



The Voice Of Truth

A weekly publication of the

Hillcrest church of Christ

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313
(920) 499-5677

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com

April 29th, 2007

"WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?"

By Jimmy Pettigrew

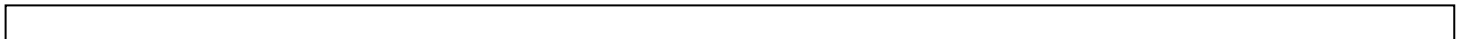
"Go to now, ye that say, Today or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:13-17).

What are your dreams, plans and goals for the future? Too many people place the emphasis in all the wrong places when they think about the future and what they will do with their lives. We are prone to be too earth-bound in our thinking and to leave God out of our plans. People need to take life inventory. James's question, "What is your life?", when properly viewed, will enable us to take a life inventory.

What is your life from the standpoint of duration? It is a vapor (**James 4:14-15**); it is here only briefly and then is gone. James is saying stop and consider! Before making plans for the future, determine what sort of life you have. Is it permanent, abiding, enduring; will it be here tomorrow, next week, the following year? *"For my days are but a breath" (Job 7:16).* *"Remember how*

short my time is" (Psalm 89:47). *"There is but a step between me and death" (1 Samuel 20:3),* Man's days on earth are pictured as a flower that is cut down, and therefore soon withers (**Job 14:1-2; James 1:10-11**). Man's days on earth are pictured as a fleeing shadow (**Job. 14:2**). Life passes quickly as the *"eagle hasteth to the prey" (Job 9:26).* Man lives but one time on earth (**Hebrews 9:27**). With life so uncertain as this, how foolish are we to plan the future without regard to Him Who holds the future in His hands. Boasting of a definite future on earth is evil because it denies God's power and will (**James 4:15-16**).

It is imperative that we recognize that God has a plan and a will for life on this earth *"Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isaiah 43:7).* What is your life from the standpoint of purpose? The purpose of some people is to get all of the material things that they **obtain (Luke 12:15; Matthew 6:19-20)**. What should be man's purpose in life? *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).* We are to trust in God! If we will let Him direct us, then our lives will be



immensely enriched. A study of **Ecclesiastes** reveals that Solomon tried basically the things that men try in their effort to find a purpose for being. The conclusion of **chapter 12, verses 13, 14**, is a studied conclusion. *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."*

Your life is a gift from God and is to be used for His glory. All men need to be confronted with the question: "What is your life?" We are urged to *"examine ourselves"* (**2 Corinthians 13:5**).

God has authorized all present governments to punish lawbreakers by death.

I. ORIGIN OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT:

- A. Cain is protected by God against capital punishment: Gen 4:13-15
- B. Lamech presumes even more protection: Gen 4:23-24
- C. Description of earth without capital punishment? Gen 6:11-12
- D. God's solution: Global capital punishment: Gen 6:13

II. AFTER THE FLOOD:

- A. God institutes capital punishment: Gen 9:5-6

III. UNDER THE OT:

- A. capital punishment for the following crimes:
 - 1. Premeditated murder: Ex 21:12-14
 - 2. Parental abuse: Ex 21:15
 - 3. Cursing parents: Ex 21:17
 - 4. Kidnapping: Ex 21:16
 - 5. Inadvertent abortion: Ex 21:22-25
 - 6. Failure to restrain dangerous animal that kills: Ex 21:28-29
 - 7. Killing a thief in revenge: Ex 22:2-3
 - 8. Sorcery: Ex 22:18
 - 9. Bestiality: Ex 22:19
 - 10. Adultery: Lev 20:10
 - 11. Incest: Lev 20:11-12
 - 12. Homosexuality: Lev 20:13

- 13. Marrying both mother and daughter: Lev 20:14
- 14. Practicing spiritualism and mediums: Lev 20:27
- 15. Breaking the Sabbath: Num 15:32
- B. Notice: Rom 7:12

IV. UNDER THE NT:

- A. "beware, they do not bear sword for nothing": Rom 13:1-7
- B. Paul willing to die if he is sinner: Acts 25:11
- C. There are some things worthy of death: Rom 1:32

V. PURPOSE OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT:

- A. Justice of God: "Life for life"
- B. vengeance:
 - 1. Individuals cannot take their own vengeance: Rom 12:17-19; 1 Th 5:15; 1 Pe 3:9
 - 2. God take vengeance through government: Rom 13:4; 3:5-6
- C. Deterrent:
 - 1. Deut 13:10-11
 - 2. Israelites who fell were and example for us: 1 Cor 10:6-11
 - 3. Ananias and Sapphira: Acts 5:1-8 "great fear came upon all"
 - 4. Without swift penalty crime flourishes: Eccl 8:11
- D. protection of the public:
 - 1. "Minister of God to you for good": Rom 13:4; 1 Pe 2:13-14
 - 2. Purges sin from the general public

VI. ARGUMENTS AGAINST CAPITAL PUNISHMENT:

- A. What if the innocent are killed?
 - 1. What if the innocent are jailed, should we dismantle our prisons?
- B. The Bible says, "Thou shalt not kill"
 - 1. This means murder, for which God commanded the death penalty!

VII. CONCLUSION:

- A. Capital offences for Christians: unrepented sin
- B. If criminal escapes justice God will eventually get him: Heb 10:30-31

Steve Rudd