



DECISION TIME

BY REID FANOUS

Where am I coming from? Where am I going? Why am I here? Why do I do what I do? What's the meaning of it all? We face these questions, and more, at some point in time early on in our lives. We may decide to investigate and seek guidance to reach some understanding of these fundamental issues. Or we feel daunted by these seemingly insurmountable questions, get discouraged and work as hard as we can to avoid them, shut them out, and ignore them. One popular way out is to get busy with activities, and raise the level of noise surrounding us to such level that we do not have a clear moment left to face any of these questions.

We may temporarily succeed in running away, but sooner or later we have to come to terms with these issues. Therefore, sooner or later the same destination is reached: Investigate and Study; the only difference is "when" do we reach this station? Facing these questions early on in life and reaching some concrete conclusions, carries the potential of a

lifetime of learning and growth, without the burden of running away and avoiding the issues. Late resolution of these issues runs the risk of getting to see the light and regret all the wasted time spent stumbling in the dark, or worse yet ending our physical lives without getting to see at all.

When we start facing these issues, we find that the only players are: The Creator of the universe and man (myself, yourself, all of us individually). The Bible represents our main reference. The Church is the body of believers we surround ourselves with throughout our journey of learning and growth. Fellowship tends to be more than just companionship as it extends into observing, studying, learning, exchanging, practicing, touching and being touched. Since we make up the church, churches tend to have their own weaknesses that come only from our own human weaknesses. However, this weakness does not take away from our relationship with Him, because in Him our weakness becomes

strength. As Paul says: And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you: for 'My strength is made perfect in weakness'." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Therefore the issue being faced today is: What course of action have we assumed, knowingly or unknowingly, when faced with the questions we started with here? Have we reached the decision time, yet? **Baggage & Shackles**

When faced with a decision point we tend to search for excuses to postpone considering it. "Let me first do this, and then I'll consider it"; or "Let me attend to that first, then I'll have more time to consider this issue". The unstated objective is to push it further into the future, possibly with the intention of not doing it at all. "Then He said to another, 'Follow Me.' But he said, 'Lord, let me first go and bury my father.' Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.' And another also said, 'Lord, I will follow you; but let me first go bid them farewell, who are at my house.' But Je-

sus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:59-62)

These ephemeral cares are the heavy baggage we subconsciously shackle to our wrists. We want to leap forward, but are brought to a screeching halt when dragging these weights along. It may make sense to first break loose from the baggage in order to freely face the decision time. Or is it?

Job – Project – Being

So, how are we to live? Since we are usually more comfortable drawing on past experiences when faced with new issues, we may be tempted to look at life as a "job." After all, most of us are familiar with what "jobs" are: One, or more, activity to be performed regularly. Pursuing life as a repetitive chain of activities, aiming at perfecting each of these activities in order to perfect the chain itself may sound like a worthwhile endeavor. A closer look reveals that this approach, in and by itself, takes away our inheritance as true children of God the Father, and reduces us to human robots. If all what we care about, and live for, is to perform these "jobs," or "rituals," we become "These people draw near to Me with their mouth. And honor me with their lips. But their heart is far from me. And in vain they worship Me. Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15: 8-9) Therefore, our life cannot be a mere "job."

If not a "job", it may then be a "project," which we may define as: A group of related activities, that have a defined beginning and end, designed to reach a particular result. On the surface it may be tempting to look at life as a "project" since our earthly life has a defined beginning and end. As such, the "project" will also have a defined end or goal. However, whatever the project, it can still be had for far less than the price already paid on our behalf by the Son. Therefore, life is certainly much more valuable than a "project." If not a "job" or a "project," what is it?

Do you recall the last time you heard a piece of music that went well beyond your ears and reached your soul; or looked at a painting that kept on drawing you into it while revealing more of itself to you; or been to a spot by the sea where the serenity engulfed you; or came across a book, poem, even a single phrase that deeply touched you? When we come across any of these situations, our reaction is typically to spend more time listening, looking,

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are awed indefinitely. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power." (Ephesians 1:17-19) When we capture

this, we forsake every thing else in order to spend more time here. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." (Matthew 13:44)

Therefore life is "Being" what we truly are: Christians – Members of God's Family. We call Him: "Our Father in heavens, ..." (Matthew 6:9) and His Son said "No longer do I call you

experiencing, reading and repeating. The more the beauty or value experienced, the longer the time we would like to spend with it. What if the beauty is endless? What if the value is infinite? What if the greatness is boundless? We

servants; for a servant does not know what his master is doing: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15)

Going through life as such we find that "jobs" and "projects", appropriately known as "rituals" and "exercises" become more like means and tools to enhance our "Being" Christians. We also find that in our unity in Him we do not "earn" a living but are rather alive from His grace. Moreover, death ceases to carry its dreadful stigma; "O Death, Where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:55; Isaiah 25:8) and become a transition allowing us to cross over to what "...Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love him." (1 Corinthian 2:9) Yet the fruits of this decision of just "being" can be subjects of endless articles and books that are well beyond the containment of this world.

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