

What Then?

by Russell DeLong

The sermon challenges listeners to reflect on the purpose of their lives in light of mortality and the ultimate judgment they will face.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 1:2, Matthew 16:26, Matthew 25:46, 1 Corinthians 15:19, Hebrews 9:27

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Judgment Day"

Description

Russell DeLong delivers a thought-provoking sermon questioning the purpose and direction of our lives, emphasizing the futility of worldly pursuits that ultimately lead to death. He highlights the importance of considering the eternal consequences of our actions and choices, pointing out that without immortality, life becomes a pessimistic existence. DeLong challenges listeners to reflect on the significance of their present lives in light of the future beyond the grave, stressing the need to seek meaning from non-temporal sources like God, eternal life, and the Judgment.

Transcript

What's your next move? After that, What then? Is your life a disconnected series of jerks

toward no definite end? Or is your life merely a "merry-go-round," going in circles - going nowhere -- just going?

You say, "I must be doing something."

What?

"Oh, anything. I must be going places and doing things"

Whirl is king. Doing is more important and attractive than either thinking or being.

The lives of some people are empty, meaningless, and purposeless. They are just existing.

Like animals, they eat, drink, sleep, and move around -- going nowhere in particular and doing nothing on purpose.

Then there are others who are going somewhere and doing some things in order to attain certain goals.

One young man wants to get a job. Why? To earn some money. For what? To buy a car.

Why? He likes to speed. So he gets a job, works, gets money, buys a car, and speeds. What then?

Another young man goes to high school. Why? So that he can qualify for college. Why? He finishes college so that he might enter law school. Why? That he might pass the bar examinations and become a lawyer. Why? He wants to become district attorney. Why? That he may be elected governor. What then? He'll run for senator. And then what? Maybe, President. After that? Retire. What then? Old age. What then? Death. What then?

Any avenue one takes eventually leads step by step to death.

One makes a million dollars. He meets death and leaves it. What then?

One achieves great political power -- relinquishes it and faces death. What then?

One scales the heights in Hollywood and becomes an idolized star; loses beauty, health, and vitality; fades away into obscurity and dies. What then?

One travels to faraway places, sees spectacular phenomena, visits the shrines of antiquity, and mingles with people of all colors, races, and religions. Then weakens and dies. What then?

Money, fame, popularity, power, education, and position all reach their peak -- then the descent and finally the river of death. What then?

This sermon does have a pessimistic note. And yet it is important. If death is the end, pessimism is the correct philosophy. We are prisoners, all serving a death sentence. There is no escape. Without immortality life is a pessimistic, if not diabolic, madhouse.

But -- if we live beyond the grave, such future life must of necessity give meaning to present living.

If life is of any import, its significance must come from non-temporal sources -- God, eternal life, and the Judgment.

Life -- here and now -- must be shot full of meaning by the there and then.

How we live now must be decided by how we hope to live then.

Where we hope to live hereafter is determined by how we live here.

So, instead of working for money, position, fame, power, or acclaim, it is imperative to ask, Why? Because we must come to death. Here we are relieved of all we own. What we have we leave. What we have done is in the record.

What we are goes beyond death.

What then?

The Judgment.

What then?

Either the Judge of the Universe says: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord."

Or else He pronounces: "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

So, the final and ultimate "What then?" gets one of two answers: Heaven or Hell.

Mr. J. W. Green has put the truth of this sermon very pointedly and pertinently in his poem, "What Then?"

WHAT THEN?

When the great, busy plants of our cities

Shall turn out their last finished work;

When the merchants have sold their last order

And dismissed every last tired clerk;

When our banks have raked in their last dollar

And have paid out their last dividend;

When the Judge of the earth wants a hearing,

And asks for a balance -- WHAT THEN?

When the choir has sung its last anthem,

And the preacher has voiced his last prayer,

And the people have heard their last sermon,

And the sound has died out in the air;

When the Bible lies closed on the altar

And the pews are all empty of men;

When each one stands facing his record,

And the great Book is opened -- WHAT THEN?

When the actors have played their last drama,

And the mimic has made his last fun;
When the movie has flashed its last picture,
And the billboard displayed its last run;
When the crowd seeking pleasure has vanished,
And gone out in the darkness again;
When the trumpet of ages has sounded
And we stand before Him -- WHAT THEN?
When the bugle-call sinks into silence
And the long marching columns stand still;
When the captain repeats his last orders
And they've captured the last fort and hill;
When the flag has been hauled down from the masthead,
And the wounded afield have checked in,
And the world that rejected its Saviour
Is asked for a reason -- WHAT THEN?
Friend, what's your next move? And after that? And then what? And finally death. What
then?

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/russell-delong/what-then/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net

