

"FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST"

PHIL 1:12-26

I. HE'S THE ANSWER TO LIFE'S GREATEST QUESTIONS

- A. Christ **revealed to me**—the answer to life's greatest questions (cf. Victor Frankl' *Man's Search for Meaning*; Rick Warren's *The Purpose-Driven Life*)
- B. **Who am I?**
 - 1. Neither Angel: Gnostics; Mary Baker Eddy & Christians Science; Shirley MacLain: "I am God"
 - 2. Nor wholly Animal: naturalistic evolutionists such as William Provine & Richard Dawkins & B.F. Skinner (akin to rats & pigeons, "higher primate," "evolved slime"?)
 - 3. But Image of God (*Imago Dei*)—thus C.S. Lewis: "no ordinary people"
 - a. Gn 1:26: "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness"
 - 1. Spiritual—embodied soul; consciousness evidence
 - 2. Rational—mind beyond brain, amazing powers; Logos in Jn 1
 - 3. Ethical—natural law operative; love & free will
 - b. Incarnation & Jesus the "express image" of God (Web 1:3)
 - c. Still more: joint heirs with Christ & able to say "Our Father" (Rom 8:16-17)
- C. **Why am I here?**
 - 1. Meaninglessness of naturalistic science & philosophy—nihilism
 - a. Ernest Hemingway: "It was all nothing . . . Some lived in it and never felt it but he knew it was *nada y pues nada y pues nada*."
 - b. Stephen Weinberg (Nobel Prize in Physics) & ultimate nothingness, meaninglessness
 - 2. Meaningful theistic perspectives—God-in-Christ makes all the difference.
 - a. Intelligent Design & "anthropic principle"
 - 1. Fine-tuned universe just right for us—illustrations: coins; cake; hole-in-one
 - 2. Cf. Col 1:15-19
 - b. Designed, above all, to worship Creator rather than creatures (cf. Rom 1:22-23)
- D. **Where am I going?**
 - 1. Naturalism's "dead end"—nihilistic despair evident in Richard Dawkins *et al*
 - 2. Humanism's elusive hope to live on in others' memories
 - 3. Non-Christian religions' vague longings for hereafter
 - 4. Christ reveals authentic hope
 - a. Eternal life was ever on Jesus' mind—as evident talking with Nicodemus (Jn 3)
 - b. Jesus' Resurrection provides final answer—where He Is we can be also (Jn 14)
 - 5. Paul's certainty: "to die is gain"—cf. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (II Tim 4:7-8).
- E. **Does anyone care?**
 - 1. Arthur Brooks provides data re widespread loneliness in *The Meaning of Your Life: Finding Purpose in an Age of Emptiness*
 - 2. Christ reveals: "God so loved the world that He gave . . ." (Jn 3:16)
 - 3. Body of Christ (the Church) carries on His message & work via work of Holy Spirit
 - 4. Campus Crusade's spiritual laws—widespread effectiveness

II. HE'S THE INNER ENERGY to LIVE WELL

- A. Christ **residing in me**—supernatural power to live
- B. Early Church refrain: "The Son of God became man so that we might become God" (Athanasius).
- C. Enduring invitation: ask Jesus to "come into your heart" & many testimonies re reality
 - 1. Emmalyn Carter German, as a child on mission field in India & instant awareness
 - 2. Drew Brees, being inaugurated into Hall of Fame, said: "Sitting in church on my 17th birthday, Christ came into my heart and changed me forever." Thenceforth he felt "protected, connected, and directed" toward the path God had for his life.
- D. Holy Spirit enters into and comforts believers
- E. Perennial petition: "Jesus help me"