

# Don't Waste Your Life - Part 3

by John Piper

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living for Christ and making radical decisions to avoid wasting one's life, highlighting the dangers of cultural influences that try to get us to waste our lives.*

**Duration:** 7:59

**Scripture:** Psalm 90:12, Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, Matthew 16:24-25, Philippians 1:20-21, Colossians 3:23-24

**Topics:** "Eternal Focus", "Radical Discipleship"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not wasting one's life and the urgency to live a life that is dedicated to Christ and His gospel. It warns against the temptation to waste time and resources on worldly pursuits like retirement, highlighting the need for radical decisions and commitments to avoid a life of waste. The speaker shares personal stories and reflections on the significance of making every moment count for Christ, as the river of life flows swiftly towards eternity.

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## Transcript

And deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would seek to save his life will lose it. And whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it and not waste it.

It is possible to waste your life. Few things make me tremble more at age 58 than wasting my life. You'll read about this in the book if you read it.

I grew up in a Christian home and this was hanging over the sink in the kitchen from the time I was a tiny little child. And every morning I would get up and run into the kitchen and there it would be. Only one life, which will soon be passed.

Only what's done for Christ will last. Which communicated to me over the years as a child, you can waste your life. You can really waste it.

It was built into my heart as a little child, don't waste it. My dad told the story, one of the most moving I can remember as a little kid sitting, hearing my father preach as an evangelist. And my father's eyes could really blaze in preaching.

He always began the sermon with a joke. But it wasn't very long before his eyes were blazing and he was telling stories that would make you cringe. And one of them was a revival meeting in which at the end of the meeting, an old man that everybody had been praying for for decades evidently, walked to the front, I

think age something like 78, and just wept and wept and wept as my father sat beside him on the pew.

And all he could say was, I've wasted it, I've wasted it, I've wasted it. When I heard my dad tell that story and I heard it numerous times, and I remembered that plaque, I felt with every fiber of my being, I will not waste it. You get one crack and there's no replay.

And you can throw it away or the opposite. I'm 58 almost, a couple of weeks, and the river of my life is really flowing fast over the precipice of my days. And I don't have any idea how long the Lord may give me.

My zeal not to waste my life is as alive today as it's ever been, perhaps more so because it feels so short before I stand before the judge, King Jesus, and give an account of my life. What a tragedy in America. This is one of the biggest tragedies in our culture, that billions of dollars are invested every year to get people my age to waste the rest of our lives.

Billions of dollars invested to persuade us and lure us, at any cost it seems, to waste the rest of our lives. It's called retirement. And in Psalm it goes like this, You've worked for it, now enjoy it.

Twenty years, perhaps, of play, leisure, ease, while the world, uncared for medically, uneducated, filthy water, poverty stricken, un-evangelized, sinks under the weight of healthy 65-year-old people playing bridge and shuffleboard and collecting shells and fishing and golfing their way into the presence of King Jesus. And you know what? You're going to join them unless, at this stage in your life, you make some very radical decisions, very radical commitments, very radical choices about where your treasure is. Do not assume you won't be sucked in, because every stage of your life in this Disneyland called America, there are powerful forces angling to get you to waste your lives.

It will take a massive work of grace to rescue you from the clutches of this culture. For many of you are totally enslaved, and I pray on the way to being set free. So now the question is, what is the unwasted life? You're all worked up about us not wasting our lives.

Tell us what the unwasted life looks like. Tell us the pathway so that it will be written over our lives at the end, this life was not wasted. What would that be? Now, if you have a Bible, I do invite you to turn.

If you don't, that's okay. I'll read the text for you, but we're going to go to Philippians chapter 1 for the answer. This text means almost more to me than any other when it comes to asking the question, how can I not waste my life? Whether it's age 18, 28, 38, 58, 88, this text is the answer.

I preached on this text almost 24 years ago now, when I candidated for the pastorate of Bethlehem, which is just a little ways away. So it has a very special, powerful place in my memory, in my life, and I wanted to have a place like that for you. Philippians chapter 1, we'll just read a couple of verses here, 20 and 21, and you will hear, I hope, Paul's passion, which is the opposite of the unwasted life, Philippians 1.20. It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not at all be ashamed, but that with full courage, now as always, Christ will be honored, or you could use the word magnified, shown to be magnificent.

Christ will be magnified, honored, shown to be magnificent in my body, whether by life or by death. Paul's all-consuming passion is to so live and so live.

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