



Worship Service: 10am, 160 Paya Lebar Road, Orion@Paya Lebar #04-06, Singapore 409022
Sunday School: 11.45am, Prayer Meeting: 8pm Wednesday
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Death and Resurrection

Death is a different thing in human beings from what it is in animals. The common mistake is to suppose that when a human being dies he, or she, is over and done forever and in every way. But this is wrong.

Death in an animal is the end of its existence in every way. But death in a human being is not the end of existence. The reason for the difference is this. A human being is created with two parts: a body and a soul. An animal has a body but no soul. Therefore, when a human being dies the body begins to decay and so is fit only for burial. But the soul of a man or woman does not cease to exist. It leaves the body and enters into another world. There are two places to which the soul, or death, may go: heaven and hell.

The soul, which at death leaves the human body, immediately and with no delay enters into its eternal home and will live there forever. Hence the most serious subject which any man or woman can be faced with is this: Where will my soul be at death? It is only when this immensely serious question faces a person that they begin to realise how extremely important it is that we all prepare for death. It is all too easy for people to say that they do not believe that we have a soul. However, one easy way to recognise the existence of our soul is to think of the conscience. Conscience and intelligence are elements of the soul. All human beings have these elements. Animals do not have them.

Conscience is that element of the soul which warns us of the guilt of our sin. Sin is disobedience to the moral laws of God. Conscience is a God-given warning which we are all aware of. Even people who scoff at religion and who hate to think of God are compelled to face up to the reality of conscience. Even Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Christ, could not escape the warning and alarm of his own conscience. It roused in him such fear for his sinful betrayal of Christ that he committed suicide.

Sin is the supremely serious problem which we all, as human beings, have to face up to. God tells us very clearly in His Bible that He will punish our sins, either in this life, or in the life to come, or in both - unless we are forgiven.

The fact that all human beings are sinful should awaken our conscience to make us face up to the extremely important question: How can I get forgiveness for my sins before I die? The seriousness of this question is very obvious. If I die with my sins all forgiven by God I shall go to heaven. But if I die with my sins not forgiven by God He will punish me in hell eternally. No problem which we face on earth is so extremely serious as this is.

Thankfully, God in His mercy has given us a very clear explanation of this problem in

the Bible. A man, woman or child who believes in Jesus Christ will most certainly be forgiven all his, or her, sins and will be received up into heaven when they die.

God is perfectly just and He will forgive the sins of all who believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour. Jesus died for the sins of all who believe in Him. He paid the price for our sins by suffering on the Cross for us. This is the comfort which all Christian believers have.

No wonder John Wesley said about the Christians of his church, "Our people die well". Christians die well. They are sinners like others. But because they believe in Jesus, who died on the Cross for sinners, they have all their sins forgiven in this life. Their soul therefore goes to heaven as soon as they die.

So the wise way to face death is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness. The foolish way to face death is to close our mind to the seriousness of death and so to face death unprepared. Those who die without faith in Jesus will enter into the eternal punishment of hell-fire. In the moment of death their soul is by God cast into eternal punishment.

How different is the death of the believer in Christ! The moment his soul leaves his body in death it is received up into heaven, where it will be eternally at peace and happy in God's house above.

What about the resurrection? At the end of the world Jesus Christ will come back to judge all mankind on the Day of Judgement. To the believer Jesus will say, "Come!" To the unbeliever He will say, "Depart from me!" Resurrection is the lifting of dead bodies from the grave at the end of the world. When Jesus Christ comes again. He will put the soul back into the body of every person. The body and soul of all believers will now shine in glory and beauty. They will rise up to meet Christ at His second coming. Sadly, the body and soul of all unbelievers will be re-joined together. But the unbelievers will now be cast into eternal punishment forever.

The lesson for us all is surely obvious. Be sure you trust in Jesus for salvation. All believers will be, both body and soul, in heaven forever. All unbelievers will be cast by God into hell. Seek grace to believe in Christ.

Rev Maurice Roberts
Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)

Balancing Work and Leisure as a Christian

Introduction

Work and leisure are God's gifts to the human race. Our attitude towards them in our society is generally dominated by a secular and pragmatic outlook. The gradual decline of moral and spiritual values in our culture is also reflected in how people spend their leisure time. Today the confusion about work and play had degenerated into this: Someone once said, "**We worship our work, work at our play and play during worship.**" Christians need to rethink, and rediscover God's blueprint for us in this vital aspect of our life.

Work can be defined as "**the meaningful employment of our time that results in productivity and fruit of our labour.**" The Bible asserts the value of industrious work. Solomon said, "*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest*" (Eccl 9:10). The Protestant tradition made much of work as a creation ordinance. The **Reformers extolled diligence in work as a primary virtue in the**

Christian life. It came commonly to be known as the Protestant Work Ethic in the later years. The Puritans in 17th century England emphasised on the same theme. William Perkins said, “man must live by the labour of his own hands and feed upon his own bread.” Richard Bernard added, “**idleness is a great sin, the nurse of all vice.**” Or, the common adage, “An idle mind is a devil’s workshop.” Work should be viewed as a calling in which the worker is a steward and he is accountable to God (cf. Eph 4:1). The goals of work are firstly, spiritual, to glorify God and, secondly, humanitarian, to serve men and society.

Today, the purpose and value of work is clouded by many material pursuits. The consumer ethic, coupled with the success ethic (in a meritocratic and elitist society like Singapore), affected our career ethic. People value work as a means towards attaining success; with one of the signs of success as having a prestigious career or many promotions. The Singaporean dream consists of the five C’s—Condo, Car, Club, Card and Corporate success. More importantly to the Christians are the 3 C’s—our **Creator**, our **Consecration to Christ**, and **Contempt of the world**. To achieve success, workers thought that they must deny themselves of leisure, their families and their friends. They would have a competitive spirit that tramples upon other people on the way to economic success. Christians ought not to be so, for there is a higher purpose for us in the spiritual realm than just material gains and power on earth.

The concept of leisure, on the other hand, is quite elusive and difficult to define compared to work. Some have simply defined leisure as the antithesis of work and called it non-working time. While this may be true in some sense, I find it insufficient and misleading. I believe leisure is **discretionary time**—time used fruitfully to the glory of God apart from the obligation of work, family, and society. It is an activity positively chosen for personal enrichment. It can be a time for physical, spiritual and intellectual and social refreshment, like reading a book or going for a walk or even interacting meaningfully with someone over a conversation. **Yet leisure is a matter of mental and spiritual attitude, not as a result only of external matters.** (A person on leave from work may not be enjoying leisure.) I think leisure provides the occasion for learning, growth and free expression, for rest and freedom, for rediscovering life in its entirety. It is a search for repose, for creativity and freedom. It serves many useful functions. Jesus had occasions of leisure with His disciples, as in Mark 6:31–32, we read, “*And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.*”

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:12, “*All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*” There are some things we do not do as Christians even in the name of leisure or relaxation. For example, dancing in a night spot, drinking alcohol, smoking, watching worldly movies or doing yoga which has religious connotation in its philosophy and origin. I treasure reading good Christian books, exercising in long walks with my wife, swimming, cycling, or listening to Christian music or messages, or playing the guitar or sharing and fellowshiping with others or just resting. It is more than non-work, it is positive benefit for our body and soul. I believe it is essential for a healthy ministry, a healthy mind and body as well. **If you don’t come apart and rest awhile, you may just plain come apart!** Take a book and go to the beach or quiet place to read. Seek the Lord in meaningful moments of life away from the hue and cry of work, family and community. Take a break (e.g., holiday) from work from time to time. We need it for the refreshing of our bodies.

In the Gospel, we see the record of Jesus and the disciples engaged not just in work but also in times of physical and spiritual refreshment (Mark 7:42; 8:10; Matt 15:21, 29; Luke 16:22; John 10:40). Jesus took time off from the busy schedule of healing

people, casting out demons and preaching and spent much time with the disciples privately. It was a time for personal refreshment as they retired from work and reinvigorated and re-energised themselves with the fellowship of the Lord and one another. Jesus often retreated to a mountain to pray (Mark 6:46). That is the source of spiritual strength and vitality for the continuance of the demanding Christian ministry. In the same vein, our bodies need the necessary rest and restoration. Leisure is an opportunity to repair our weary bodies and to recuperate from the stress and strain of the day. Leisure need not be non-activity. Work hard while it is time to work and have a meaningful and fulfilling time for recreation and leisure as well.

Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 3:13, *“And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.”* You can be reading a Christian book or resting on the beach or even listening to good edifying music or light exercise. Taking care of some plants or fishes or birds may be quite refreshing. I find it helpful physically to walk, swim, or go on the treadmill twice or thrice a week. I like to read a book during my free time and to just rest on a Sunday afternoon. There is a time for everything (Eccl 3:1–2). God has made us in a way that we do not work continuously to our physical detriment but **there is a day of rest in the week to recuperate, refresh, repair and reinvigorate ourselves in the Lord and physically too**. In some companies, it is common to see employees selling their annual leave to make more money and work on Sundays for overtime as well. This is not necessary a wise thing to do. Do not deprive yourselves of these wonderful privilege and pleasure.

Moderation in leisure means avoiding the idolatry in leisure. Leisure pursuit is capable of becoming a religion as well when people put other interests in the centre of their lives instead of God. For example, if everyday is play, then play will become tedious work one day. A good leisure life must meet spiritual and moral standards as well and contributes to one’s personal wellbeing in constructive ways by opening up possibilities not present in the routine of work and obligation. The Puritans gave us a perspective on what is generally not acceptable for leisure. The Puritans rejected games of chance like gambling, bear baiting (i.e., cruelty to animals), horse racing and carousing in and out of taverns. They were also wary of idleness, loafing and aimless inactivity. They honoured the Lord on the Sabbath in worship and rest and communion with the Lord and His people, and did spend more time with the family and the brethren in consecration and sharing and reading.

Conclusion

It is possible that a legitimate leisure can be turned into inordinate affection and does not augur well for a person’s spiritual health and vitality. For example, The author knows that there are some who are enthralled by computer games, TV, watching youtube videos, listening to worldly music on the the ipod, s and watching violent and immoral movies. For the children it can be excessive playing with the Game of Thrones, Transformers or other little obsessions including pets, and other hobbies can be possible idols. Others are enamoured with watching youtube movies, NBA, Kpop or rock music or worldly entertainment (ie especially occultic or violet or immoral ones) or football or Fi car race, and some are enamoured with their leisure that they neglected family, prayer, work and worship. Be careful that these things be not carried to the extreme. It can do more harm than good to us spiritually. Hope this helps

Jack Sin

(NB.for deeper studies, read Ryken Leland, Redeeming the Time, A Christian Perspective of Work and Leisure, 1995)



The sermons are recorded every Sunday and are available from brother Albert



Pray to join the Wednesday night prayer meeting in intercession for one another



The monthly Monday Bible study at Julie's home studying the book of Mark

Memory Verse

Jos 3:5 And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

Announcements

1. Elder Khoo Peng Kiat speaks next Sunday on "Claiming Our Possessions (Joshua 5:1-15)
2. Prayer meeting continues on Wed at 8pm at the home sister Han Kin Kheng.
3. Sunday messages are recorded on video format. If you are interested to have them, please contact Albert.
4. The second anniversary of the church will be on 2 February 2020 and Rev Philip Heng of Galilee BPC will be the speaker
5. Pastor and Angie will be attending the ICCC Congress in Chile (Pastor will be speaking at the conference) and preaching twice at a BP mission in Arica, Chile, from 13 Jan to 1 Feb
6. Rev Tan Eng Boo of Grace BPC will be standing in for Pastor Jack in his absence.
7. Rev Philip Heng is the speaker of the church camp from 10-13 June and it will be held in Pulau Springs Resort. Those interested to know more, please see Dn Choo Siang or Dn Yue kay
8. Pastor is available for counselling anytime at 91160948 (hp).