

This earthly life is a journey to eternity

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Oct. 31–Nov. 1, 2009

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BIG SANDY, Texas—How do you handle life when you are disappointed in your own behavior?

Allow me to remind you about a concept that can help you deal with disappointment and with rehabilitation:

Life is a journey.

Seeing that phrase probably imparts no new knowledge. When was the first time you heard that phrase? That long ago?

You undoubtedly understand the concept of the phrase "life is a journey" better today than you did when you first heard it. That's what life's experience does. Experience helps us to internalize information as we mature.

Story of Ecclesiastes

One of the best examples of life being a journey is in the book of Ecclesiastes.

Believers love the conclusion of that Old Testament book. The book has such a positive message at the end. However, the tone throughout the book can be considered pessimistic.

The book begins in Ecclesiastes 1:1-2 with the thesis that can be paraphrased this way: "Life is worthless." Then the author writes about his journey.

He tried the route of striving after wisdom (verses 12-18). That didn't provide him with the answers for which he was searching.

He embarked on the path of pleasure (Ecclesiastes 2:1-3), great accomplishments (verses 4-17) and hard labor (verses 18-23). He still considered life to be flawed.

Ecclesiastes is a fascinating book. We watch a glimpse of a man on a journey in his life. The process of his learning is a valuable lesson.

Focus on eternity

Viewing life as a journey should empower us to make better decisions in our lives. Yet there is more to the story than merely viewing life as a journey.

We are on a journey to eternity. Chew on that for a while.

■ Focusing on eternity should help us to put physical possessions into perspective.

Christ taught His disciples in Matthew 6:25-34 not to become preoccupied with physical things.

■ Focusing on eternity should help us to put religion into perspective.

We need to look to the Apostle. In case you don't know who that is, check out Hebrews 3:1.

We need to look to the Head of the church at headquarters. In case you don't know who and where those are, read Ephesians 1:20-23.

■ Focusing on eternity should help us to put negative experiences into perspective.

People have a tendency to do evil toward you because they get away with their behavior during this life (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

■ Focusing on eternity should help us change our behavior.

Paul wrote that if we are risen with Christ we should seek those things that are above (Colossians 3:1-2).

Christ Himself taught that a believer's recompense would come at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:12-14).

One other benefit

Remembering that this life is a journey to eternity should be valuable in helping us when we are disappointed in ourselves. We can become reconciled with our Father.

There is another benefit as well. Remembering that this life is a journey to eternity should be valuable in helping us when we are disappointed in the behavior of other people.

There is certainly nothing wrong with avoiding the unsavory behavior of other people. There is also nothing wrong with avoiding unsavory people.

But, if we remember that they are on a journey to eternity, we will do a better job of allowing Christ to be their judge.

Even as we keep our distance, we might even pray that their journey to eternity will be successful.