

From the Pastor's Desk

We Don't Have a Life - We Are Life

Could it be that our eternal destiny is mirrored in our physical life?

Picture yourself as a small fetus in your mother's womb. There you are warm and floating about in an ocean of fluid. All your needs are being met and you are comfortable and at peace. You feel warmth and love as you develop and grow.

Suddenly things begin to change. The water in which you floated is gone. You feel your world constricting and find yourself being pushed down a narrow canal. It becomes very uncomfortable and you begin to feel fear. Again, another contraction and you're forced further down the canal and feel great pain. Your body is being crushed and forced where you would rather not go. Now the pain is unbearable. You feel your life coming to an end and fully expect to die. You gasp for life, wanting to live ...

It's all over now.

You find yourself thrust out into a whole new world and see light and hear the strange sound of screaming but notice it's coming from inside you. "Where am I? What is this place? Who are these creatures that surround me? I miss the warmth and comfort my previous home. My life has come to an end."

From the perspective of your mother's womb, you have died.

Who is it within you that heard you crying? Who observes your body and thoughts entering and leaving your mind? That is your spirit / soul, which has no beginning and will have no end. Do you sense this eternal reality within you, or are you lost in your thoughts?

Soon you begin forgetting about your previous home in the womb and the spiritual home from which you came. Your birth was also your death.

Now it's 90 years later. Your body has been getting weak and frail. Moving has becoming more and more painful. You're tired. You know your end is coming and you feel anxiety and sometimes fear. Your home on this earth for the past 90 years has become your reality. You know there has to be more than this physical life, but what is it? Your religious tradition has proclaimed life after death, but that was all theory. Now you think - "my" end is coming. What will happen to me? Sadness envelopes you at the thought of leaving your children, grandchildren and other loved ones.

Suddenly, you feel a sharp pain in your chest and break out in a cold sweat. You fall from your chair onto the floor and are gasping to breath. In the distance you hear someone shout "Call an ambulance!" You feel fear, but also a strange peace. You're tired and feel yourself letting go

and now can look down at your body from above. Your 90 years of life has begun to feel like a dream. What's happening to me? Then you see a tunnel and are drawn through it. A bright light appears in the distance and you begin feeling unimaginable love, joy and peace beyond words.

Again, your birth is perceived as your death. From the perspective of "earth womb", you have died.

"Why do you search for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has been raised up."
Luke 24: 5

When will you let go of your life? Can you begin doing so a little each day?

Death is birth. You don't have a life. You are life and it can never be destroyed. This is the Good News of the Gospel.

"Mary Magdalene stood weeping beside the tomb. Even as she wept, she stooped to peer inside." John 20:11

The price of love is sadness when we or our loved ones are born the second time. Yet, we choose to love. Why? Because love is what we came from and for that reason, when we experience love, we are instinctively drawn to it.

Love can be painful too. Some people have been so hurt during the course of life that they have built walls around themselves and formed calluses on their hearts to avoid being hurt again. In a healthy faith community healing comes when we enter into trust, become vulnerable, risk and allow love to once again flow.

The love we give and receive between births is all we take out of this physical life.

Let us journey through life together and surround one another with love.

God of peace and love, help us to realize you are with us always. Our minds are difficult to quiet and our worries and fears threaten our peace. We surrender. We let go knowing you never let us go. May our lives bring a little more love and peace into this world. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your love made incarnate and the one we seek to imitate and follow.
Amen.

Christmas celebrates life but in the distance we see the cross. Our birth celebrates life but is understood in the context of death. There is no life without death and that seems to be the reality of the whole cosmos. Scientists tell us that we are made up of star dust—previous stars shining on only God knows what life forms in the universe, only to die by exploding and sending their particles throughout the universe to form new life such as ourselves.

In between births we find that we live most fully when allow the very life of God to flow through us—love and compassion freely given. With bread and wine for the journey and mercy when we make mistakes, with the life of Christ to guide us, and a faith community as our home base we are sent out. The circle of life will never end.

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