

THE INSTRUCTOR



"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

Volume 12

JANUARY, 1975

Number 1

THE DAYS OF OUR YEARS

"The days of our years are three-score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." (Psalms 90:10). "For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." (James 4:14).

These quotations from the Old Testament and the New bring sharply into focus the brevity of human life. No man can read such words with any degree of comprehension without realizing how swift and how certain is the approach of death for everyone of us. All our earthly hopes and ambitions, our plans, our dreams, and fondest expectations will finally come to rest beneath a little mound of dirt over which the green grass will grow for centuries after we have returned to the elements. How futile and how silly to think we can build anything that will endure on this earth!

As I write these lines, I sit beneath the shade of a mighty Douglas fir, whose towering summit seems to reach into the very heavens. Its age I can only guess, but I am certain there is not a man living on earth today who was alive when this tree began to grow. Only a few hours drive south of here are the giant Redwoods of California, some of which

were growing when Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, and many of which were old, old trees when Jesus wept in Gethsemane. Amid such awesome works of God, frail man seems insignificant indeed.

Yet I shall live after the tallest tree shall have long since crumbled and decayed. For by God's grace my life is not limited to the few fleeting, uncertain and often miserable years of earth. The "days of my years" may be very few, but the length of my life is beyond measure. I live for eternity, not for time. The God I serve is a God of the living, and not of the dead.

Now then can I ignore God? How can I put him out of life? close my ears to His commandments? disregard His word and His will? What is the thinking of the man who stupidly bargains for this life at the cost of eternal life? "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" (Matt. 16:26). It is eternally true that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." To such a man God once said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; and the things which

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Published monthly in the interest of truth and righteousness by the congregation of Christ, meeting on Highway 431 South, in Albertville, Alabama.

CARROL R. SUTTON
EDITOR

Send all questions, comments, and criticisms to the editor, Route 3, Highway 431 South, Albertville, Alabama 35950.

Second-class postage paid in
Albertville, Ala. 35950.

Editorial . . .

What Is Your Life?

We are approaching the chasm of death. All of us must cross it and none of us shall return to this present life on earth.

For centuries scientists have tried to discover what lies beyond death, but they have not been successful. The only light we have concerning what death beholds is revealed in God's Word — the BIBLE!

As we stand in the presence of the reality of death, we are made to ponder as to **what life really is** and what death beholds?

In trying to impress upon Christians their need for and dependence upon God, James says, "**For what is your life?**" (See James 4:13-17). This question deserves and should demand our serious consideration. Let us consider this from one viewpoint in this study and from other viewpoints in later lessons.

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE WITH REFERENCE TO ITS ORIGIN? The greatest scientists and philosophers of this age, as well as of ages past, have not and can not answer this question! Their "answers" are mere theories. They can surmise and give their opinions, but they can not really come to grips with the question and truly answer it. We must go

to God's Word for the **true** answer. It is the only reliable information we have on the subject. It tells us clearly that "**God created man** in His own image." (See Genesis 1:26-27). We learn from Genesis 2:7 that "**God formed man** of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and **man became a living soul.**" Zechariah 12:1 informs us that it is the Lord who "**formeth the spirit of man within him.**" In Acts 17:29 the apostle Paul affirms that "**we are the offspring of God.**" We learn from the Hebrew writer that God is "**the Father of spirits.**" (Hebrews 12:9). God is "**the God of the spirits of all flesh**" according to Numbers 16:22.

Before God created man, He "**created** the heavens and the earth" and things therein. (See Genesis 1). Man, as far as this earth is concerned, was obviously the "**crown**" of God's creation. We learn from Genesis 1:26-27 that when God created man, "**male and female created he them.**" Jesus said: "But from the beginning of the creation **God made them male and female.**" (Mark 10:6).

" . . . Man is not of the woman; but the woman is of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." (1 Cor. 11:8-9). "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God." (1 Cor. 11:11-12).

Some people do not like to "**retain God in their knowledge.**" They worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. In times past God gave such people "over to a reprobate mind" and "gave them up unto vile affections" and "uncleanliness" and stated through Paul that they "**are worthy of death.**" (See Romans 1:16-32).

At death the body of man shall return to dust of the earth as it was, and "**the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.**" (See Eccl. 12:7).

Surely, we should exalt God as our Creator and praise Him as our Father! Our attitude should be such as was the attitude of the psalmist David when he

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THE DAYS OF OUR YEARS

thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?" And Jesus added His own comment to that in the statement, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:21).

It is a calm, bright day in late summer as these lines are written. The beautiful Willamette Valley stretches before me in seemingly unending miles. The rambling log trucks, each with its burden of three or four giant logs, roll endlessly on the roads below. The valley is peaceful and quiet. Yet every person here is living a life that is headed toward the inevitable day of judgment. We shall all stand in the presence of that eternal judge; and each of us shall be judged "out of the things which are written in the books." The faithful Christian, the cynic, the scoffer, the deceitful worker, the misguided zealot, the ignorant savage shall each receive his due portion. That final reckoning cannot be evaded; it cannot be avoided; it cannot be delayed. We shall all be judged.

In view of the brevity of life, and the certainty of the judgment, what manner of persons ought we to be? "Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness. Looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God . . ." are the words used by Peter to impress our responsibility.

God's plan for the redemption of the soul is simple. By the sacrifice of Christ He has made it possible for me to escape the awful punishment which is the due recompense for my sin. Believing in Christ, I turn in penitence from sin, and am buried through baptism "unto the remission of" all sins. This brings me into covenant relationship with God, and makes me a citizen in His kingdom. It then is my task to live each day in the consciousness of that relationship, to "walk worthily of the calling" wherewith I have been called.

Business ventures, family troubles, political upheavals, personal problems — how trivial! There is one problem, and

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only one, before every one of us; to live a life that is pleasing to God. Whether that life is lived in riches or in poverty, in political freedom or in chains and imprisonment or in domestic felicity or in misery and loneliness, is quite unimportant. Whether one receives the adulation and praises of men or their contempt and animosity matters little. If one walks with the Lord, in the full assurance of His favor, neither the flattery of friends nor the hatred of foes will count for much. The days of our years are so few, so filled with duties and labors, that we should waste little time in thinking whether our actions are pleasing to men or not. Do they please God? that is the one and only question to be considered. If yes, then with confidence we can press on; if no, then we should tremble in terror until the situation is changed.

"What is your life?" Consider it; let God's will rule your heart, and His word direct your ways.

—Fanning Yater Tant

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WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

said: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy work; and my soul knoweth right well." (Psalms 139:14). This attitude should prompt us to "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

In answer to the question: WHAT IS YOUR LIFE WITH REFERENCE TO ITS ORIGIN, we must clearly and gratefully assert that GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE and "in Him we live, and move, and have our being." (To be continued)

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JESUS CHRIST SAID:

Revelation 22:14-15: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whoso loveth and maketh a lie."

Why I Am A Member Of The Church of Christ

I didn't join the church of Christ. I didn't select the church of Christ as "my choice" from among many churches. It never occurred to me that I had a choice nor that I desired to make a choice of churches.

I started thinking about my spiritual condition down in Tennessee some years ago — several years ago and made up my mind that I should do something about it. I began to consider what the Lord wanted me to do. I started to study my Bible.

I found that I was a sinner and that Christ was THE Saviour. I found that if I were ever saved it would be by Christ. I considered HIS word relative to what to do to be saved. He said I should **repent**, Luke 13:3. I did. He said I should **confess HIM**, Matthew 10:32. I did. He said I should **be baptized**, Mark 16:16. I did. He had said if I would do these things I would **BE SAVED**. I was. But the BIBLE taught that when I was saved the Lord added me to the church, Acts 2:47. He did.

Now, WHICH CHURCH did he add me

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The Hill-Sutton Debate

The HILL-SUTTON DEBATE that was postponed temporarily due to an automobile accident in which Sutton was injured **has not** yet been re-scheduled because HOBBS ST. CHURCH in Athens has not been willing to do so. It seems that the promise to do so will not be kept. The promise by the brethren at HOBBS ST. to the EAST-SIDE brethren was that a date would be set in a short while. That promise was made last April. We are still waiting for them to **honor their word**. If any of you who read this know how to get them to do what they **PROMISED** to do, **please** help them!

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to? HIS, Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16. Thus I am a member of the Church of Christ because I had **NO CHOICE** and wanted none. I just **wanted to be saved**. And I was.

—A. C. Grider in TIDINGS OF TRUTH
June 4, 1970

Sentence Sermons

A sharp tongue does not necessarily indicate a keen mind.

Worry is the advance interest you pay on troubles that seldom come.

An evil conscience can not be cured by medicine.

A Christian can not be a blank. He is either a blessing or a blot.

What a man possesses is not nearly as important as what possesses him.

Two people can not hate each other if they both love God.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Route 3, Highway 431 South
Albertville, Alabama 35950