

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

"Looking at Life"

" Tender Teens, Teachable Twenties, Tireless Thirties, Fiery Forties, Forceful Fifties, Serious Sixties, Sacred Seventies, Aching Eighties,....Shortening Breath , Death, Sod.....God ".

The above statement from the pen of an unknown author has been printed under the heading "Outline of Life." Although it is brief it does remind us that each decade of life is different and that life at its best is brief. However, our need is not to have carefully worded phrases about life, but to hold to a carefully framed philosophy of life.

Our greatest need for today is for a definite philosophy of life based on Christian belief and teaching. It is evident that those who lack definite values, standards, and ideals live only to satisfy natural desires. They join the masses of humanity who "live it up." They are lured to man-made glamour and appealing amusements. The movies, many newspapers, and popular magazines continually foster the idea of "free expression." Unfortunately, too, some educationalists endorse this self-centred philosophy of life. However, when we look behind the flimsy front of the flowing champagne, the glittering lights, the sensual pleasures, we realize anew the need for a Christian philosophy of life.

True philosophy demands proper balance between rigid rules and free expression. A man may be so rigid that he breaks himself and he can be so loose that he falls to pieces. Too much freedom makes a person mad and too much authority can lead to the same end. Balance is very important to proper adjustment in life and we must keep clear of extreme positions. Let us remember that it is just as possible to perish in fires of fanaticism as it is in the ices of indifference.

Listed are some broad and basic principles that are included in the Christian philosophy of life.

1. The Bible is the unerring rule of faith and practice and helps us to distinguish between truth and error, right and wrong.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16.

Haile Selassie, past Emperor of Ethiopia, recognized man's need to look to the Scriptures to "find the solution of his present difficulties and guidance for his future action."

He declared: "Today man sees all his hopes and aspirations crumbling before him. He is perplexed and knows not whither he is drifting. But he must realize that the Bible is his refuge, and the rallying point for all humanity. It is here man will find the solution of his present difficulties and guidance for his future action, and unless he accepts with clear conscience the Bible and its great message, he cannot hope for salvation. For my part, I glory in the Bible."

2. The supreme force of life is love, and we must continually test our motives to see that our actions stem from love.

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Matthew 22:37-39.

From a study of these verses it is clear that love to God and to our fellow men is our first responsibility in life. We are to let love motivate our worship to God and service to others. This is the only kind of Christian life the Lord recognizes and although it is possible to live without loving, it is not possible to love without living. When we order our lives according to this divine philosophy, we discover the real secret of joy –

Jesus First

Others Next

Yourself last

3. We do not know our future, but we know Who holds the future, and we therefore are to "live by faith."

"Life is a story in volumes three-

The Past, the Present, the Yet-to-be.

The first is finished and laid away,

The second we are reading day by day;

The third and last of volumes three

Is locked from sight - God keeps the Key."

This verse reminds us of a beautiful statement which came from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?" "Take therefore no thought for tomorrow: for tomorrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matthew 6:25, 26, 34.

4. Knowing that Jesus "went about doing good," we are to follow His example and to practise the golden rule at all times.

Although the "golden rule" is often quoted, it is also often forgotten in the home, the community, and in the school. It was first stated by Jesus when he said, "Therefore all things, whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matthew 7:12. The world is waiting for a demonstration of practical godliness; for Christians to live the way they pray. Ours is the responsibility and the blessed duty to seek out those who need help, comfort, and encouragement. We not only are to pass on to them the good news of salvation, but also to practise good deeds of kindness. Let us ever remember that the good news and the good deeds go hand in hand for if we take "GOD" out of "good" there is nothing left. As we follow in the steps of the Master we will go about "doing good" - we will do as he did.

5. We need a clear vision of our place in the plan of God.

The Scriptures bear out this principle of successful living. Years ago Isaiah said, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." We are all born like kittens, with our eyes closed to light that beams from Calvary's hill, light that beckons us to Christ's service and kingdom. One author said:

"No horse gets anywhere until he is harnessed.

No steam or gas drives anything until it is confined.

No Niagara falls is ever turned into light and power until it is tunnelled.

No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated, disciplined."

People who are focused, dedicated, disciplined, are wanted in this life and if these people are focused on Christ, dedicated to Christ, and disciplined by Christ, they are warranted a place in the kingdom of heaven.

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