

Don't Waste Your Life

Remembering John Piper's famous sermon from passion conference 2000.

His story about Ruby and Laura, medical workers just about to hit 80, who died in Cameroon for Jesus.

By Remaining Childish and “Merely Human”

The difference between milk and solid food

Paul only preached one thing, Christ crucified. Therefore, the difference is not wisdom of God vs. man. The difference is in teaching method, not the things taught.

“The difference between milk and strong to meat... is simply the difference between the more or less perfect development of the things taught... The important truth is that there are not two sets of doctrine, a higher and a lower form of faith, one for the learned and the other for the unlearned.

We teach a child that God is a Spirit, present everywhere and knowing everything... This to the child is milk, but it contains food for angels. The truth expressed in these propositions may be expanded indefinitely and furnishes nourishment for the highest intellects for all eternity.” Charles Hodge

“Christ is milk for infants, and strong meat for men.” John Calvin

How deep will you go?

“Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”

vs.

“I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.” – Heidelberg Catechism, Question 1

The Corinthians *wasted their lives* by jealousy and strife. They needed deeper reflection, “meat.”

By Not Carrying Out the Assignment the Lord Gave You

The lord has assigned some work of service to each person. (vs. 5)

Only God makes the work fruitful, so only he gets credit for the results. (vss. 6-7)

All laborers have the same ultimate goal, and therefore there should be no competition. (vs. 8)

We are rewarded according to our labor, not our assignment or gifts. (vs. 9)

Matthew 25:21 and Matthew 25:23 – “Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.” Exact same reward, different talents.

We are both nothing AND rewarded for our labor. Praise God!

By Building With Worthless Materials

The difference between works and faith

“If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved.”

A testing fire

Making the Gospel beautiful

By Destroying God’s Temple

“But y’all are God’s temple and God’s Spirit dwells in y’all. If anyone destroys y’all, God will destroy him.”

This especially applies to teachers, they will be held accountable for their teaching of false doctrine.

By Refusing God’s Wisdom

Don’t deceive yourself

This is a warning to Christians against adding worldly and prioritizing worldly wisdom over the cross. All things are yours through the Gospel, so you don’t need to add anything else to what God has done.

The attitude God rewards

Job 5:13-15 He catches the wise in their own craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end. They meet with darkness in the daytime and grope at noonday as in the night. But he saves the needy from the sword of their mouth and from the hand of the mighty.”

Questions for Personal Study

1. Which of these five ways of wasting your life endangers you most?
2. What is the assignment God has given you?
3. What can you do to make the Gospel beautiful? What do you “build” with?
- 4.