

2-12-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: The Eternal Significance of a Soul

Purpose: Provoke people to live a life of eternal significance by leading people to Christ and discipling them.

Truth for Today: Leading people to Christ and discipling them is eternally significant.

Text: 2 Corinthians 4:8, Matthew 28:18-20

Topic: Eternity, Heaven Hell, Soulwinning, Discipleship

Series Title: Something More

Series purpose: Provoke people to a deeper and more productive spiritual life in 2023.

The Eternal Significance of a Soul

- I. Introduction: Hand out invite cards; Qamar Titus/ lunch SOM; Pic R-Brag on Travis
 - A. Review series: Conclusion “Something More.” I’ve been trying to provoke us to a deeper and more productive spiritual life in 2023. (Longer intro, tie several key thots.)
 - B. Today I want to talk about ‘something more’ in the big picture of our life. I’m going to challenge you not to just live for what’s temporary but what’s eternal. Paul said [2 Cor. 4:18 (NIV) So we **fix our eyes** not on what is **seen**, but on what is **unseen**, since what is seen is **temporary**, but what is unseen is **eternal**. (NLT) ...For the things we see now will **soon be gone**, but the things we cannot see will **last forever**.]
 1. Paul realized that most things we do are temporary, not bad, and have no eternal value, Contrast e.g., Buying another fancy duck call or buying a case of Bibles for Hindu’s in India. Praying for the people effected by Turkey earthquake or surfing the internet. Telling a friend how Jesus changed your life or just having fun at a Super Bowl party. Our choice isn’t between good and bad it’s good and better.
 2. ‘Inside Look’ book, COTR provides an opportunity for significance, i.e., doing something truly important and consequential because it has eternal value.
 - C. There’s lots we do for Christ: we serve Him with our passion and gifts, we give money to advance the gospel, we live godly lives, etc. Today I want to elevate the most important thing a Christian can do, lead people to Christ and disciple them. His last words, [Mt. 28:18–20 (NLT) 18 Jesus... told his disciples, ...19... **go and make disciples of all the nations**, (NCV) go and

make followers of all people in the world...20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.] Our 1st priority is to lead someone to Christ; our 2nd priority is to help them grow spiritually as a follower of Jesus. How do we do that? That's the question we'll focus on today, but 1st let's talk about why...Our motivation: Everyone will spend eternity in heaven or hell. We can help them go to heaven.

D. Title: The Eternal Significance of a Soul

II. Heaven, Hell and Eternity (motivation why reaching a soul for Christ is so important)

A. Judgment Day, [Rev. 20:11–15 (NLT) And I saw a **great white throne** and the one sitting on it...12 I saw the dead, both **great and small**, standing before God's throne. And the **books were opened**, including the **Book of Life**. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books...15 And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the **lake of fire**.]

B. Heaven is real, [Rev. 21:1–5 (NLT) Then I saw a new heaven and a **new earth**...3 I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, **God's home is now among his people! He will live with them**, and they will be his people. **God himself will be with them**. 4 He will **wipe every tear from their eyes**, and there will be **no more death or sorrow or crying or pain...**"] Life will be perfect, and followers of Jesus will live forever in a perfect place.

C. Hell, the lake of fire is real, too. Jesus [Mt. 13:40–42 (NCV) "Just as the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the **end of the age**. 41 The Son of Man will send out his **angels**, and they will **gather out of his kingdom all who cause sin and all who do evil**. 42 The angels will throw them into the **blazing furnace, where the people will cry and grind their teeth with pain**.]

1. Hell wasn't created for people. [Mt. 25:41 (NLT) "Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the **eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons**.'] The Bible teaches God doesn't want anyone to go there but many will reject Christ and be in hell forever. [1 Timothy 2:4 (NCV) (**God**) **wants all people to be saved** and to know the truth.]

D. Quotes afterlife: (1) Stephen Hawking, Britain's most eminent scientist said 'the belief that heaven or an afterlife awaits us is a "fairy story" for people afraid of death.'¹ (2) Bill Nye, the Science Guy, said 'Life after death does

not exist', he thinks there is "overwhelming evidence" against the idea of an afterlife.² A question all of us must ask is who we believe, Steven Hawking, the Bill Nye or Jesus.

- E. (3) Blaise Pascal, French mathematician and philosopher mid 1650's, promoted Pascal's wager, "Let us weigh the gain and the loss in wagering that God is. Let us estimate these two chances. If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation that He is."³
- F. The Bible is clear: there is an afterlife, and we should be motivated to help people go to heaven and not hell. I'll tell you how.

III. How do I win a soul to Christ?

A. Personal evangelism: you and I telling people about Jesus and then discipling them.

- 1. [2 Cor. 5:17–20 (NLT)...anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; **a new life has begun!** 18...**And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him...**20 So we are **Christ's ambassadors**; God is making his appeal **through us**. We speak for Christ when we **plead**, "Come back to God!"] [Ro 10:13–14 (NLT) "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 But **how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him?** And how can they believe in him if they have **never heard** about him? And how can they hear about him unless **someone tells them?**] Personal test., Gideon.

- a. Barna: "Hundreds of thousands of Americans embrace Jesus Christ as their savior for the first time in any given year. However, only 7% of those are likely to do so in direct response to the preaching, teaching, or personal ministry of a pastor or church leader.' That means 93% of the people that make decisions to follow Christ this year will be because a friend or loved one cared enough to personally share the good news."⁵

B. What do I say? Pic invite card Problem, Consequence, Solution, Decision

- 1. The power of our testimony, [Acts 1:8 (NLT) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And **you will be my witnesses**, telling people about me everywhere...] Our job is to be a witness// court; the HS converts them.

C. What else can I do?

- 1. Distribute Bibles and Christian literature at work: Pic table Bible, Church invites.

2. Engage people on social media, Relevant Magazine, 30% of Christians use social media to evangelize⁶, e.g., TikTok, “I’m not a Christian but I really liked the video. Thanks for making it...”
3. Serve in KZ or PH, according to [the Barna Group](#), only 6% of adult Christians made their decision to follow God over the age of 18. That means 94% made decisions as children that follow with them throughout their life.⁴ Also, spiritual influence of a coach, or teacher who works with kids.
4. Plant spiritual seeds, e.g., saying God bless you or offering to pray with someone.
5. Use the financial resources God has entrusted to us to reach people for Christ. Support missionaries, e.g., Titus school, Bibles, water wells, Kaya Turkey earthquake “I must keep the church alive in Turkey.”
6. Let your light shine, i.e., the example of our life speaks louder than words. [Mt. 5:14–16 (NLT) “**You are the light of the world**—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden... 16...let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.] People are watching. Car stalled
7. Pray and ask God to change people’s hearts, Pers. Test. Mary. Prayer can become the most important thing we do as we get older., e.g., 10 min.hour, 10 min am/ pm

IV. How do I disciple someone?

- A. Jesus’ model for making disciples is like a doctor’s internship: learn in class, watch/ listen as a licensed dr. diagnoses and prescribes, they diagnose under supervision, they act on their own and one day will train/ disciple a young intern. [2 Tim. 2:2 (NCV) **You should teach people** whom you can trust the things you and many others have **heard me say**. Then they will be able to **teach others**.] Paul, spiritual son Timothy, Timothy raised spiritual sons trained who spiritual great-grandsons for Paul.
- B. Pers. test.: Gideon, Navigators, I was a young, carnal Christian and met Dave and Bitsy Krupa in Adak, Alaska. They opened their home and taught me how to be a Christian. I saw the same thing happening at COTR Wed. night in KZ, PH, Life Group

V. Conclusion: Added motivation to lead people to Christ and disciple them: reward in heaven

- A. Parable of talents, in between 2nd Coming and Judgment Day. [Mt. 25:14–24 (NLT) “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the

story of **a man going on a long trip**. He called together his **servants and entrusted** his money to them while he was gone...²¹ “The master was full of praise. ‘**Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!**’

1. Everything on this earth is temporary. However, there is eternal significance in everything we do to lead people to Christ and disciple them. One day Jesus will look at us and smile and say, well done!

B. New series next week: Building Relationships that Last

VI. Response

A. Prayer: boldness to share our faith, etc.

B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2011/may/15/stephen-hawking-interview-there-is-no-heaven>
2. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1387330/life-after-death-bill-nye-evidence-afterlife-proof-nde-evg>
3. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pascals-wager>
4. <https://anotherfarfromhome.com/94-of-christians-were-saved-before-18-years-of-age/>
5. Barna.com
6. Relevantmagazine.com

VIII. Supplemental Material

A. 1 Corinthians 9:19–27 (NLT) — 19 Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ. 20 When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the Jews to Christ. When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. 21 When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ. 22 When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. 23 I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings. 24 Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! 25 All

athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. 26 So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. 27 I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

B. Only what's done for Christ will last forever.

C. Attitude: [2 Timothy 2:24–26 (NLT) A servant of the Lord must **not quarrel but must be kind** to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people. 25 Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people's hearts, and they will learn the truth. 26 Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants.

D. What happens to people who reject Jesus before Judgment Day? They go to Hades, [Luke 16:22–24 (NLT)...the poor man (*Lazarus*) died and was carried by the angels to sit beside **Abraham** at the heavenly banquet. (*Paradise*) The rich man also died...23 and he went to the **place of the dead** (*ESV hades*). There, in **torment**, he **saw** Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus... 24 “The rich man shouted...Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in **anguish** in these flames.

E. Parable of talents, in context of Judgment Day, Summarize, [Matthew 25:14–24 (NLT) “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of **a man going on a long trip**. He called together his **servants and entrusted** his money to them while he was gone. 15 He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to **their abilities**. He then left on his trip. 16 “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. 17 The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. 18 But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money. 19 “**After a long time their master returned** from his trip and called them to **give an account** of how they had used his money. 20 The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’ 21 “The master was full of praise. ‘**Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount,**

so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!'