

Sunday Morning Message

September 20, 2020

What Is Left of Your Life

Topic – making the most of the years (or perhaps days) that you have left

Text – James 4:1 - 17

Congregational Reading – James 4:13 - 17

Introduction

Read the entire chapter before focusing in on v. 14.

Illustrate – conversation with my dad before he died. His life went by very quickly.

Life goes by very quickly.

The Lord has been impressing upon me lately that none of us may have much time left here on the earth.

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." (Ephesians 5:15-17)

God says that we should redeem the time – literally means to purchase it – or recover it – We need to make the most out of the short time that we have here on this earth.

Notice that Ephesians said: the days are evil. That could not be more true than it is today. We may not have much time left here on the earth. It seems like the Lord's return is very close.

What is really left of your life?

Thoughts About Your Life

I **Life Is Passing** (v. 14 – a vapour)

"LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah." (Psalms 39:4-5)

David said, "... there is but a step between me and death."

"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope." (Job 7:6)

"Now my days are swifter than a post: they flee away, they see no good. They are passed away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey." (Job 9:25-26)

"For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again." (Psalms 78:39)

II Life Is Precious

A Because of Your Importance To God

1 You are God's Creation

2 You are God's Child (If saved)

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:" (John 1:12)

*"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."
(Jeremiah 1:5)*

The world doesn't pay much attention to our lives – to the world we are insignificant, but to God we are very significant.

Turn to Luke 15:1 – 7 – one sheep is very important to God

B Because of Your Influence on Others

Your life is also precious to God because you are a valuable tool in his hands. God wants to use you to influence other people.

III Life Is Preparatory

"... prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." (Amos 4:12 KJV)

A Get Saved

If you are not saved, you are not prepared to go on into eternity.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Corinthians 13:5)

B Surrender to the Will of God (v. 15)

"For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." (Mark 3:35)

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2)

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;" (Ephesians 6:5-6)

The will of God is revealed generally through the Bible, and specifically through obedience and prayer. (Explain)

C Separate From This World (vs. 7 – 9)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17)

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:8-10)

"These all (all of the Old Testament saints mentioned in Hebrews 11) died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Hebrews 11:13)

We are just ambassadors down here – our conversation (citizenship) is in Heaven. Brother Roloff used to say don't nail your tent pegs down too deeply here on the earth.

Prepare for Heaven

D Be a Soulwinner

The best way to prepare for Heaven is to invite some folks to come with you.

Jesus illustrated this point in Luke 14 in “The Parable of the Great Supper”. He sent his servants out to invite the poor, the lame, the halt, and the blind. He told them to go out into the highways and hedges, the streets and lanes of the city. He told them (and us) to compel them to come in.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20)

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

Preach the gospel with your life.

Preach the gospel with your words.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

E Be Satisfied

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." (Philippians 4:11)

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Hebrews 13:5)

Learn to enjoy what God has for you. Enjoy your family: your children and grandchildren; your friends.

Illustrate – Selah and Emerson’s soccer practice yesterday.

The devil will try to tell you that he has something better for you; something more for you than what God can give you. Don’t listen to him.

He promised Eve that she would be like God, knowing good and evil. Eve knew nothing but good, and she knew nothing about evil; so the devil only introduced evil into her life.

God has nothing but good for your life.

"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."
(Proverbs 10:22)

Conclusion

What is your life?

Are you living your life today pursuing all of the world's pleasures?

Does your life consist of purchasing all of the world's possessions?

"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." (Luke 12:15)

What is your life?

I hope you realize that your life is passing away quickly – redeem the time.

I hope you understand that your life is very precious to God – don't waste it.

I hope you know that you are living this life preparing for the life to come – I hope you have received the gift of eternal life, and I hope that if you are saved you are making the most of your life.

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13)

Everything that you do for the Lord today will follow you into eternity.

Live your life for God.

I have already wasted away much of my life doing things that don't matter – I want to get the most out of the rest of my life by giving all to the Lord.

"There is something worse than living your life as a failure before men, and that is succeeding at something that doesn't matter to God."

"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." (James 4:14)

According to Hebrews 9:27 we all have an appointment with death. Yours may be tomorrow. All of ours may be soon if the Lord returns – not death in that case, but the end of life on this earth. If it is – make the most out of today by living for God.

In our Scripture reading from this morning, Hosea said to us:

*"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: **for it is time to seek the LORD**, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." (Hosea 10:12)*

It's time to seek the Lord because our time on earth is running out.