

The Philosophy of a Fool

by Dennis Jenkins

A proper approach to life involves recognizing the existence of God and acknowledging one's spiritual nature, as a materialistic approach is foolish and leads to spiritual emptiness.

Duration: 49:44

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 11:9, Luke 12:15, Luke 12:20, Romans 1:18, Romans 1:20, Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 11:26

Topics: "Philosophy"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the parable of the rich farmer as told by Jesus. The parable highlights the foolishness of placing all emphasis on material possessions and neglecting the spiritual aspect of life. The rich farmer in the parable plans to retire and enjoy the fruits of his labor, but fails to consider the spiritual and the inevitable reality of death. The preacher emphasizes that the materialistic philosophy of life is foolish and disastrous, and urges listeners to prioritize their relationship with God over worldly possessions.

Transcript

Well, as my brethren before me, I wish to acknowledge very gratefully the privilege of fellowship with you here this week as God's people, and also the privilege of bringing to you God's words. And for that word tonight, we turn to the chapter that was read at the beginning, the 12th, in the Gospel according to Luke, and we will read again verse 15. We'll read again verse 15 in chapter 12 of the Gospel according to Luke.

And he said unto them, take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Now I believe that the New English Bible reads, if a man have more than enough, his riches will not give him life. And the old Welsh Bible says, Now we are all aware that we are involved in the business of living, whatever our creed, whatever our culture, whatever our circumstances.

We all have a stake in life. We all have lives to live in this world. And in view of this, the questions that we should be asking ourselves are these.

What is the proper approach to life? In what terms should I be thinking of life? What is the true philosophy of life? Now these are questions to which the proper answers must be provided. Otherwise we will make but an abortive attempt at living. We will fail in something we cannot afford to fail in, and with devastating consequences.

Now I'm sure that I speak for everyone tonight when I say that failure is something we dread and wish to avoid. Now with regards to something in life, many avenues are open to us. If we chance to fail up one avenue, we can always return to the starting point and try another avenue.

But with life, this is impossible. Should you, my friends, or I, happen to take a wrong turning along the avenue of life and come to a dead end, it will be catastrophic for us because there are no reverse gears on the vehicles which travel along life's avenue. Making a three-point turn is out of the question, and the time and space machine which transports people backwards and forwards in time and space is something exclusive to the fantastic world of Doctor Who.

It is therefore obvious that we are dealing with a serious matter here tonight. Now what kind of approach do people make to life generally speaking today? Well I suggest to you that they make a purely materialistic or a purely humanistic approach. People are of the opinion that in order to get the best out of life, in order to experience a blissful life, that it is important for them to gather together as many of the things of this world as possible and then spend the rest of their time enjoying them.

That they must live well, eat well, drink well, be surrounded by all kinds of luxuries, and after that run the whole round of pleasures that are offered by a permissive society. In other words, a man must eat, drink, and be merry. And they think that if they adopt that policy that they will be really living.

Well now then such people lived in the day of Jesus Christ. On one occasion when he was preaching he was rudely interrupted by a man in his congregation who shouted out and said, Master tell my brother, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me. Now it is obvious that this man and his brother had been left some property or a sum of money in their father's will and they were having a quarrel over this inheritance.

And this man wanted Jesus to intervene in the dispute. Jesus replied and told this man that settling a legal matter between two parties in conflict didn't come within the province of his ministry. And he went on to warn this man against covetousness, against the eager desire, the craving to have what belongs to someone else.

And then he went on to say that life didn't consist in possessing an abundance of things. Now that is precisely what this man believed. That the formula for a full and a satisfying life was having a lot of things.

He was convinced that unless this happened to him that life would pass him by. And he realized that it is only as he had half the inheritance in his hands would such a state of affairs come into being and prove to be favorable for him. Because without that inheritance, possessing an abundance of things was out of the question for him.

We therefore see, don't we, that the kind of approach that this man made was a materialistic approach. He thought of life in purely materialistic terms. His life was based on a materialistic philosophy.

I mean, Jesus was discoursing on great things, on the deep things of God, but these things had no, made no impact whatever upon this man. He was obsessed by the inheritance. That's what a materialistic philosophy did for this man.

And that is precisely the approach that the majority of people make in this life today. This is one of the driving forces surely behind the eager desire to win substantial wages. This surely is one of the root causes of the excessive gambling that takes place in this land of ours today.

People desire to have a lot of money in order that they can afford themselves a luxurious lifestyle with its dream home, with all the mod cons, a streamlined car in the garage, a luxurious yacht in the local harbor. And then, yes, a continental and a transatlantic holiday every year. And being able to afford a social life, enjoying social life to the very full, yes, even at the expense of morality and human dignity.

Now, provided they have all this, people believe that they will have arrived in the hitherto elusive utopia, that they will be really living, that they will be experiencing life at its very best, and that nothing else will be required. Now, that kind of approach is foolish and disastrous. It was against this kind of approach that Jesus related the parable of the rich farmer, in which we see a man placing the whole emphasis of his life on the material.

The parable described for us this farmer how one year he had a super harvest. So heavy was the yield that a plan of expansion was necessary in order to contain the harvest. And the man sat down and he thought out his plans.

And then he said to himself, after the harvest is safely gathered in, I will be able to retire, to sit back, to relax, to put my feet up. I've worked hard over the years, but after this, no more hard graft for me. And he planned that the existing barns should come down and be replaced by newer and bigger barns.

And then, of course, he said that after that, he would be enjoying the result of all his hard labors throughout the year. And he thought that he would require nothing else in order to enjoy a full and a satisfying life. But the last syllable had hardly died away on his lips when another voice spoke up, the voice of God.

Thou fool, said God, you fool, this night you are going to die. And then for whose benefit will all this preparing, with all this providing, with all this storing be? And then Jesus rounds up the parable or rounds off the parable by saying that this farmer is representative of all those who make abundant provision for themselves materially and who are not rich towards God, but he's representative of all those who live selfish, self-centered lives and who give no consideration whatsoever for the spiritual. Now, whether they are aware of it or not, their approach to life is foolish.

The materialistic philosophy of life is a philosophy of fools. Or to use another word, it is foolosophy. Now, why is such an approach so foolish? Well, for three reasons at least, which we deduce from the parable before us this evening.

Because first of all, it disregards the invisible. Secondly, because it neglects the indispensable. And thirdly, because it overlooks the inevitable.

Now, let us consider those reasons one by one. Philosophy disregards the invisible. Now, surely this is one of the things that stands out in the parable before us.

There is a total disregard of the invisible in this farmer's life. The name of God doesn't appear in his vocabulary. Thoughts of God do not cross his mind.

He appears to be totally oblivious to the being and to the existence of God. He traces his success and his prosperity to his own hard work and ingenuity. He takes all the credit for himself.

Now, that undoubtedly was a factor, a vital factor in the prosperity that he had achieved. But there were other factors. It was he who had ploughed the field and started the good seed on the land.

But what fed that seed? What watered that seed? What gave the increase? God's almighty hand. Now, this man acknowledged his own hand in his success, but he refused to acknowledge the hand of God, without which all his agricultural efforts would have come to nothing. Now, this is one reason why this man was labeled a fool, because he disregarded the invisible, because he refused to take God into account.

Now, the same tag is pinned on all those who today disregard God. Psalm 14 tells us, the fool has said in his heart, there is no God. Psalm 10 tells us, the wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after God.

All his thoughts are, no God. So, that's the verdict of the Bible, that disregarding God, that denying his existence is foolish and wicked. Now, I am aware that there are men and women in this world who are clever, who are geniuses, people with great intellect, people with brilliant minds, who have no regard whatsoever for God.

They completely ignore him. The only time they mention him is when they ridicule him or when they deny him. But would these people be what they are? Would they have achieved what they have, apart from the invisible? The answer the Bible gives to that question is an emphatic no.

If these people have great intellect, if they have brilliant minds, if they have great natural gifts, the thanks is due to God, because it was he who created them. They are the work of his hands and the God whom they deny. And disregard sustains them in every moment of their existence.

The apostle Paul went to Rome. He had no intention of preaching there, but such was the condition of that city that he was compelled to speak out for God. And in his address, in his sermon to those wise men in Athens, he told them that the God whom he preached gives to all life and breath, and that it is in him that all move and live and have their being.

Yes, even those people who deny his existence, who have no regard whatsoever for him. Now, even though the majority of the intellectuals in Western society might deny God and disregard him, treat him with contempt, that doesn't prove a thing. Neither does it disprove anything.

Now, matters like the being of God, like the existence of God, are not decided by majority vote. Neither are they decided by minority vote. They are decided on evidential ground.

Now, evidence for the existence of God abounds today. It can be gathered, this evidence, from creation, from nature. It is there for all to see.

Now, in the first century, Paul wrote a Christian at Rome, and in it he describes the condition of society in his day. He says that men and women are ungodly and unrighteous, that they are guilty of suppressing the truth of God, that they had thrown God out, that they had no regard whatsoever for him. They dismissed him from their thoughts.

And Paul says of these people that their conduct, the conduct of these materialistically minded and corrupt people, was inexcusable. For, says Paul, all that may be known of God by men lies plain before their eyes. His invisible attributes, that is to say, his everlasting power and deity have been visible since the world began to the eye of reason in the things he has made.

Therefore, there is no possible defense for their conduct. Don't excuse these people who deny the existence of God. They're closing their eyes to the abundant evidence there is for his being and his

existence in creation around them.

And again, evidence for the existence of God is provided in history. Think of the Jewish nation. Think especially of Jesus Christ.

He was God become man. The Word who was God was made flesh and dwelt among us. The invisible became visible in Jesus Christ.

God broke into human history. He walked amongst men. He talked with them.

He performed mighty wonders in their very presence. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. My friend, if you want to see evidence of God, of his existence, read history.

History is his story. And again, further evidence for the existence of God is found in the Bible, which is the Word of God. The only way you can explain the existence of the Bible, the influence of the Bible, the survival of the Bible is by accepting that there is such a force to be had as the power of God.

In this book, you have an accurate record of God's utterances to men and also a record of his mighty works amongst men. Now, if men and women disregard God today and refuse to acknowledge him, this is so not because of a lack of evidence. We have tangible evidence for the existence of God in creation.

We have historical evidence for the existence of God in the Jew and in Jesus Christ. We have documentary evidence for the existence of God in the Bible. To believe only in the visible is most unreasonable.

Why? The law of the land is prepared to accept the fact of murder sometimes even though no body can be produced. Now, the real reason why men disregard the invisible today is because of their sinful pride and arrogance. Rather than being a mark of intelligence and wisdom, deliberately ignoring and disregarding God is foolishness.

Now, according to the Lord Jesus Christ, a materialistic approach to life is philosophy because it disregards the invisible without which, without whom, the visible could not exist nor survive. The first necessary ingredient, therefore, for a proper approach to life is to have a regard for God, to take him into account. That's the starting point in a proper approach to life.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And then secondly, the second reason that we look at tonight is this. Philosophy neglects the indispensable.

It neglects the indispensable. Now, in order to be able to live in the true sense of the word, it is necessary for people to realize certain things. First of all, it is necessary for a man to realize what he is.

It is necessary for him to identify himself. It is necessary for him to ask, what am I? What is my constitution? Now, this is something this farmer failed to do. He asked himself a number of questions, but one vital question was left unasked.

He failed to discover precisely his constitution. He neglected to discover his own true makeup. And that's what a purely materialistic approach to life does for men and women.

It deceives them into thinking that they are only material. That's what this man thought, that he was only material, that he was only physical. And that's what this approach to life deceives others into thinking, that

they're only physical, that they're only material, that they are indeed a mere collection of chemicals, wonderfully blended, or that they are merely flesh and blood topped up with some grey matter, full stop.

Now, how wrong they are. The teaching of the Bible is that man, in addition to being physical, is also spiritual. He's also soul or spirit as well as being body.

Now, when God created man, we are told that he moulded him out of the dust of the ground or the earth of the ground. But is that all? No, no. We are told that God went a step further and that he breathed into man, into his nostril, the breath of life, and that man became a living soul.

Now, the fact that God dealt with man in such a personal, in such an intimate way, and the fact that man has been created on the image and according to the likeness of God, distinguishes him from the other creatures, puts him in a class of his own. Man, my friends, has the capacity for communicating with the spiritual. That's what distinguishes him, for one thing, from the creatures.

And the book of Ecclesiastes tells us that God has set eternity in the heart of man. And the same writer, when he describes what happens at death, tells us, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return to God who gave it. Man is spiritual as well as physical.

And then another thing that is indispensable for people to realize is this, that there is no provision for the spiritual in the material. Now, with the farmer that we find in this parable, obviously thought so. Listen to how he speaks.

My soul, he says, you have much good stored up for many years. Take your ease. He's talking to his innermost being.

He's talking to his innermost being. And he says, take it easy, eat, drink, and be merry. Now, that is a very foolish way of talking.

But that is precisely how people think today. They believe that they can satisfy the deepest longings of their heart, and the restlessness of their eternal souls by feasting and drinking, by being permissive, by throwing away restraint, by allowing their lusts to run riot. They believe that this is the road which will lead them to total bliss and satisfaction.

And the people who revel in this kind of thing look with pity upon those of us who do not adopt this popular lifestyle. And they tell us that we do not know what life is, and that we are of all men most miserable. Now, little do they realize that some of us in days gone by adopted this motto, eat, drink, and be merry.

We sought the pleasures of the world. We tasted of the pleasures of the world. We drew morsels from the flesh pots of Egypt.

But what did we find there? Life with a capital L, satisfaction with a capital F, no disillusionment with a capital D. We would wake up the morning after the night before frustrated, irritated, like bears with sore heads. We were disappointed, and within us, there was an empty feeling. One of our hymnists described this as an aching void.

And oh, my friends, how it aches on occasion. It aches to the extent sometimes of driving us to the very verge of despair, and to think even in terms of suicide. We tried the broken systems of this world, and the water failed.

Now, that aching void is none other than God reminding people that there is no provision for the spiritual in the material. Now, listen to the confession of Rachel Welsh, the well-known actress and film star. I had acquired everything I wanted, yet I was totally miserable.

I thought that to be most peculiar, because I had acquired everything I wanted as a child, plus wealth, fame, and achievement in my career. I had beautiful children and a lifestyle that appeared to be terrific, yet I was totally and miserably unhappy. I found it very frightening that one could acquire all things and still be miserable, endorsing that statement that there is no provision for the spiritual in the material.

Listen to the words of someone who is the final authority in the matter of life and living. Man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God shall man live. In every man without exception, there is that which only God can satisfy, and the only time that life will take on any real meaning and prove to be satisfactory is when man is brought into immediate contact with God, when a harmonious cord is struck between the spirit of man and the spirit of God.

Now, the other thing that is indispensable for people in order to make a proper approach to life is this. They must realize that they aren't the owners, but only the stewards of the things they possess. Now, this farmer in the parable obviously didn't realize this, because this is how he spoke, my fruits, my barn, my goods, my soul.

Now, how mistaken he was. In the hour of his exit from this world, this man was separated from his possessions. They parted company, never to meet again, indicating once and for all that he wasn't the owner of these things.

Now, if he had only considered himself as only a steward of these things and accountable for them before God, then surely he would have made better use of these goods which he had. And in their folly, people think in identical terms today. How often have we heard that retort? It's my life.

I can do what I want with it. It's my money. I'll spend it in the way I want to.

They are my talents. I will dispose of them as I think best. They consider themselves to be the sovereign owners, not only of themselves, but also all that they have.

And they dispose of these things at will. And what a hash they're making. What a mess they're getting into.

Men and women need reminding that the earth is the Lord and the fullness thereof, the world and all they that dwell therein, that we brought nothing into this world and that we can carry nothing out. In the Old Testament, we are told of a man named Job who suffered a series of calamities. Thieves robbed him of his cattle and killed off his servants.

A whirlwind robbed him of his crops and killed his seven sons and three daughters. Now, how did Job feel? Well, sorrowful undoubtedly. But that an injustice had been done to him? No.

As Job surveyed the devastation caused by the marauders and the whirlwind, as he gazed at the vacant servants' quarters, at the empty fields, as he looked tearfully at the ten mounds of freshly dug earth which marked out the graves of his ten children, we are told that Job worshipped God and said, naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked I shall return. The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Now, that is the voice of true wisdom that acknowledges God as the sovereign owner, not only of us, our person, but also all that we have. And if people were only to realize this, then surely they would have second thoughts and they would make better use of these things that are in their possession. The true approach to life takes into consideration therefore these three factors, that man is spiritual as well as physical, that there is no provision for the spiritual in the material, and that man is only the leaseholder upon the thing he possesses.

Philosophy neglects these things. And then the final reason that we deduce this evening from the parable in order to show, to demonstrate how foolish it is, this materialistic approach to life. Philosophy overlooks the inevitable.

Now, let us listen again to the rich farmer talking. My soul, you have much goods laid by you for many years. It appears that this man had made ample provision for the future.

It appears that his future was secure. It appears that many people would be prepared to compliment this man on his initiative and on his foresightedness. Here is a man who appeared to be a step in front of everyone else, but he wasn't.

He wasn't. That wasn't true. This man wasn't farsighted.

And precisely because he had overlooked something vital, he had failed to see the inevitable. He had only made provision for the possible. No such measures had been taken in regard to the inevitable.

This man failed to realize that at any moment he could drop dead. He had failed to prepare for death. Many years was only a possibility.

Death was an inevitability. The very night that he had so carefully planned for the future, for the possible, he met the inevitable, unprepared, and he went out of this world a miserable failure. He departed for eternity and judgment, because make no mistake about it, those words, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, not only spelled out the death sentence for this man, but also a summons to judgment.

He would be required to stand before God and render account. Because living for this man was a matter of eat, drink, and be merry, death proved an irrecoverable loss for him. It wasn't the building contractor that came the following morning to build newer and better barns, but the funeral director to arrange for this man's burial.

The farmer said, many years, God said this night, and what he says goes. Now we live in days when people are making extensive provision for the future. Pensions, pension schemes, insurance policies, superannuations are running abreast of the best-selling commodities in this present society.

People are looking ahead to the time when they retire and they seek to make their future as secure as possible. Well, there's nothing wrong with that up to a point, but many people I'm sure congratulate themselves on the initiative they are taking and on their foresightedness. Their future appears to be absolutely secure.

Are you like that? Well, the question I want to ask you is this, that before asking the question, could I remind you that you've only made provision for the possible? What provision have you made for the inevitable? Young people in the congregation tonight, you've had your A results today, your advanced level results. Some of you are disappointed undoubtedly, others of you are overjoyed, but whatever has

happened in the A level examination, you have to plot your course in life. You have to decide on your career and possibly some of you are already doing that.

You have initiative, you have foresight and possibly you've already taken steps that will secure for you a bright future and I wish you all the best. But my dear friend, the question I want to ask you is this, what provision have you made for the inevitable? None? Then I wouldn't give that much for your initiative and your foresightedness. You've overlooked one of life's greatest realities, death.

I was born in a country village where only Welsh was spoken and in those early years of my life, a saying that was much used by all the villagers was this, yes, but one must, one must time. All the villagers used it on one occasion or another. I myself used it many a time as a child.

In circumstances like this, possibly two of us would be out playing in the field and darkness would come unexpectedly and one of us would say to the other, well, I must hurry home, otherwise mum will give me a row for being out too late and this is how the other would answer him. Yes, but one must, one must time. A determined child would possibly be seeking to persuade a very reluctant mother to give him something and indeed he would stamp his foot on the floor and say, mother, I must have it and back would come the inevitable reply, my child, yes, but one must, one must time.

Now I can imagine someone saying, well, did you ever hear of such a thing? Poor man, what a morbid upbringing he's had. There had to be a law against that kind of thing. Be that as it may, it's true, isn't it? Yes, but one must, one must time.

All else is only possible. Death is inevitable and it is only those who have prepared for this, who have realised this, that are the truly far-sighted and far-seeing people in this world. Well, that's the kind of man Abraham was.

He saw the inevitable and he refused as a result to make his riches the be-all and the end-all of his life. He didn't even bother to build a house when he was in this world. He lived in a tent and all because he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

That's the kind of man Moses was. He turned his back on the most promising future in Egypt. He could have inherited great wealth, great fame, pleasures galore in the courts of Egypt, but he turned his back on it all.

Why? There's only one answer. Because he saw the inevitable and that changed his whole outlook upon life. He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Yes, he chose, he esteemed the reproach of Christ to be greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. He endured, we are told, as one seeing the invisible, yes, and the inevitable. Both of these men travelled along the avenue of life with their eyes on the eternal.

It is people like these who are truly farsighted. Now I remind you, my friends, that in the experience of each and every one of us, there will be this night, thy soul shall be required of thee. And as in the case of the rich farmer, it could possibly come sooner than you think.

It is appointed unto men once to die. And after this, the judgment. Rejoice, O young man! Rejoice, O young woman! In thy youth, walk in the ways of thine heart and in the sight of thine eyes.

Yes, live and let live. Experiment with this, that, and the other. Experiment with drink, drugs, sex.

But know this, that for all this, for all these things, God will bring you to judgment. And only one thing will matter then, riches towards God. Without this, we will be doomed for all eternity.

But availing ourselves of this, how blessed will our portion be! We are made rich towards God in Jesus Christ. Oh, the trouble he went to in order that this might come about. Paul tells us, he tells the Corinthians, that Jesus was rich.

As the Son of Man in glory, he was rich, pavilioned with splendor, girded with praise, the object of great adoration. And we are told that he turned his back on it all. He forsook it all in order to come into this world to make provision for poor, wretched sinners, who were poverty stricken.

He took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh. He was born of the Virgin Mary. Yes, in the most adverse of circumstances, born in a stable.

He lived a comparatively poor life in this world. And then, at the age of 33, in the prime of life, they nailed him to a cross and put him to death. He was put in a grave.

But on the morning of the third day, he came forth triumphantly. And after showing himself over a period of 40 days time and time again to his disciples, assuring them of the truth of the resurrection, he went back to heaven to sit in with great honor and dignity at the right hand of God, from where he will come again to judge the living and the dead. All these mighty, momentous events took place that provision might be made for poverty stricken men and women, that they might be made rich toward God.

My friends, Jesus, through his death, made life in abundance possible. Yes, that kind of life, my friends, that triumphs in the adverse of circumstances and indeed survives in the most alien of atmospheres. Now, let me give you an instance of this as I close.

The kind of life that we are talking about is this. Now, the gospel was first preached in a world that was dominated by Rome. And when the citizens of Rome embraced the gospel and pledged allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, they were accused of disloyalty to the emperor.

And they were arrested, they were persecuted, and they were thrown to the lions. But a far harder and a more bitter sentence was passed on some Christians, the damnato sad metala, condemned to the mines. And you know, their sufferings there, these Christians in these mines, were indescribable.

The prisoners, first of all, were compelled to row themselves across the sea to the North African coast. And by the time they arrived there, the red wheels on their back showed that their taskmasters had shown them no mercy on the voyage. And then they had to march through the blazing sun to these mines.

When they arrived there, their chains were shortened so that they would never be able to stand erect again. They were branded with red hot irons on the forehead. More often than not, one eye would be gouged out.

A mallet and a light would be put in their hands, and then they would be whipped underground, never to surface again. For company, they had the scum of the earth. And they were exploited by the cruel taskmasters, who sometimes killed for the very amusement of it.

Now, the more fortunate of those prisoners died of any fevers that happened to be going at the time, but many lived on. Yes, in those deplorable circumstances, in a book entitled Sanjuis Martirum, the sufferings and triumphs of many Christians is mentioned. Apparently, some of them wrote messages on the smooth walls of the mines with charcoal.

Prayers, some of them. Verses of scripture, the names of friends or loved ones. But you know, one word appeared time and time and time again on the walls of the mines, which ran like a golden thread through all the other words.

Life! Life! Life! Vita! Vita! Vita! Yes, they had the life of Christ down there in the gloom of what surely was a living grave for them. They had life which put light in their eyes and put buoyancy in their hearts, and they triumphed in those circumstances which surely would have swamped the strongest of ordinary men. Now, the world would have pitied these men and women and argued that they merely existed, but they themselves would never have thought so.

The entombed Christians would not have been prepared to change places with anyone in this world if it meant forfeiting that life which they found in such abundance in Christ. Now, that's the kind of life that we are talking about tonight. Have you got it? You young people, have you got this life? We refer to young people as being full of life.

Have you got this life? Those of us who are middle-aged, those of us who are older, have you got this life? If you want to avail yourself of that life tonight, you must humbly acknowledge your need of it. Sin has devastated your life, left you dead, dead in trespasses and sins, without hope, without God in the world. You must repent of your sins.

Yes, you must repent of your wrongdoing. You must tell God that you are determined to break once and for all with your sinful, foolish past, and then you must look to Jesus Christ and Him crucified and submit yourself unreservedly, unconditionally to Him. You must say to Him, Thou of life of fountain art, freely let me take of Thee, spring Thou up within my heart, rise to all eternity.

Provided you come in all sincerity, provision will be made for you immediately. Your eternal pulse will begin to beat, which will not be interrupted by your physical death. Yes, your life will no longer consist in the abundance of the things that you possess, but of Christ, the resurrection and the life, who endures for all eternity.

And consequently, you will be able to say with the Apostle Paul, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But that isn't all. There's a footnote to be added.

This life we are talking about, which is imparted to the souls of men in this world, will be extended to their bodies one day. Those bodies which are laying in the grave, or which are committed to the flames of the crematorium. This life, it will be extended to those bodies one day.

Yes, the trumpet will sound. The dead will be raised incorruptible. Corruption will put on incorruption.

Mortal will put on immortality. Death will be swallowed up in victory. There will be no more death.

And from then on, my friends, it will be life, life, life, forever and forever and forever. So may God, in his mercy, grant that all of us present in this great congregation tonight will know of that abundant life in Christ, and live with him for all eternity. For the sake of his glory.

Amen.

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