

God's Glory

August 19, 2009

Introduction--Anteater Expert Video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXD9HnrNrvk>

I would not want to be that guy. First of all, anteaters? Who would really want to study anteaters? What really stinks is that he actually realizes that he wasted 15 years of his life. That is rough.

Who really wants to look back on 15 years and say that they wasted it? What's worse, who wants to look back on their entire life and say that they wasted it? I don't know about you, but I don't want to do that. I don't want to waste the time that I have because time is something that you can never get back. Once it is gone, it's gone for good.

I don't want to waste my life, and I don't want you guys to waste yours either. There are a lot of things that I have done that have been a waste, and I wish I could have them back. I can't. You guys have done things and will do things that are a waste, and you can't get them back even though you wish with all your heart that you could. No one lives a life without at least some regret. But I don't want my life to be wasted. And I don't want your lives to be wasted either.

Ok Mike, so what does it mean to live a life that is not wasted? That's a great question! Thank you for asking!

Lets think about that for a second. What would be a wasted life for this pen? If you used it for something other than writing. What would be a wasted life for a car? If you used it to store all your stuff rather than drive it. A wasted life is when a thing--or a person--doesn't fulfill the purpose for which it was made.

The question that we must answer then is the question that people have been asking since the beginning of time: What is the meaning of life? Why am I here? What's the point of it all? Thankfully, Christians know the answer to that question, and its found in the Bible: Genesis 1:27: So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. The answer to the question is found in why we were made: as images of God.

What is the point of an image? It points to and honors something else. It honors the thing that it represents. Show images of Mount Rushmore, Lincoln Memorial, Michael Jordan Statue.

Since we were made in the image of God--since we are images of God--we were made to honor him. That is the simple answer to the question.

Maybe if I asked this question, some of you might be able to give me the correct answer: what is the chief end of man? Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. The whole point of our lives is to glorify God and to enjoy him. That is why we are here. Period.

When we are on our deathbed and we know that the end is near, the only way that we can avoid saying "I wasted it!" is by living a life that glorifies and enjoys God.

I read a poem just recently that I wanted to share with you:

*Only one life,
'Twill soon be past.
Only what's done
For Christ will last.*

Here's my problem. And I don't think its just my problem. I think that it's the problem of everyone in here: I waste way too much of time and effort on things that just aren't important. I'm old enough--and so are you--where I can look back at different times in my life and say "That was such a waste." I look back on every single relationship that I was in before I met Stephanie, and I can tell you that each one was a waste. I can't tell you the countless hours that I have spent watching SportCenter. If there was a day when I didn't have class or if I didn't have to work until later in the day, I would watch SC over and over and over again. It was always the same, but I still had to watch it. Wasted. In college, I wasted too much time doing stupid stuff that I don't even remember--and not because I was 'wasted' if you know what I mean. I didn't concentrate as I should have on my studies. My grades slipped and I lost part of a scholarship that I had. I'm still paying back student loans because of that.

We get so wrapped up in silly little things that we think are so important but are really not. We chase after things that we think will make our lives so great if we could just have them. We get wrapped up in our boyfriends

or girlfriends. Or if we don't have one of those, we think that we have to and we spend all of our time and energy trying to get one. We think that popularity is so important. If I could get in with this group or that group, or if I just sat by this person at lunch, then I would be cool and life would be great. We try so hard to get the right people to like us and the wrong people to leave us alone. Or we get wrapped up in sports and we think that they are just so important and should come first in our lives. Sports aren't all that, and they end eventually. Then what? I had a buddy that I played with in high school who got drafted by the Cubs in the 13th round straight out of high school. A year later, he was back at my high school watching our games, because it didn't pan out for him. He was trying desperately to relive the glory days cause that is all that he had. It's a waste.

I'm not saying for you to give all that stuff up. Coach Smith would kill me if everyone showed up tomorrow and quit. What I am saying though is that if your life is completely wrapped up in these things, then something needs to change. If you feel like you couldn't live if sports was taken away from you, you need a perspective change. If you feel like life would be over if your boyfriend or girlfriend dumped you, we need to have a serious talk. You need a change in perspective.

Living a life that is not wasted is all about perspective. Right now, this is your perspective: Self-Centered. You think that life is all about me, all about what people think of me, all about what I can get. Your thoughts rarely go past what is happening right here and right now. It's all about the moment, all about pleasure, all about no worries.

Self-centered lives are wasted lives. Our lives are wasted when we focus on ourselves rather than God's glory.

So here's the deal. I don't want to scare you, but I don't want you to not hear the truth. Death is certain for everyone, and how you live your life matters. How you live your life matters because how you live determines where you go. Everyone lives forever. That is how we were made. But how we live our lives on here on earth determines where we live forever.

Our lives are so important! Why would we want to do anything else than what we were made to do? We wouldn't want to be a pen that isn't used to write with or a car that no one drives. But that is what we do if we live our lives in a way that doesn't glorify God. It's a waste.

I know that no one is perfect--except Jesus--so we will all do things that we regret. It will happen, and I hope we recognize that and learn from it. But that isn't an excuse. "Well, I suck and I can't do it so why even try?" you can live a life that glorifies God and is not wasted. And you don't have to be a pastor or pastor's kid to do it.

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31 NIV And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17 NIV

I know that this is not easy, and some of you might even be saying whatever and have tuned me out at this point. So be it. But here is where the rubber meets the road. This is how you can put this into practice when you walk out of here:

Don't waste your life seeking popularity or getting people to like you. Don't waste your life Taking every stinking quiz that comes along on facebook. Don't waste your life updating your status every 10 minutes. Don't waste your life watching that movie trashy movie that everyone thinks is funny but in reality you know its nothing but crap. Don't waste your time in school by not doing your best. And don't waste your time cheating in school cause it will always come back to bite you. Don't waste your time dating someone that you don't see yourself marrying. Don't date in middle school. It's a waste of your time. Don't waste the time with your family. It goes by so quickly.

Instead, remember why we were made. You are an image of God, and he created you so that you could glorify him and enjoy him forever. In every situation that you are in, simply ask yourself, how can I do what I am doing for the glory of God? If you are always asking yourself that question and honestly trying to live that out, that is a life that is not wasted.