

Frank Tomlin Eulogy

10/27/2005

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All of you knew Frank. Please accept my thanks for your support of his family during this time. I'm sure he'd be happy knowing you are all here.

There is one point I want to make today about the focus of our life. We all know life is complicated, even chaotic - and it seems to get harder as we get older and more involved, if we're not careful.

Now, while there is one focus we are to have in life, it is obvious that there are many competing entanglements - even very worthy ones - that make up the stuff of an interesting, productive life.

That said, however, we are only lying to ourselves if we fail to see what we are actually here for.

So, if I asked you, 'Why are you here in life, and what for?', what would your answer be?

The answer is before us in God's Word. So, if I'm going to do things right and as our Creator expects, I can always be sure He has revealed what we need to know in the Bible.

Jesus actually answered this very question. It's not personal satisfaction, nor even focusing on doing good deeds. Instead, Jesus calls us to see God Himself as Supreme:

And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

God is the center of all things, bar none. He is the Almighty, and we are here for His good pleasure and to worship Him. We have nothing higher to be concerned about. So how shall we love Him? By believing the Father when He said:

“This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.”

Jesus goes on to answer the second part of our question, ‘Why are we here in life, and what for?’ He said:

And the second (commandment), like it, is this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these.

Loving God, and loving our neighbor. Loving another person often has little to do with a feeling you have towards someone you enjoy. True love is expressed as a deliberate choice, in service to another, even if the other person is not acting loveable. And True love, as God is True Love, comes first, from Him alone. We are to ask for the capacity of that kind of love, and then spend it freely on the other person. We cannot see a better picture of love than that of Jesus dying for us, even while we wanted nothing to do with Him. The Apostle Paul wrote:

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Frank and I became friends several years ago as I was working on a building project. I came to know him through his son Tom, who has been a good friend of our family for over fifteen years. The fact Tom saved my life one day probably helped to seal our friendship, but I’d also admit to loving Tom as a brother, despite both of our quirks. Life is rich with friends like us.

Frank might not have been accused of being the easiest guy to get along with at times, but no one could convince me of his lack of devotion to someone he loved. I

know, because I saw his love for me and his family, especially Derek and Alex. Now, just like Tommy and I are different people, so too were Frank and I. But it was a commonality in a serving love that we found unity. Jesus said His followers would be known for their love. And He also commanded us to love our neighbor in a self sacrificing way, so as to obey and glorify God. This love is ours to give because of Jesus' love for those who belong to Him. The Apostle James wrote:

We love because (Jesus) first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

Even as we prepare to inter Frank's body, all of the people here who cared about him are performing a service of love. It's what we do for people we care about when they die.

The only way of fulfilling Jesus' answer to 'Why are we here in life, and what for?' is by embracing the declaration of His Supremacy as our only Savior. In this, Jesus absolutely lays down the line, proclaiming:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Jesus leaves no other means for forgiveness and peace with the Father God Who demands justice for our sin. All of us are guilty, and we all must recognize it. We recognize it now while there is still time for forgiveness, or later at Judgment, when it is too late.

Eternal peace in God's presence, or eternal punishment under God's wrath. Which do we choose?

All of us have the opportunity to settle our debt now by accepting Jesus for Who he says He is, else we will face Hell as payment. Beware! Any other route to Heaven is a lie. The wonderful news is that Jesus' offer is simple, it's free, and it's guaranteed.

Me, you, Frank - anyone who trusts in faith that Jesus alone will save him and bring him into peace - will meet the Lord at their body's death during these 'last days'.

The funeral of a believer is a joyful time, not a sad one. Salvation guarantees us a life in Christ, even if we die here. There is victory in a believer's death because our victory is already won by the Lord Who overcame death itself. Paul noted that for a believer, **"To be absent of the body is to be present with the Lord."** Where is your sting, O Death? I am with my Lord even now, before you can open your jaws to consume me. Neither Death nor Hell can touch a child of God bought by Jesus. He has defied you and conquered you, laying waster to your claims to me!

And why is this so? Because those who believe in faith will be Saved:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

and

"The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,"that is, the word of faith (I am) proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you WILL be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

So, why are you here in life, and what for?

See God. See His expectations. See your sin. See Jesus. See eternity in the balance. Read your Bible and honestly ask God to show you the truth, **'and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'**

Mark 12:30-32 (New King James Version)

³⁰And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. ³¹And the second, like it, is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Luke 9:34-35

³⁴While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. ³⁵A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him."

Romans 5:8 (New King James Version)

⁸But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4:19-20 (New International Version)

¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

John 14:5-7 (New King James Version)

⁵Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

2 Corinthians 5:8 (New King James Version)

⁸We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

John 3:16-18

¹⁶For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸“He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Romans 10:8-10 (New International Version)

⁸But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: ⁹That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

John 8:32 (New King James Version)

³²And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”