

November 1, 2015 “Live like Today May be Your Last” Philippians 1:16-30

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Colossians 3:5-10 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ...

Matthew 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

James 1:26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

James 1:22-27 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. ...

James 1:19-20 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Ephesians 4:1-6 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ...

Hebrews 13:5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Proverbs 28:20 A faithful man will abound with blessings, but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.

Philippians 3:18-19 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

James 4:11-12 Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

Matthew 6:24 “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Romans 14:1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions.

Ephesians 4:26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Jim Elliott. Was famous for saying... "He is no fool to give up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." This flows from the heart of a man who had an eternal perspective. It is from someone more concerned about the things of heaven than entangled with the things of earth. **In his diary he wrote...** "God I pray to you, light these idol sticks of my life that I may burn for you. Consume my life God, for it is yours." And then he wrote, "I seek not a long life but a full life, like that of Jesus Christ." His prayer was answered. His life was not that long. He died in 1956 taking the Gospel to the Auca Indians in Ecuador.

In **Shakespeare's** famous play Hamlet, we find the words, "to be or not to be, that is the question." We discover a man who wants to end his life. He no longer wants to go on living, but facing death would be even more tragic.

Professional golfer Paul Azinger was diagnosed with cancer at age 33. He had just won a PGA championship and had ten tournament victories to his credit. He wrote, "A genuine feeling of fear came over me. I could die from cancer. Then another reality hit me even harder. I'm going to die eventually anyway, whether from cancer or something else. It's just a question of when." Before, Azinger lived for golf. No more. Now all he wanted to do was live! One day in the early stages of the panic following his diagnosis, Azinger remember some words he had once heard in a Bible study. "We're not in the land of the living going to the land of the dying," the teacher had said, "We're in the land of the dying trying to get to the land of the living." That reality led him to a living hope through faith in Jesus Christ. Golfer Paul Azinger recovered from chemotherapy and returned to the PGA tour. But the bout with cancer changed his perspective. He would later write, "I've learned that happiness is only temporary. The only way to true contentment is in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I'm not saying that nothing ever bothers me and I don't have problems, but I feel like I've found the answer to the six-foot hole."

"For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain." Warren Wiersbe asks how we might complete that same sentence. Might we say... "For to me to live is money and to die is to leave it all behind?", "For to me to live is fame and to die is to be forgotten?", "For to me to live is power and to die is to lose it all?" ...or... "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain?"

In the fall of 2005, 9-year-old, Austin Blessit, had his tonsils removed. Before the surgery, an anesthesiologist came in to start an IV. He was wearing a cool surgical cap covered in colorful frogs. Austin loved that "frog hat." When the doctor started to leave, Austin called out, "Hey, wait." The doctor turned. "Yeah, buddy, what do you need?" "Do you go to church?" "No," the doctor admitted. "I know I probably should, but I don't."

Austin then asked, "Well, are you saved?" Chuckling nervously, the doctor said: "Nope. But after talking to you, maybe it's something I should consider." Pleased with his response, Austin answered, "Well you should, 'cause Jesus is great!" "I'm sure he is, little guy," the doctor said, and quickly made his exit. When Austin's surgery was finished, the anesthesiologist came into the waiting room to talk to his mother. He told her the surgery went well, then said, "Mrs. Blessit, I don't usually come down and talk to the parents after a surgery, but I just had to tell you what your son did." Oh boy, she thought. What did that little rascal do now? The doctor explained that he'd just put the mask on Austin when her son signaled that he needed to say something. When the doctor removed the mask, Austin blurted, "Wait a minute, we have to pray!" The doctor told him to go ahead, and Austin prayed: "Dear Lord, please let all the doctors and nurses have a good day. And Jesus, please let the doctor with the frog hat get saved and start going to church. Amen." The doctor admitted that this had touched him. "I was so sure he would pray that his surgery went well," he explained. "He didn't even mention his surgery. He prayed for me! Mrs. Blessit, I had to come down and let you know what a great little guy you have." A few minutes later, a nurse came to take her to post-op. She had a big smile on her face as they walked to the elevator. "There's something you should know," she said. "Some of the other nurses and I have been witnessing to and praying for that doctor for a long time. After your son's surgery, he tracked a few of us down to tell us about Austin's prayer. He said, 'Well girls, you got me. If that little boy could pray for me when he was about to have surgery, then I think maybe I need his Jesus, too.'"

Tina Blessit, "A Prayer Before Surgery," Today's Christian (July/August 2006), p. 27

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