

Don't Waste Your Life - Part 1

by John Piper

John Piper emphasizes the importance of living a purposeful life in light of the fragility of existence and the call to repentance amidst suffering.

Duration: 8:47

Scripture: Job 1:18-19, Psalm 139:16, Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, Luke 13:1-5, James 4:14

Topics: "Repentance", "Gods Purpose"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not wasting our lives and finding significance, power, and meaning in every moment, even in the midst of pain and suffering. It reflects on tragic events like natural disasters and challenges listeners to repent and not take life for granted, recognizing that our lives are in God's hands and we exist for His purpose.

Transcript

Father, my heart's desire tonight is that in part because of what we do here now together there would be no wasted lives in this room and in the hearing of my voice and there would be no wasted deaths. I pray that you would bring a significance and a power and a meaning to the lives in this room and I pray that you would use that significance and power and meaning to make every death count for your glory whether it happens quickly or whether it happens 50 or 60 years from now. I pray Lord that if we're not able to trade in our pain or shame or suffering in this life we would not postpone the joy.

Rather find it in the shame, in the suffering. So come now and help me to make your word plain. Grip, I pray, these young people and don't let them waste their lives.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. So here we are gathered on the 29th of December 2003 and the body count as we meet from the earthquake in Bam, Iran is at about 25,000.

That's a lot of human lives snuffed out at 528 in the morning and you feel the personal weight of it when you read about a father digging through the blocks of his house looking for a daughter and a wife and uncovering a dead hand and passing out for grief. Or when you read about a little baby being found alive in the grip of a dead mother, puts a face on it. What makes this event here at the end of 2003 feel so apocalyptic for some of us is not the magnitude of it, though it's 10 times bigger than 9-11, but how many other events were packed together with it, right? Thirteen people buried in a mudslide in California, six buried under an avalanche in Utah, 111 dead in a plane crash in Benin, 198 dead and poisoned from gas

in China, all packed together in a few days at the end of the year.

And it just takes your breath away and makes us ask, what would Jesus want us to learn from this about not wasting our lives? And I think if we go to Jesus and ask Him that, He has something ready to say to us and it's found in Luke 13. You don't need to go there. This is not my main text.

I just want to read you what Jesus, I think, would say. Do you remember the situation? Some people came to Jesus and told Him about this atrocity in which Pilate had killed people while they were offering their sacrifices and he had taken their blood and mingled it with the blood of their sacrifices just to mock them. And they came to Jesus and said, what about that? Give an accounting of the Almighty here.

And here's what Jesus said. Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those 18 on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who live in Jerusalem? No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

Now don't make a mistake here. Jesus could weep with those who wept. Jesus had compassion almost everywhere He turned.

But He knows, and you know, that after a season of extraordinary, wracking grief in calamity, it begins to ease up and the questions come. And when they come to Jesus with these questions, He does not settle for sentimentality, trying to make everybody feel good, trying to get God off the hook. That is not the way Jesus responds.

Jesus says, are you astonished at the magnitude of this calamity in Galilee or at the magnitude of the calamity of the falling tower in Siloam? I will tell you what to be astonished at. Be astonished you weren't under the tower. Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

Means everybody in this room deserves to die and perish tonight. That's the way Jesus answered this inquiry about whether God could give an accounting of the deaths of the tower and Pilate's atrocity. So when you compare that earthquake to us tonight, I think Jesus would say, unless you repent, the thing you should be astonished about is that this hotel hasn't come down on all of us.

Our wonderment shouldn't be that 25,000 people perished in a moment, but that we have not yet been snuffed out. That's what should amaze us, Jesus says. So I conclude from this event and this sets the stage for my message that your life is in God's hands.

Your life hangs by a slender thread of sovereign grace tonight. You belong to God. He made you.

You exist for Him. God made life. He knows what life is for and He has a right to take it and a right to give it whenever He pleases.

You remember Job, first chapter? All ten of his children in an Iran-like calamity because the house fell on all ten of them and killed them. And Job gets the word and here's what it says happened. He tore his robe.

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