

# "Today is the First Day of the Rest of your Life"

Ron Roberts

When I was in high school this statement was made popular by a number of people. *"Today is the first day of the rest of your life."* The emphasis of the sentence was to not waste the day. A Latin phrase "*Carpe Diem*" expresses the same thought. It means "*Seize the Day*". Paul tells us "*Redeeming the time*" is part of walking in wisdom (Eph. 5:15-17).

Life is brief. We should not waste it pursuing the wrong goals. In college many students begin working on a major and decide after a year or two of investment of their lives and their parents' money that this is not the degree they really want. They change their major or their school altogether. They wasted thousands of dollars and years of their lives chasing the wrong goal. If they had only decided on the right course of study in the first place they would not have lost so much time and money. This is better than graduating, working a number of years, accumulating greater debts, and then deciding this is not really the career you want. One is a lesser waste than the other, but they are both wasting portions of our lives.

The Bible warns us of the brevity of life. It is like a vanishing vapor James tells us (James 4:14). Because life is so short we dare not let opportunities to do good pass us by. James 4:17 says, "*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*" Gal. 6:10 says, "*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*"

The book of Ecclesiastes warns us again and again that many of our pursuits in life are merely "*chasing after the wind*" (1:14, 17, 2:11, 17,26, 4:6).

We do not like to think about the day of our death. We do not want to face the reality that we are dying. We do not like to think that the time we waste can never be reclaimed. I have a "Grumpy" coffee mug that shows the dwarf saying, "*I'll get to it later*". This is the favorite quote of many of us. We consistently talk as if we have a guaranteed "later". We make appointments with doctors, contractors, and mechanics; and never imagine those dates might arrive after we are no longer here. James tells us to not be so definitive in our plans. We should say, "*if the Lord wills*" we will do the things we have planned (Jms. 4:15).

1 Timothy 4:8 tells us, "*...bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*" It is not wrong to exercise the body. It makes us feel better. It prolongs our life. It gives us the energy to do more and better work. It does profit us a little in this life. But regardless of the miles jogged, the pushups done, and the wheat germ consumed; eventually we are going to decline in health and die.

The exercise of godliness is of much greater benefit. There is the profit of *the life that now is*. When we live in a godly manner we do not destroy ourselves with alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. We do not catch sexually transmitted diseases. We do not risk our lives driving recklessly or engage in shoot outs with the police department. Godliness benefits us and others in life. We do good for others as opportunities present themselves. We provide good instructions in our words and good examples by our lives. We make the world a better place and uplift those we come in contact with on a day to day basis.

But the greatest thing about exercising godliness is the profit that comes after this life is over. Gal. 6:7-9 reminds us to

*"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."*

Everything in our fleshly life will ultimately disappear. It may decay slowly like our health, eyesight, hearing... Or it may vanish quickly like a treasure that is stolen, or an item that is broken. 2 Peter 3:10-12 tells us the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night at which time, ***"the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall dissolve, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"***

You will notice the passage ends with a question mark. The question is *"What manner of persons ought ye to be?"* When we recognize that nothing we see is going to last why should we devote maximum effort to accumulating what we see? Why should we put godliness on the back burner as we emphasize making money, getting educated, improving fitness, and having fun? We are sowing to the flesh. We are profiting a little. We are majoring in minors. We are chasing the wind.

We have witnessed the beginning of 2018. What if we never see the end of it? Are we ready to die and reap what we have sown? Are we ready to see all the earthly possessions dissolved because we are assured of our heavenly treasure beyond this place?

*Today is the first day of the rest of your life*, but we do not know when the last day is. Use the time you have to obey the Gospel. Seize this day to serve the Lord and benefit others by your exercised godliness. *"Carpe Diem"*.