

## Life Is A Temporary Assignment Series

October 6, 2021

Scripture: Philippians 3:17-20

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Summary: This life is not forever.

However, it is important- very important, in light of where we're going.

Life is a Temporary Assignment

We don't want it to be, but life on earth is a temporary assignment, and this brings some perspective to what we do and how we live that might be different from what we have if we think we'll go on forever.

I don't really think that most people think they'll go on forever; they simply push mortality out of the way and don't focus on it until they have to.

Job 8.9- tells us that our days on earth are transient.

**This thought could drive us to depression, if we allowed it, but God tells us a lot more than that about our lives.**

**What He tells us is very encouraging, too.**

**First, compared to eternity, life here is extremely brief.**

**Secondly, earth is only a temporary residence.**

**David asked God to help him properly gauge his life here, and here are the words he used:**

**Psa. 39.4- he sought understanding.**

**He sought to understand so he could live properly in the reality of life.**

**So we need to be able to do.**

**God compares life on earth to temporarily living in a foreign country.**

**Earth is not your permanent home or final destination. You're just passing through and just visiting earth. God calls you an alien, pilgrim, foreigner, stranger, visitor, and traveler.**

**Psa. 119.19- foreigner on earth**

**1 Pet. 1.17- temporary residents of earth**

**Christians- you and me- are only landed immigrants on earth- we are resident aliens- this is not our home. Our home is not here.**

**Phil. 3.19-20- we are citizens of heaven! That is our country.**

**We must understand that there is more to life than just the few years that we live on this planet.**

**Your identity is in eternity, and your homeland is heaven.**

**What does this reality do for you?**

**Among other things, it gives perspective on ‘stuff’ and acquirement here. A lot of people are caught up with having it all right now, so they try to have the house, the car, the clothes, the job, and everything in perfection now.**

**However, we don’t have to. This doesn’t have to be our quest and doesn’t have to dominate our priorities and lifestyles.**

**Without question, we are to do well with what we do here- God tells us that. But He doesn’t tell us that we’re going to reach all peaks here and now.**

**There is a concept that Paul uses that really defines our role right now.**

**2 Cor. 5.20- ambassadors for Christ.**

**An ambassador for one country to another is to represent the interests of his country to the other. He, though, is a guest in the country he is in and does not have citizen rights in that country. He is temporary in that country, but he has to represent his country while there. He is not to get involved in the host country. And, from time-to-time, the ambassadorship changes, and an ambassador gets moved to another posting- this is part of the job.**

**With this in mind, we can see that Christians can be guilty of betraying their true nation. Many Christians have assumed that because they live on earth that this is their home, and they conduct themselves as if this is the case.**

**1 Pet. 2.11- this world is not your home.**

**God warns us not to get too attached to what’s around us because it is temporary.**

**1 Cor. 7.31- in 2 ways, this world is passing away.**

**First of all, there is a new world coming that we find revealed in the truth of the establishment of the Kingdom of God, under Christ’s leadership at the time of his glorious return.**

**Secondly, shortly, you and I won’t be here- we will die- so this world, for us, will pass away. With this being doubly true, we need to live cautiously here and now.**

**In so many ways, life has never been easier for us. We are constantly entertained, amused, and catered to.**

**What can be accessed via Internet is amazing and the games, movies, and music, alone, that are freely available, can draw us into a pursuit for entertainment that other generations could not even imagine.**

**Only as we remember that life is a test, a trust, and a temporary assignment will the appeal of these things lose their grip on our lives.**

**We are preparing for something even better.**

**2 Cor. 4.18- the things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.**

**Because the earth is not our ultimate home, we experience difficulty, sorrow, and rejection in this world.**

**Some of God's promises even seem unfulfilled, some prayers seem unanswered, and some circumstances seem unfair. But, this is not the end of the story.**

**So that we don't get too attached to earth, God allows us to feel a certain amount of discontent and dissatisfaction in life- longings that will never be fulfilled this side of eternity.**

**We're not completely happy here because we're not supposed to be!**

**Earth is not our final home; we were created for something much better.**

**We're like the fish that can't live so well on earth because it was made for water.**

**We were made for someplace other than where we spend this life. We'll all have a lot of happy times here, but nothing compared with what we will eventually know.**

**If we think about life as a temporary assignment, it will lead to our altering our values.**

**Eternal values will rise to the top and become the deciding factors in decision making.**

**CS Lewis observed, “All that is not eternal is eternally useless.”**

**Again, go back to 2 Cor. 4.18 and what we’re told there.**

**Let no Christian make the mistake of assuming that God’s goal for our lives is material prosperity or popular success, as the world defines it, now.**

**The abundant life has nothing to do with material abundance, and faithfulness to God does not guarantee success in a career or even a ministry.**

**Let us not focus on temporary crowns- or achievements.**

**Think of some of the greats of God’s kingdom.**

**Paul was faithful, yet he ended up in prison and martyred.**

**John the Baptist, who Jesus declared to be the greatest person born of woman, was faithful, but was beheaded.**

**Millions of faithful people have been martyred, have lost everything, or have come to the end of life with nothing to show for it.**

**Think of the Persecuted Church. But the end of life is not the end.**

**In God’s eyes, the greatest heroes of faith are not those who achieve prosperity, success, and power in this life, but those who treat this life as a temporary assignment and serve faithfully, expecting their promised reward in eternity.**

**Hebrews 11 is God’s Hall of Fame, and is much more valuable than the Hockey Hall of Fame or the Baseball Hall of Fame, etc.**

**Heb.11.13, 16. Your and my time on earth is not the complete story of life.**

**We have to wait until we join God for the rest of the chapters.**

**It takes faith to live on earth as a foreigner.**

**There's an old story of a retiring missionary coming home to North America on the same boat as the president of the United States. Cheering crowds, a military band, a red carpet, banners, and the media welcomed the president home, but the missionary slipped off the ship unnoticed. Feeling self-pity and resentment, he began complaining to God. Then God gently reminded him, "But my child, you're not home yet."**

**You will eventually be home and when you are, you'll really wonder why you placed so much importance on things that were so temporary. All of us will wonder that. We'll wonder what we were really thinking about and why we wasted so much time, energy, and concern on what wasn't going to last. You'll wonder why you didn't have the perspective that would have kept eternity before you.**

**There are times when life is tough and when we're overwhelmed with doubt or when we wonder if living for Christ is worth the effort.**

**When that happens, remember: "We're not home, yet." There will come a day- the day of death- when we don't leave home, but we go home.**

**In the land of the dyeing, on our way to the land of the living.**

**Although we don't anxiously wait for that day, it is one to look for knowing the truth about it.**