

## LET THE BIBLE SPEAK SERIES

### A Right To The Tree Of Life

Rev. 22:14-15

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The story of salvation is the grandest subject to ever engage the mind of man. To be saved in heaven, with the redeemed of all ages, freed from earth's sorrows, pains, and temptations, is a thought that fills our heart with happy anticipation.

The words of our text suggest that entering heaven is a right granted as a result of our having "obeyed the commandments of God," or "washing our robes."

I have faced many gates during my life, and so have you. I know what it means to be admitted. I also know what it means to be rejected.

It's a wonderful privilege to have a right to something. I have a right to be an American, a right to be a husband, a right to travel under this nation's passport.

And it is possible to "have a right to the tree of life." A right to an endless future.

The alternative is so frightening to comprehend that I think it should be clearly stated at every gospel service. "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

**Dogs**--Not ordinary household pet. Dogs in ancient cultures were fierce, unattached, unrestrained, vicious, dirty, cowardly, and disgusting.

**Judas**--fit that picture. It is the picture of unrestrained greed that would sell the best friend he ever had.

**Pilate**--fits that picture, he trampled justice with the instinct of a beast brought to bay.

**The Rich Young Ruler**--fits that picture, he loved wealth like a cur that cannot control his saliva.

These "dogs" that were without were thoroughly immoral persons.

**Sorcerers**---The black arts were common in John's day. So are they today. Satan hasn't invented a new sin in a thousand years.

**Fornicators**---sexual impurity

**Murderers**---taking of life

**Idolator's**---Ancient idolatry was enshrined in temples of paganism; modern idolatry is more subtle, and is identified with self-love and selfish disregard of others.

**Without**---Does not mean just outside God's city such characters as these are lurking in the shadows, trying to enter. Their doom is not mere exclusion from the city, but is the lake of fire.

What if you are among those who are "outside?" What will it mean to be lost?

**If I Am Lost:**

**I. I Will Not Be Alone.**

a. No one lives or dies to himself--Rom. 14:7 "for none of us liveth to himself, and on man dies to himself."

**My Influence**

My life shall touch a dozen lives before this day is done  
Leave, countless marks for good or ill ere sets the evening sun  
This is the wish I always wish, the prayer I always pray  
Lord, may my life help other lives it touches by the way.

- b. Eve was not by herself--she enticed Adam Gen. 3:1
- c. The rich man desired that his brothers not be there Luke 16:19
- d. If we lead or influence others, it is likely some of the best loved ones i.e. parents, children etc. family and friends.

There are little eyes upon you, and they are watching night and day;  
There are little ears that quickly take in every word you say;  
There are little hands all so eager to do everything you do,  
And a little boy who's dreaming of the day he'll be like you.

You're the little fellows idol, you're the wisest of the wise  
In his little mind about you no suspicions ever rise  
He believes in you devoutly, holds that all you say and do  
He will say and do in your way too when he's grown up like you.

There's a wide-eyed little fellow who believes you are always right,  
And his ears are always open and he watches day and night  
You are setting an example every day in all that you do  
For the little boy who's waiting to grow up to be like you.

A careful man I ought to be; a little fellow follows me  
I do not dare to go astray, for fear he'll go the selfsame way

I cannot once escape his eyes; what'er he sees me do he tries  
Like me he says he's going to be; The little chap who follows me

He thinks that I am good and fine, believes in every word of mine  
The base in me he must not see, that little chap who follows me

I must remember as I go thro summer's sun and winters snow  
I'm building for years to be, that little chap who follows me.

## **II. I Will Have Wasted My Life.**

a. The prodigal "wasted" his substance..." Luke 15:13

What could have been for this young man, at this time in his life, was not--because "he wasted"

his living, opportunities, body, health, reputation etc.

b. Jehoram, one of Judah's kings is a prime example of a wasted life. 2Chron. 21:20 "He was thirty two years old when he became king. He reigned in Jerusalem eight years and, to no ones sorrow, departed. However they buried him in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings." NO ONE MISSED HIM. His life counted less than a discarded orange rind or banana peeling.

Jehoram was as cheap a politician as you will ever note recorded on the sleazy pages of a corrupt administration.

He was bloodthirsty and irreligious.

He was the firstborn in a family of eight brothers. Upon his inauguration, he celebrated by murdering his brothers and eliminating as many princes of Judah as he could lay his hands on.

His swath reached into eight miserable tainted, years. Years better forgotten, all wasted. He instituted trends of profane thinking and permissive living that wrecked the economy and character of his country. It sickened God, and God smote Jehoram with a dread disease, and brought a worthless life to a screeching stop.

c. Above all, don't waste your changes to get right with God.

The young man in Luke 15 might have become another casualty, filling an unmarked grave, with the story ending "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine...and he began to be in want...And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. (Lk. 15:14,16)

His story could have finished there, a lot of them have. But this one did not..."He came to himself, he said "I perish with hunger, I will arise and go to my father..."

That changes everything, expunges all the bad chapters that precede. Redeems the waste. Whatever you have wasted to this moment, don't waste your soul.

How do you want to look back? Do you want to leave a trail of husks? Or a life of productivity?

Don't waste your life.

### **III. I Will Be Lost Forever**

- a. "And these shall go away into everlasting..." Mt. 25:46
- b. Hell is eternal--2Thess.2:7-9 "and to you who are troubled, rest with us..who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
- c. No second change--Luke 16:19-31
- d. 2Peter 2:9 "then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment."
- e. Mt. 8:12 "But children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

### **IV. I Will Be To Blame.**

- a. If I am lost, it will be my fault. I cannot blame others.  
**WHO CARES IF I AM LOST?**

- 1. God Cares---Jno.3:16, 2Pet. 3:9 "the lord is not slack concerning his ..."  
The doctrine of predestination not true.
- 2. Christ Cares---Mt.20:28 "even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many."  
2Tim. 2:14 "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself..."  
Heb.5:9 "And being made perfect he became the..."
- 3. The Holy Spirit Cares---Eph.4:30 "to cause pain, grief, or distress" When we sin, we cause the Holy Spirit to grieve. He cares.
- 4. The Angels Care---Luke 15:10 "Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels..."
- 5. The Church Cares---1Tim.3:15 "But and if I tarry, that thou..."
- 6. The Lost Care---Lk. 16:19 "send Lazarus to warn my five brothers..."

Bill Sands, in his book *My Shadow Ran Fast*, traces the events that landed him in San Quentin prison before he was 21 years old.  
He faced long concurrent sentences for serious crimes against the state.  
He soon found himself in solitary. Warden Duffey chose to visit him.  
He said "There are two ways men leave this place. They either walk out or they are carried out. I would like to see you walk out."  
Bill turned on the warden and cursed him with every vile oath he could think of. Finishing he sneered, "who cares?"

He says he remembers the moment as though it were yesterday. Duffey slowly measured him with his Irish blue eyes and replied calmly and from the heart, "Bill, I do."

That was it. That was the turning point. Because somebody sincerely cared, this man changed. You can too.

One of America's most popular ballads says:  
You're nobody 'till somebody loves you  
You're nobody 'till somebody cares;  
You may be king  
You may possess  
The world and its gold,  
But gold won't bring you happiness  
When you're growing old;  
The world still is the same  
You'll never change it,  
As sure as the stars shine above;  
You're nobody 'till somebody loves you,  
So find yourself somebody to love.

"We love him, because he first loved us." 1John 4:19

I alone am responsible IF I AM LOST