

How to build up a meaningful life

Life



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Beyond the ideas, information, and industry of our modern world, there lies deep within the human heart a profound hunger to know the meaning and purpose of life. Finding the best way to satisfy this hunger has never been an easy task in any generation. Some people deal with it by plunging themselves into a relentless pursuit of pleasure, fame, power, and profit-making, only to discover in the end that these are more like narcotics than nourishment.

Others feed it by immersing themselves in various philosophies, ideologies, and even religious practices; and many ones say that their life just become meaningful only when they give good contribution to this world, only to find out that these too can become empty if they are not grounded in meaningful relationships. When one ignores the transcendent dimensions of human life, the soul withers and undergoes a spiritual famine. That's why St. Augustine cried out on his Confession: " Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Thy power, and of Thy wisdom there is no end.

And man, being a part of Thy creation, desires to praise Thee, man, who bears about with him his mortality, the witness of his sin, even the witness that Thou " resistest the proud,"(2) -- yet man, this part of Thy creation, desires to praise Thee. Thou movest us to delight in praising Thee; for Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee. "(St. Augustine, Confession, I, 1). For this concern, I, as a Christian, on this paper, will try to contribute my idea of how to build up a meaningful life as an attempt to find out a good direction of life.

Christians affirm that we human beings attain our purpose of life only when we get into heaven where we are united in one with God. To achieve this goal, we are endowed and pointed out the way by the Begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was made flesh to save this world according to the plan of the Trinity. That way is embodied in His doctrine through the teaching of the Scriptures and of the Church. Generally, that way requires us to carry out God's will for us: love God and love one another as God loves us. Why does God want our love for him?

Isn't it that He lacks of love in nature? No, it is completely not, because God is love, said the Scripture of John; in other words, God is the source of love. When God wants our love for Him and for one another, He just wants us to manifest our vocation and our nature: being created in accordance with His image, His likeness; and through our love, we can achieve our purpose of life: being united in one with Him and with one another. Moreover, love is also the cause of happiness that makes our lives wholesome in this very world, here and now.

So, what we need to do is building up a life of love every day. It is certain that the nature of love has a characteristic of teaching its owner how to give loving acts and to live a loving lifestyle. However, we can learn from some others their great and marvelous love. Jesus Christ would be the first example that we need to refer and learn from when we say about those who have great love. In fact, Jesus of Nazareth manifested his love strongly for God-the Father- and for others in all his actions in his whole life.

For example, He was always ready to do God's plan for the salvation of this world by sacrificing His life, although He sometimes, for the sake of His human nature, did not want to do that. Similarly, Jesus stretched out his hands to hold the diseases, even the lepers- those who were kept away from by the society-in order to embody his love and to heal them. Besides Jesus as the greatest example of love, we can explore some contemporary figures from various cultures and traditions who are images of mercy and icons of justice for the human family.

They manifest an integrity of heart, not because they are perfect but because they have had the courage to embrace the entirety of their existence. Because the limitation of space does not allow us to examine these individuals in great detail, here we can call names of these figures: Mahatma Gandhi-icon of nonviolence; Martin Luther King, Jr. -icon of human rights; Dorothy Day-icon of contemplative activism; Mother Teresa-icon of mercy; and Oscar Romero-icon of human liberation. ¹ In summary, our life will be meaningful when we can state our goal of life and navigate our life towards that goal.

So, for me, as a Christian, I am convinced that I was created according to the likeness and image of God; I have been invited to live for God and to come back to him as the purpose of my life. For this reason, my life is a pilgrimage in which my love for God and my love for others, as all what God wants from me, is the luggage by which I can approach my destination: being united in one with God and with others, so that God's Kingdom may be seen on the Earth as well as in Heaven.