It is right here in the home that they have their beginnings. Whether the home is humble or the most humble in the world. Did you ever read the story of Pasteur, the scientist in France. He lived in a small house. And they tell us that in Paris, that little poverty marked house where he was born, and where he was brought up. And who ultimately relieved the world of a great deal of suffering. But he went back to that little home and he put a tablet on that little house. And it reads like this. "Oh my father and mother, who lived so simply in this tiny house. It is to you that I owe everything. Your eager enthusiasm, my mother, you passed into my life. And you my father, whose life was so toilsome, you taught me what patience can accomplish with prolonged effort. You my father, I owe my tenacity and daily labor."

There was a mother and father who put their best into their son. They tried to shape and to mold in the direction and to inspire. His attitude towards life began right in the home.

We are stewards of all. This should include our attitude toward life. Paul

realized it and finally Solomon realized it. That he was a steward of all that he had. Your influence whether it is in your home, you are a steward there. A great preacher once asked a man - you mean to tell me that your children are not going to have any help, toward getting instruction, and example toward Heaven, and eternity from you? And that man later, turned around in his life and became a power for God.

What is your attitude. Do you feel that you can just feed on bread and meat and that is going to be your life. No, we are stewards of everything.

Years ago there was a lady who died, a member of the First Baptist Church, Atlanta, Ga. Before she went away she said this, I am a steward to my Lord. I am steward of all his property. The property that my husband left me. She gave one round million dollars to that church saying, "I will ask that the officers of this church invest this million dollars as wisely as they can, and make the interest on it go on and on in every wise way." She gave the other million left her to the hospital center. She said that "I will ask the trustees to take the interest of it and make it last until time shall be no more."

How great - go thou and do likewise. (Giving on and living on, and on when this earthly life is over. You can live on by the right kind of example - by the right kind of influence. You can live on in the lives of people even though you have no money to leave.

You need to give, right now today - and lay up treasurers for yourselves where neither moth, nor rust, nor corruption - where thieves do not break through or steal. You need to invest in the Lord's work. And there will be people years to

come who will say, I was healed because of you. I was helped because of you. Because of what you did or what you said, or planned. My life has been blessed.

What is your attitude towards life. Is it the bound dragging life that is selfish. We are in this world to do all the good we can in all the ways that we can. To all the people that we can.

In nuggets of gold, the author tells about an experience that he had in Athens, Greece. He said he was on a tour and an elderly lady asked if she might go along with him. And so he agreed. And she informed him that she had a small fortune. And that she was going around now - going to enjoy some of it. He said they got back to the hotel and she went into a candy shop. She wanted some candy. So in a few minutes, he decided to go into the candy store. And the little old lady was sampling every piece of candy they had in the store. The people could speak very little English so they couldn't understand what she was talking about. He said he found a piece of candy that he wanted, and paid the cashier, and began to eat it. She came over to him and said now, is that good. He told her, yes. She told the waiter she wanted a piece just like it. The waiter wrapped up a piece. How much is it. And the waiter gave her the price in Greek money. She turned and asked the man, how much is that in American money. 12¢ he answered. She looked at him first and then she looked at the waiter. That's too expensive, she said. And gave the candy back. The man said this, (I guess after 50 years of being stingy - 12¢ came awfully hard.) You know your attitudes in life develop very young. And they stick with you throughout life.

What is your attitude towards life.

It is worth considering today.

James 4:14 - wherefore ye know not what shall be on tomorrow, for what is your life. It is appeareth a little time and then vanishes away.

How foolish and how anxious we are about many things. But here is life that passes away in transition. We have no lease on it - we have no guarantee on it. We do not know whether we will be among the living tomorrow. Like a vapor, or fog, a mist, a puff of smoke. In a few moments it is just going to vanish.

Beloved, we are dying men and women. We do not know at what moment our earthly pilgrimage will cease. Tomorrow may dawn for us or it may not.

This reminds us of what the 15th verse says, for that you ought to say, if the Lord will - we shall live and do this. If it is God's will. The Lord knows what is best for his children. And this is the thing that characterized Paul's life. And it is natural and good for us that we desire the things of God and draw nigh unto him.

Many people boast however and say, it matters not how straight the gate. How charged with punishments, I am the master of my faith, I am the captain of my soul. Boasting is like that whistling in the dark. We are responsible to God. And we need to have the right attitude. I am satisfied with Jesus. He has done so much for me. He has suffered to redeem me. And has died to set me free.

The rest of that hymn goes - when my work on earth is ended, and I cross the

mystic sea, I could hear him saying - I am satisfied with Thee.

I am satisfied, I am satisfied with Jesus. But the question comes to me,
as I think of Calvary, is the Master satisfied with me."

In 1960, Martha Mason received from Wake Forest College a Bachelor of Arts Degree, Summa Cumlaude. Now if she had just been the normal college student, it would have been different.

But she had been 12 years in an iron lung - not able to be out of the lung but just for a few minutes.

Polio claimed her in 1948 - she was in the 5th grade of public school in N. C. And when the news that Martha could live in the iron lung, she had already dreamed of going to college and high school.

For seven years the public schools, Martha was taught by unselfish teachers.

She graduated from high school with an all time high average 98.6.

Martha did go to college, they moved the iron lung to the school. And they had communications with her so she could keep up with the classes and the church. And she took all the tests and examinations. And she graduated from Gardner Webb Junior College (96+ average) for two years there. And then she went on to Wake Forest, and won honors.

She wanted to become a journalist, a writer. She was sustained by her faith in God and many articles have appeared in magazines and national circulation. With the (by line) Martha Mason, Her attitude in life was an attitude that we are talking

about today - what we need. Selfishness is not of God. The unselfish man and woman shall go on and on - making the world a better place. We need to get the right attitude. We need to rise up oh men of God and give heart, mind, strength, and soul, To Christ, the blessed king.

Who wants to follow this glorious Saviour and Lord today. Who will say, I am Christ's friend now and I want to link my life with his church and with his people. Who wants to say, I am a friend of Christ's - I've never made a decision before, but I will do it today. Who will say, I want to make an unconditional surrender - my attitude of life has not been what it should have been.

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Would you live for Jesus, and be always pure and good. Would you walk with him within the narrow road. Would you have him bear your burden, ~~carry~~ all your load. Let him have his way with you. !!