

¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

You have certainly seen the cartoon many times:



Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

Is the end of the earth's time near at hand? Things in the world look pretty bleak right now, but is the end at hand? Jesus tells us, *But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.* (Matthew 24:36) No one knows, certainly if Jesus did not know, no one here knows. But, it is certain the end is near for some of us, for on any given day roughly 313,000 people on earth will breathe their last.

When our life here on earth comes to an end, how do we measure our success or lack thereof?

When we leave here, we leave for Heaven or Hell. Which one can be answered by who says those final words of judgment, *Thy Will Be Done.* You or Jesus? It needs to be us who say it, not He whose words would be confirmation of our own condemnation.

So, if we are going to be shooting for it being us who say to Jesus, *Thy Will Be Done,* what precisely does that mean? If we don't know where we are going and how to get there, we will never make it.

So, what does Scripture tell us?

And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

(Acts 16:31)

So, all we need to do is believe Jesus Christ is Lord, He gave His earthly life that we might have eternal life. True enough. But, what about acting on those beliefs? Diction without action is meaningless.

Jesus tells us “believing” in reality means action, not just diction, note what He says, *He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.* (Matthew 14:24)

So, what guidance does Jesus give us in how to act? *The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.* (Mark 12:29-31)

Love God, love our neighbor. Put God first, then others. Do not put yourself first. So, the first people to put first are our family, in particular our children. As parents, we have three primary jobs:

1. Prepare your children for Heaven;
2. Be there to meet them;
3. Prepare your children for this world.

After that you can do whatever you like, consistent with the above. But, always keep these in mind and remember God put you on earth to make a difference. It is best to make it a positive difference. Consider the warrior who risks his life to defend his country and family. There is little of that *filthy lucre* involved, but there is much honor. When you value the man on his departure, consider how close he came to the motto:

God • Honor • Country • Family

The motto is in order, God must be first, all things must be done to His honor with honor, our country must be defended against all enemies foreign and domestic, or there will be no place for our families which are our primary responsibility here on earth.

What did the man put first? The big house, the fancy car, the servants and whatever other trappings you might associate with success? These are temporal things that in the end have no meaning for us. Nice while they last, maybe. But, we oft make little gods or idols out of them. It is not that riches are bad, for they can be used for much good; or as is of the case, not.

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

(1 Timothy 6:7)

So what is success? It is not how much you gather up in things you leave behind at the grave, they are of no consequence. Consider what the preacher says:

AND how dieth the wise man? as the fool. ¹⁷ Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit. ¹⁸ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me. (Ecclesiastes 2:16-18)

Success is a clean conscience when you leave behind that which counts, your family, your friends and to the extent you are responsible, your country.

Will you be perfect; will you fail?

Probably a lot, perhaps even most of the time, but pick yourself up, start out again and try to do better each time.

Do your best; that is all God asks, Jesus will account you as perfect where you fall short at that final accounting. But, remember doing your best and saying you are trying your best are not same thing.

Do or do not, there is no try, so saith Yoda. Action, not diction is what counts.