

Audio Sermon: An Eye for the Eternal

by Bob Jennings

The way we look at things matters, and applying an eternal perspective to our daily lives can change our lives and improve our souls.

Duration: 11:14

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:13

Topics: "Eternal Perspective", "Spiritual Discipline"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of making wise daily decisions that have eternal significance, cautioning against being distracted by lesser things and highlighting the battle to prioritize reading the Bible and good books for soul improvement. It challenges believers to view sufferings, losses, possessions, sin, and even the smallest matters through an eternal perspective, urging a focus on seeking God's kingdom above all else.

Transcript

The devil will tempt us to make soft, even destructive choices in this regard. The Christian can make foolish, daily decisions, things that will not count for eternity. Esteeming things over people, things of the body over the soul.

He'll get us to doing good things which are still not the best thing. Puttering around with this, puttering around with that. And we never do get any reading done.

That will improve our soul. Even good books. It is a battle to read the Bible.

It is a battle to read good books. Things that will improve our soul. That will change our life, you see.

Transform our life by the renewing of the mind, Romans 12. Think of Paul. In 2 Timothy 4.13, he tells him, When you come, he says, bring my cloak which I left with Christmas, and bring the books, and especially the parchments.

Probably the Scriptures. But he didn't say, bring the books. I mean, here's Paul, a mighty apostle, and he says, bring the books.

Inspired by God, and he says, bring the books. Taken up in the third heaven, paradise, saw things so glorious that it's not permitted to repeat them. But he says, bring the books.

No doubt had a wide experience, widely traveled, talking with many men, and yet he says, bring the books. Are you reading good books? Spurgeon says, if you don't pick the brains of other men, you don't have a brain yourself. Are you reading good books? Good volume, good books, things that are expositional to the Scriptures.

Are you? Why not? Paul says, bring the books. I'll tell you why. It's because the devil is constantly putting pressure on the believer to distract him to this and that and the other, and keep us from getting input that will be ours personally.

You know, you feel like when you've read it, well, you've mined that gold out for yourself, and it's precious to you. Thank you. Oh, yes.

Sure, it's shared from a brother, whoever he is. Maybe he's dead, but it's yours. I found that.

And it's something you can share. A good measure of your activities can be analyzed that way by how much you've got from it to share with somebody else. It is important what we look at.

It's important how we look at things, isn't it? How you look at things, it makes a lot of difference. I've used this illustration before. If I were to ask my son to go out and stand in the woods for three hours, right there, three hours, just stand there.

Torture it would be. But if he goes out to stand in a deer stand for three hours, great fun. Didn't see anything, that's all I did.

Oh, it's great fun. It's a matter of how you look at things, right? Somebody might, back during the days of the Titanic, before it was launched, come on board. Says, Captain, I want to show it to you.

Look at all these chandeliers, look at all this silverware, look at all this stuff, furniture and everything. Beautiful. But the minute you step off, somebody comes up and says, Hey, did you know that that thing is going to go down in one day's time? Are you sure? Absolutely sure.

It's going down. It will go down in one day's time. That puts a whole different perspective on it, doesn't it? I mean, you feel, what? All that for one day? It's going down? Absolutely? You're sure? Yeah.

Why'd I look? You know, the glitter and the glory and the glamour, it only mocks the destruction, the termination, the temporalness of it all the more. It's how we look at things. Out there playing volleyball, you know, the volleyball goes out of bounds.

And it's obvious, everybody's hesitating, you know, let him get it. And then if I do get it, oh boy, it's hard to pick up speed, you know, and chase that ball. Yet later in the day, you take off and run a mile, and it's great fun.

Don't think a thing about it, no problem, you know. It's just a matter of how you look at things. Well, same way here.

It ought to affect how we look at our sufferings. Think of Paul. He was not some iron man, right? He felt it.

He felt the affliction. He felt the disrespect. He felt what was going on here at Corinth.

And yet, we find him saying in other places, yet none of these things move me. They don't move me. They don't stop me.

They don't affect me. I keep right on plodding ahead. I don't count my life dear to myself, but I may finish my course with joy and the ministry that I've received from the Lord Jesus to testify of the grace of God.

It doesn't move me. Oh yeah, it's real. I feel it, but it does not move me.

I go on realizing. It's temporal. Realizing.

It's momentary. It's a matter of how you look at it. It's like a miserable overnight stay in some tent.

Generally, when we go out camping, you know, that's what it is for me. Miserable, but it's for others. And it's just overnight.

You know, you get up in the morning and you go on and the sun's shining. You know, I got a little sleep, I guess. And that's the way.

That's the way with our lives. You know, resurrection morning, it'll all be over. The sun will be shining.

So what? It was so brief. It ought to affect us how we look at our losses. Think of these Hebrews here.

You know, they were having trouble. And he tells them, reminds them, he says, Hebrews 10.34, you took what? Joyfully the spoiling of your goods. Knowing that in heaven, you have a better and enduring substance.

That is a powerful verse, a powerful testimony, those early Hebrews, Christians. It ought to affect how we look at our vocation to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. The Gentiles, the non-Christians, they are anxious.

They are anxiously seeking the food, the shelter and all that stuff. That's what they're looking for. All this temple stuff, they're trying to put it all together, accumulate something.

It says in Proverbs, do not weary yourself to make wealth, for when you look on it, it's gone. It'll make itself wings like an eagle and take off. Oh yeah, you're supposed to work hard, but there comes a point where do not weary yourself.

Don't be anxious. Don't kill yourself to make the next buck. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Trust God with the rest of all of it. It ought to affect how we look in our smallest matters, whether we eat or drink, a cup of cold water do all to the glory of God. That has eternal significance.

It ought to affect how we look at our precious children, realizing that they're mortal. They are mortal. They have a terminal disease just like we do.

And we ought to be so aware that we only have them for a while. It ought to affect how I look at my possessions. Not be entangled with them.

Like Spurgeon says, be like the wise fly when it finds some sweets. It just takes a little sip and takes off again. A foolish fly takes a long sip, wanders out into it, gets all bogged down and is killed.

Hold our earthly possessions loose. It ought to affect how we look at sin. Peter says, seeing all these things are going to pass away.

What kind of people ought we to be in holiness and godly conduct? Interestingly, in Romans 16, it says put a mark on those who cause divisions and dissensions contrary to the gospel. That word there, that Greek word there is the same as this, skopio, skopio. In other words, put your eye on them.

Fix your eye on them. Put a mark and solve for us. We ought to mark these things as temporal.

Mark these things as eternal. Look at them. Set your eye on them.

Mark them. God, the word of God, souls of men, the dealings of God in your life, confidences, kind tokens of his presence and love. Put a mark on them.

We look, not we do look. Think of it. Memorize it.

Do it. The outcome, the overall outcome of our life, who we are, and our eternal destiny, really is determined by our daily decisions. Right? This is what we do.

That's what Christians do. No option, right? They do.

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