

# Before I Die I Want To \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm 90:12

## Introduction

Here we are at another new year. We're exiting a time of the year where it is incredibly difficult not to get caught up in all of the day-to-day busyness and forget what really matters.

And if you've been in here long at all, you'd be shocked if I didn't have a lesson aimed at change, increasing our impact, and pushing toward God's best for our lives.

As well, you won't be surprised at all for me to leverage the negative in order to bring about the positive. Today we will use the reality of death to motivate us.

"No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary." – Steve Jobs – 2005 commencement address at Stanford

The Bible has many passages reminding us about the fact of death and how it should drive us to live and act while we have a chance. Today we'll start in Psalm 90.

## Background Passage:

Psalm 90:12 - **So teach us to number our days**, that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom.

This passage comes from a chapter that is focused on the shortness of life and how futile it is if we waste it on sin or inactivity.

When I talk about such things Trena often accuses me of being melancholy. That is, in fact, part of my personality makeup. But there is nothing wrong with introspection. In the flesh, and without the light of God's hope, it could lead to

depression. But, when illuminated by God's Word and led by His Holy Spirit, it can be a pathway to realizing God's vision for your life.

Eph. 5:15-16 - <sup>15</sup>Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, <sup>16</sup>**making the most of your time**, because the days are evil.

We'll be talking more about this verse in a few weeks.

Ecc. 9:10 - Whatever your hand finds to do, verily, do *it* with all your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going.

## "Deathbed Exercise":

When you die, there will probably be a funeral. At the funeral, someone will probably give a eulogy. You are writing your eulogy right now. What will it say?

Who was made a better person because of your life?

What were the three biggest events that happened because of you?

For what will you be remembered?

How was the world different because of you?

What would you like it to say?

You don't read about a lot of people in the Bible who were average. Being a good mom or dad is great, and definitely impacts some people, but the people in the Bible who made a difference DID SOMETHING! What are you going to do?

## "Before I Die I want to \_\_\_\_\_"

In 2011, Candy Chang took the sides of an abandoned house in her neighborhood in New Orleans and stenciled the question over and over again all over it. The response was immediate and incredibly moving. Since then she has joined with her coworkers to produce kits and has sent them all over the world.

(See the full TED Talk at:  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/candy\\_chang\\_before\\_i\\_die\\_i\\_want\\_to.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/candy_chang_before_i_die_i_want_to.html)

"Two of the most valuable things we have are time and our relationships with other people. In our age of increasing distractions, it's more important than ever to find ways to maintain perspective and remember that life is brief and tender. Death is something that we're often discouraged to talk about or even think about, but I've realized that preparing for death is one of the most empowering things you can do. Thinking about death clarifies your life." – Candy Chang

As I've been preparing this lesson since early November, I've realized that we've taken a necessary, but incomplete pathway toward creating a life vision. This perspective is the necessary final step.

What do you want to do before you die?

You can focus on material, financial, parental, and ambiguous. But what I want to do is challenge you to ask, "What is God's ultimate goal for my life?"

### **Conclusion:**

This is not about New Year's resolutions. No one will care what you weighed when you died. Resolutions will come and go. But your life purpose and life vision will be your impact on the world and God's kingdom, and they won't come and go with the times and the seasons.

What do you want people to say about you when you die?

What do you want to do before you die?

Once you know the answer to those questions, then it's time to ask, "OK, so what should I do right now? Today? This year?"