

Give Living

All You've Got

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GIVE LIVING ALL YOU'VE GOT

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:9; Matthew 16:25, 26:27;
John 10:10

ARE you getting out of life all that you should? The question is put that way rather than asking: are you getting out of life all that you *want* because your wants may be restricted by your attitude.

It is a fact that having failed to get much out of life one tends to settle down into a supine acceptance of limitation. But there is no limit to what one can get out of life. The human being has illimitable possibilities. Living is such a tremendous thing that you cannot even imagine all the marvels it contains. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." One of the pathetic facts in human existence is that so many of us are willing to go along with a little trinket of this powerful thing called life, when we could have a great

. surge of it.

Now, of course, you and I will sometimes meet a person who says, "Life has given me a bad break." How many times have you heard that? We all know people who say, "When they passed on the good things they certainly passed me by" or make similar depreciatory remarks. But maybe they should ask themselves, "What have I given to life? How can I expect life to give me a great deal if I never give anything to it?" It is a two-way street.

Just recently I met a man who was overflowing with nerve and enthusiasm. Later his employer told me that one year he was the top-ranking salesman in his organization, which has many hundreds of salesmen. The man interested me because he seemed so vital, so completely alive.

Naturally, I began probing to learn more about him - which wasn't difficult, because what I wanted to know was outside of him.

He told me that for years he had been a lackadaisical person, ineffective. "In fact," he said, "I was pretty near being what you'd have to rate a failure." And this is what he said that especially struck me: "I was continually complaining about what life didn't give me. Life wasn't treating me fairly, I thought. It wasn't giving me what I had come to expect of me. It was giving me a lot of things that I didn't want. Sometimes it seemed to be throwing the whole book at me. And I sat around waiting for life to give me something - and it didn't, except more of the desultory same.

Then," he said, "I went to church one Sunday and heard a minister who I think must be the finest preacher I have ever heard. He is pastor of a church in a very small town, and he had gone selling on the weekend and had to come back on Monday. In his sermon Sunday morning he said this idea: You are never going to get

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the most out of life until you *give living all you've got*. Don't wait for living to give something to you; you give something to living.

"I had never heard of such an idea in all my life. That is exactly what I was not doing. It was as if a door opened. I had an entirely new vision of myself and I decided that beginning that very day I would give living everything I had.

"So the first thing I did the next morning," he continued, "was to get up earlier than usual. I got out the list of people I was going to see that day and I prayed for every one of them. I tried to keep from praying God would sell them something. I wanted to make it as spiritual as I could. I prayed that they would be helped according to God's will - which I hoped would include a purchase from me, but this was entirely secondary.

"Well, I got to the first store before they had even opened. I actually helped the man open up. And we had a great time doing it. He told me about himself. I told him about myself. And I showed a lot of enthusiasm about his business. With the result that I made my first sale of the day before I would normally even have been up. And I had a wonderful day all day long.

"Why," he said, "it was like magic! I'd been expecting life to give me something and it hadn't been doing it. Now I was giving something to life and it was giving something back.

"Well, day after day I kept practicing this principle. I looked for every opportunity I could find to invest myself in the community. I started working with a boy's club. I went into a ghetto district and got acquainted with people living in conditions I had never known existed. I found them wonderful people. I even went to the minister

of my own church and surprised the life out of him by telling him I wanted to get into church work. And I have found life just wonderful ever since I started giving living all I've got."

It is a very simple thought. But there is plenty in it to challenge any one of us. How many of us are really giving living all we've got? You know, friends, we Americans live in a great country where one of the basic ideas is that every individual is a child of God and with the opportunities afforded by the free enterprise system he can climb to the stars. This is what Christianity teaches too - that we are children of God and that by contact with God through Christ and the Holy Spirit we can all have marvelous lives. But to have such a life you have to have the spirit. You cannot have it without the spirit. What spirit? The spirit of Christ. When you get that, then, I tell you, you find that life pours endless blessings upon you.

The spirit releases the great thing in every one of us which, for want of better terms, I call motivational power. Now that word *motivation* is one of our newer words. We are a jargon generation of people. About every year or so we have new jargon. It is hard to keep up with. This word *motivation*, however, hangs on pretty well and I hope it continues to. What does it mean? It is an activation of energy within you. Nobody ever fulfills his great potentialities who doesn't release his energy. Energy makes the world go round. Energy makes people go forward. So many people become dull, lethargic, slow. They have to be re-energized.

ON a recent occasion I spoke on the same program with Vincent Lombardi, who used to be coach of the Green Bay Packers. For years I have been a great admirer of this

man. He is, of course, one of the greatest football coaches shall lose it." Why sure! If you just save it, it will wrinkle the world has even seen. "One thing I want beyond all up and shrivel and there will be nothing left and you can else is to win," he told me. "There is no use playing a throw it away after a while. The thing is to give it away. game unless you aim to win. You must always play, you With abandon, too. This is the secret of living. Give. Give must always work, you must do everything, to win. Beyond yourself, your money, your time, your thought. And do that, the big thing is to make men - and that means men it with abandon. who want to win, who are willing to give all they've got to attain a great victory."

I had been told he is a tough man, very hard-boiled. I found him affable, friendly, very good company. In conversation with one of his players who was present that evening I remarked, "I always understood Lombardi was a hard driver. He doesn't seem like it to me. He is not driving me."

"You are not on his team!" replied the player. "If you were, you'd see another side of him!"

Jerry Kramer, one of the Green Bay Packers' great guards, has written a book called *Instant Replay: The Green Bay Diary of Jerry Kramer*. Here is a bit of lecture

ing he says Lombardi gives the backs: "This is a game of abandon and you run with complete abandon. You care nothing for anybody or anything, and when you get close to the goal line your abandon is intensified. Nothing, not a tank, not a wall, not a dozen men can stop you from getting across that goal line!"

No wonder Lombardi's team was among the greatest ever developed in this country! Isn't that also how you make something of your life? You don't fool around with it. You don't play with it. You go at it with abandon. You give it all you've got. In the name of Christ you give all the power you've got to what you are doing. And as you give this way, life gives back to you.

The Bible says that "... whosoever will save his life

THIS is also the whole secret of Christianity. If you give you shall receive - and the more you give, the more you shall receive. It is a simple law of life and applies to your years as well as your money. Keep throwing your life out and you will be healthier and live longer. Give your money away and it will come back as bread on the water. Hang on to your life, keep it close to your vest, and you will get sick and weary and think you are old - and die younger. So live with abandon.

At a luncheon meeting of a national business association all those on the speakers' platform were heads of businesses. They were mostly in their forties, I would say, except one man who was obviously older than all the rest. Somebody told me he was eighty. He had a ruddy face and strong athletic build. But he carried a cane, and you could see that he hated that cane. He had to have it because of something the matter with one leg. He sort of stumbled up the steps onto the platform. I sat down beside him and asked, "Are you head of one of these businesses here?"

"Sure am," he answered. "Why? Don't I look like I could handle it?"

I said, "I just heard you are eighty years old."

"Well," he demanded, "what's wrong with being eighty years old? It isn't how long you've been around; it's what you've done while you've been around. Yes, I've been in

the world eighty years. But I don't have an eighty-year old philosophy. I long ago got rid of that devastating old age thinking. I happen to own the business I run. If I didn't they'd probably have retired me long since, but since I own it what can they do? And I think I can run it all right. When I find some bright young fellow who is as smart as I am I'll put him in and I'll step down. Don't think that just because I have a game leg I can't handle the business. You don't run a business with your leg; you run it with your head.

"Incidentally," he then remarked, "I have walked up every one of those mountain paths in Switzerland which you claim you climbed."

"I did climb them," I said.

"Well, I did too." And he added, "I don't intend ever to get old. I know there will come a morning when I won't wake up and my obituary will be in the morning paper, but I will have had the time of my life."

Naturally, the man had found this zest where it really comes from. And where is that? Through the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, who says He has come that we might have life and have it more abundantly. That is what He offers us. Take it! Live abundantly, abandonedly.

Giving living all we've got also means exercising all the faith we can develop. I personally know that it is hard to have the kind of faith the Bible teaches. You have to grow up to it. Or, better, you have to be converted into it. Better still, you have to become as a little child and simply believe.

Some of the statements that Jesus makes are almost beyond credulity. He tells you nothing shall be impossible unto you. The person who has no faith says, "Now

look! Let's just rip that one to pieces. But, strangely enough, people who become as little children so they have this faith in depth do tremendous things with themselves and with their lives. They are able to give all they've got to life, and life gives back to them incredible bounties.

Who would think that the greatest thing anyone could learn is to believe.

How much can you believe? How far can you go with faith? That is the measure of our relationship to Christ.

When He gave them the cup at the Last Supper He said, "Drink ye all of it."

Take it! Then say to a skeptical world: "I'll settle for Jesus." For He knows more about the great intricate laws of the natural and spiritual worlds than anybody else.

I HAVE a friend, Don Belding, who is a member of Marble Collegiate Church, although he lives in Los Angeles. He fills important business positions and directorships as well as taking leadership in many service organizations. He is over seventy. This is all a matter of public record, so I don't mind giving his name.

Don Belding is a highly-educated, very sophisticated, unusually smart and intelligent person, and a very loving and outgoing one as well. He helps many people in all kinds of different ways. He is a man of varied interests. He loves life and has a childlike faith.

Well, he telephoned me one day and told me he had cancer and asked me to join him in going to work on the principles. At the thought of this big fine man having cancer I had to go to work on myself before I could give him the support he needed. But I assured him at once that we would go to work for him spiritually.

He had to have cobalt treatments, cystoscopies and what

have you. Sometimes his energy ran down a little. He writes a Personal Journal and sends copies of it to friends. Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, help us to believe this. Break through our doubts and our questions and our "Whenever I have a free day," he wrote in it to do something that fits into the normal routine after I am completely cured, which I expect to be. "Another day he writes: "I got the last tumor bombing from the cobalt machine on Tuesday. The malignant body has given up the ghost and dissolved. To celebrate, doctors gave me a week's respite before starting in on the lymph nodes. He took all this as just another thing he had to handle. Amen.

Like a business or personal problem, this was a cancer problem. He would write in his journal, for example, "Stopped at the office Monday morning, went down to the cobalt machine later. The doctor was a bit concerned at the side effects ... " Or: "On Friday went to the Freedoms Foundation office where I spent the morning ... Then to the cobalt place for lunch nearby ... then back to the Freedoms Foundation for another hour before I left for a stop at the office, then home in the late afternoon. Or: "Monday was strictly routine - the office, cobalt, and home."

I used to send him wires or letters telling him I was still "working on the principles" for him. One day I got a telegram - and to read these words made it one of the great days in my own experience: "That the work has been done. The cancer has been dissolved real well."

The Christian religion teaches that spiritual thought power is one of the greatest forces in the world. And if you practice it and give living all you've got you can throw back defeat, you can throw back sickness, your life can be full of joy and power. I believe this - you believe it too. And you will find that living will give you back more than you ever dreamed of.

THE SECRET OF A HAPPY MARRIAGE

by

Norman Vincent Peale and Ruth Stafford Peale

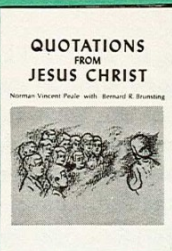
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"We must despise the enemy"
—Mao

"But now I tell you: love your
enemies"
—Jesus Christ

Which Shall Prevail?

These are the words of two of the world's most powerful forces — one a force for evil, the other a force for good. One is taken from the Chinese communist book "Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung"; the other appears in the new booklet just issued by the Foundation for Christian Living, *Quotations from Jesus Christ*.

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Norman Vincent Peale

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