

The Facts of Life

L.L. Brigance was a Gospel preacher and educator. He helped prepare outlines for N.B. Hardeman. They are found in the "Tabernacle Sermons" that were presented in the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee from March 28 through April 16, 1922. I have found his outlines to be very helpful in understanding important subjects like one he titled, "The Facts of Life."

Life is made up of time. Benjamin Franklin said, "Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of." James put it a little differently, but his point was the same. He wrote, "Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away" (4:14). Paul also urged Christians to use time wisely (Ephesians 5:15-17).

Life needs a purpose. Brigance cited a poem from an unknown author, which said, "Half the wrecks upon life's ocean If some star had been their guide Would have safely reached the harbor But they drifted with the tide." Paul compared life to the Olympic Games in his first letter to Corinth. He stressed that Christ's followers are not just practicing like someone shadow boxing. Daily devotion to pursuit of the prize demands daily sacrifice and self-control (9:25-27).

Life goes beyond the grave. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow penned the following words. "Life is real! Life is earnest! And the grave is not its goal; Dust thou art, to dust returnees, was not spoken of the soul." Paul longed for a new body specially prepared to live eternally in the heavenly home (2 Corinthians 5:1-4). He also said, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Let us resolve to use the time God gives us in a way that will glorify his name, setting our sights on receiving an unfading crown from the Master. Life on earth is not the end. Heaven is the ultimate, eternal goal.

By Gary C. Hampton