

Life: A Precious Privilege

by Wayne Goff

When you arise in the morning, think of what a precious privilege it is to be alive — to breathe, to think, to enjoy, to love.

— Marcus Aurelius

Marcus Aurelius was Emperor of Rome from 161-180 A.D. He was the last of the so-called “Five Good Emperors.” He was born in Rome on April 26, 121 A.D. and died March 17, 180 A.D. at the age of 58. He was a believer in Stoicism and his untitled writing, commonly known as the ***Meditations***, is the most significant source of understanding of ancient Stoic philosophy.

He died just before his 59th birthday, and has been dead now for 1,836 years! Do you ever wonder if “time” has any meaning when one is in the grave? Or is existence in the netherland a timeless experience? Either way, Marcus Aurelius was right when he said it is “a precious privilege” to be alive.

But God expects us to use our time wisely — “*See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil*” (Eph. 5:15-16). Also Solomon’s inspired advice, especially to the young, is this:

“Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these God will bring you into judgment” (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

The world says you only go around once in life so “grab all the gusto you can get!” God says enjoy life under the sun, and fulfill the dreams of your heart and life — but keep in mind that you will give account for your life to God in the judgment day. Therefore, walk “***circumspectly***” (carefully, diligently; “deviating in no respect from the law of duty” [Thayer’s]). In other words, always keep in mind your responsibility before God and live accordingly!

Don’t squander time, for that is the thing of which life is made. I love this quote which was given to me years ago:

“This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it or use it for good.

What I do today is very important because I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving something in its place I have traded for it. I want it to be a gain, not a loss – good not evil. Success, not failure, in order that I shall not regret the price I paid for it.” – Heartsill Wilson

For further study on how to live life, read Ecclesiastes 2:24; 3:12-15, 22; 5:18; 9:7-9; Acts 20:35; Phil. 4:4-9; 1 Thess. 5:15-16; 1 Tim. 6:18.

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