

“The Brevity Of Life” Jarrod M. Jacobs submitted by Larry Driver

A fact that many do not wish to consider is just how brief our lives really are. It is ignored because men do not like to think about their lives ending. Yet, people are dying daily! Rather than run from the truth, let us strive to understand and accept our own mortality. Let us use this truth to help encourage ourselves and others to get our lives right with God while we still can (II Cor. 6:2). The Bible speaks of the brevity of life. Thus, it is a subject we need to consider well.

Our Lifespan Is Short. Psalm 90:10 tells us: *“The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.”* Other passages that state the short lifespan of man include Job 7:6, 14:1-2; Psalm 39:5; James 4:14; I Peter 1:24; and I John 2:17. In this psalm, Moses declared that seventy or eighty years is the average age of man. This is still true today! While we recognize that there are exceptions, most men and women will not live past the age of 80. Thus, we have about “fourscore” years to get our lives right! How are we doing along that line? It is very important that we live for God while we can (Prov. 27:1).

Our Days Are Numbered. Psalm 139:16 shows us this truth. David said, *“Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”* The NKJV renders the last part of this verse, “And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.” Moses said a similar thing in Psalm 90:12. There we read, *“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”* We do not know when we will die, but God has numbered our days. Let us not take our life and time on earth for granted.

Our Life Is As A Vapor. In the book of James, chapter 4, verse 14, we read, *“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.”* When people talk about their age, and how swiftly their life has gone, it reflects on this passage. Jacob even commented on his short lifespan at 130 years old (Gen. 47:9)! Our life is just like a vapor. We are here only for a little while and then we pass away. How is your life? Are you focusing on what is most important?

Eternity Is Long. The Bible assures us that just as this life is short, eternity is long. It will continue without end. It is described as “everlasting” in reference to the punishment, or the rest received by the people in Matthew 25:46. Eternity is described as something that has no end. Thus it is with our spirit. It will enter eternity to face either eternal rest, or eternal damnation depending on our manner of life while on this earth. There is no end to eternity. I believe it is described best in the old song “Amazing Grace”. Verse 5 says, “When we’ve been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun; We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise Than when we first begun.” Rest assured, you and I will not escape eternity!

Are You Prepared? Knowing that this life is brief, and that eternity is without end, what preparations have you made for eternity? Hebrews 12:1 declares, *“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,”* Let us be prepared for eternity by running life’s race with patience, and never giving up! As Peter discussed the end of time and the destruction of this world, he said in II Peter 3:11, *“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,”* Are you being holy and godly as you ought to be? If not,

you need to change and live pleasing to God in this short life, so you can gain Heaven when this life is over. Remember, your days are numbered by God. It is like a vapor. Do not let an opportunity to be saved pass you by as Agrippa did in Acts 26:28. Obey God today before your life ends (Mk. 16:16; II Cor. 6:2; Acts 22:16)!

INFLUENCE By Randy Reynolds

Influence is potentially a powerful thing. I'm convinced that we don't give full consideration to the impact that we can and do have on those with whom we have contact with. Whether it's in the home with our spouse, or our children, people at our place of work, or in the community that we live in, the life we live and how we live it makes a difference. As Christians in a local congregation with other Christians, we also have the ability to influence each other. The inspired writer of the book of Hebrews tells us that when we assemble together for worship that we should "consider one another in order to stir up love and good works" (Hebrews 10.24). In other words, look for ways to impact others in a positive way. The stirring up, or inciting this writer has in mind is in a good sense. It's using our influence to motivate others in good and positive ways.

The apostle Paul in writing to the church at Corinth reminded those Christians that they were "an epistle of Christ" (2 Corinthians 3.3). An "epistle" or a "letter" is a means of communication whereby the thoughts of one person are conveyed to another. Just as people will read letters, they will also read our lives. The implication is that a Christian can live his life as to be a means of Divine communication whereby Christ can speak to others through him—or not—that is if a Christian doesn't openly live the way he or she should, by letting their light shine. But that should never be the case. Christians should always live their lives for the Lord and live their lives "out loud." Light was never meant to be hidden under a basket. A lampstand is where lights are supposed to be so that they may give light to an otherwise dark world. Since one's influence is potentially so powerful, the Christian should carefully take note of how he acts and how he speaks.

You see friends, one of the reasons for Christ speaking to the church at Corinth through the apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 13.3) was so He might eventually speak through us, not in a miraculous way, rather, in a moral way, encouraging us to use our lives as letters written to those we come in contact with. Our lives should be letters to younger Christians, and even those who aren't Christians, influencing them to live their lives for the Lord. Few things are more attractive in this world than a life that models the gospel of Jesus Christ. May I ask you a personal question? What is your epistle saying to those who read it?

