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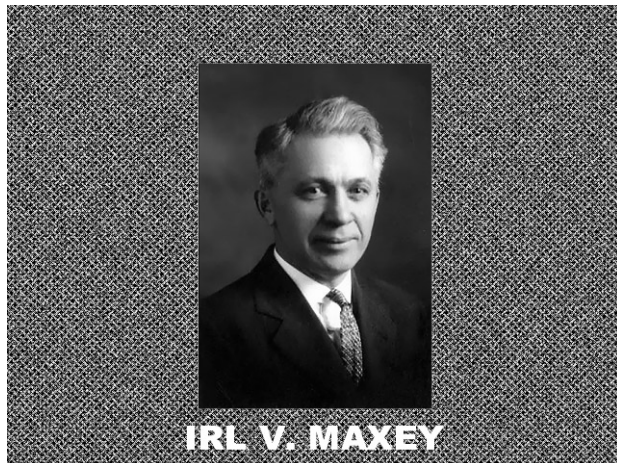
**A LIFE TO SPEND  
A Sermon By Irl V. Maxey**

**Digitized and Edited  
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## **INTRODUCTION TO THIS FILE**

**This sermon is also dated October 18, 1913, and was also written in Imbler, Oregon -- later, on the same day that he wrote hdm2414, "To This End Was I Born." In "To This End Was I Born," papa deals with choosing the right vocation in life. In this sermon he speaks of how to spend life the right way.**

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**SERMON TEXT:**

**You will find our text in the 14th verse of the 15th chapter of Luke: -- "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want."**

**\* \* \***

**Speaking in terms of today, we would say that he was broke and was hungry. Now I want to consider for a while this:-- as this boy had a few dollars to spend and spent it and became destitute, so we have a life to spend and what will happen after we spend it. "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine."**

**Ah, how great the responsibility! -- a life to spend. It must be spent. It is a solemn duty, but yet a great privilege indeed for everyone. A great human being -- a body, a mind, and a soul. Stretching out before us is a mighty expanse of time in which to do this if we will do it well.\***

**[\*Papa was but 31 years old when he wrote the above statement. He lived only 37 more years afterwards. Perhaps, like many young adults, the expected span of life yet remaining before him at age 31 seemed as if it would be "a mighty expanse of time" -- but it was just a bit longer than that span of life which he had already lived -- and, the last five of those remaining 37 years his condition was such that he could not pastor nor hold a job. Papa did not misspend those last 37 years, but perhaps they flew away much faster than he imagined they would when he wrote the above statement at age 31.]**

**As the Children of God we have an everlasting Father, Who is the Wonderful Counselor, Who will advise us how to live. There will be just two kinds of vocations:-- we must live one way or the other. God will show us which way to live if we let Him. You either be a wealth producer or a character builder. Strictly speaking, we must produce or distribute wealth, or build character.**

**I told you in another sermon how we must choose our vocations, and hence now we will deal altogether with the spending of life.**

**First, I will say that all who spend their lives are looked upon the same with God. All morally and ethically legitimate vocations are holy -- all appointed of God, and have the same responsibility with Him in the fabric of society. In the past, men have looked upon one vocation and called it menial, and on another and called it high, but this can't be. There are no such things as nobility and ignobility with God.**

**The king of Bulgaria lately asked a man to meet his nephew, saying he is a splendid fellow. So with apparent pride the king introduced the man to a bootblack on the street.\***

**[\*Apparently the "splendid fellow" nephew of the king of Bulgaria was a bootblack.]**

Not long ago, a young preacher who had just moved to a new field visited and old cobbler. He found him a devout Christian. When about to leave, the preacher said, "I am glad to find God is with you in your humble position." At this, the old man rose, stretched up to his full length, and looked upon him, saying, "Don't call my calling humble. I am a shoemaker by the grace of God, and if I do better work than you do in the pulpit I shall receive a greater reward in heaven."

So all are creators of wealth -- those who dig the soil, beat the iron or grind the wheat, etc. -- or distributors of wealth. They produce wealth and share their living with others that can't work and send the gospel to the benighted.

Your vocation may not be physical, but mental -- yet even though it is mental it must ever be the same as physical work in producing wealth. For, a character builder produces wealth of mind that enables others to work physically -- so he must share in the living and share his wealth with the needy and help spread the gospel. So whether it is physical labor with the mind to your aid, or mental labor with your body as a foundation, God expects you to conserve and spend this energy aright. If you do this, your powers will remain strong to the end.\* Your mind will not weaken ere your physical strength abates in old age, nor your body weaken ere the mind fails.\*

[\*I regret to say here, that my father was mistaken in his statements in the last two sentences of the above paragraph! Neither his own mental or physical powers remained "strong to the end" of his life. For the last 7 years of his life, he underwent increased debility in body and mind due to the advancement of arterial sclerosis = hardening of the arteries. I do not say this to denigrate my beloved father, but he wrote this sermon when he was 31 years old and near the "prime of life" -- a time during which many have no doubt believed and asserted some idealistic things which older, and more experienced people would not believe or assert. Sometimes indeed, it is prodigal and profligate living that enfeebles and disables a man, but other times Divine Providence will rob a man of both his physical and mental powers! -- prodigality and profligate living having nothing to do with it. The Divine Providence which befell my father was beyond the pale of his choice and certainly was not the result of misspending the next 30 years of his life prior to the onset of his physical and mental debility. Someone has said: "To err, is human; to forgive is Divine." However, there is nothing here to forgive, and I am very willing to overlook where my dear father erred in the above paragraph with what seem to me to be a couple of overly idealistic statements.]

There is a vocation that deals with the soul-life which is character building and deals with the soul, as other character vocations deal with the mind and body. You have a great soul-life to spend for you are a soul -- and this is primary and most important. God expects you to be His child and to depend upon your father and mother to teach you that God's grace reaches and saves you in childhood, and that

**you should continue to be His child all through your life. However, He leaves that to your own choice after you reach the time of accountability.**

**Suppose you choose for evil, God will plead with you to quit evil and give you chance to reform ere eternity begins -- a chance to live with Him always -- a chance to reform and be His child even though you left Him once. Oh, won't you look to God, make your decision and go with Him, spending all your holy calling for Him?!**

**Now, after this young man [The Prodigal Son] was given money he spent it all foolishly. He misspent it. Oh, how will you spend your life?! It must determine how you spend eternity. Will you spend your life creating wealth and turn and squander it in debauch on your body? -- finally, strength failing, mind weakening till you reach the end in destitution and want?**

**I once met a young man in St. Louis who had worked hard to make money but spent it in drinking and in the houses of ill-fame, till he had syphilitic rheumatism and was going home to die. He sinned against his mind, his body, his soul, and society. Souls going to hell were in need of his money. Instead, his strength was gone, his money gone, and his soul coursing toward hell.**

**Will you life be spent in creating wealth, whether mental or physical -- your vocation, and all this wealth you create being withheld from the needy, hoarded up for yourself, till souls are lost and bodies perish for bread as you hope to be rich?**

**I'll tell you, God will count you a prodigal and like the man who wasted his energy in sin against his body, you have sinned against society and your soul.**

**Oh, do not waste your bodies in sin, but give them to honest labor if that is your vocation. Oh, do not waste your minds by mistreating your bodies by useless reading and thereby sin, but give them over to helping others into strong character. Oh, do not mistake. God expects you to use the wealth produced to provide for yourself and your own, and no less to help the needy of earth and the benighted out here and across the waters.**

**Will you have reached the years of accountability and still be going in the way of sin? Will you pass your probation and not come to God? Or, will you pass by your opportunity to reform? Oh, you have reached the end, and in place of your vocation being well spent and your soul being rich with God, you have reached the end and an awful famine is on hand. God does not come now. You have wasted what He gave. Your body cries out for lustful satisfaction, your mind is filled with wickedness, and your soul remembering all.**

**You might have been a doctor -- you could have been. God called you to be his child and continued to call you from childhood, but you would not. Now, you are facing eternity with a famine in your soul -- nothing to commend you to God -- nothing! ah, nothing!**

**You have spent all and now a famine. Oh, now for a chance to be what you should have been in this life, but you can't. Now your years are gone. Now you want to be a Christian -- Oh, you want prayers!**

**Too late! You want, want, want! -- in a mighty famine.**

**Oh, dear beloved, do not let such conditions ever come to you. Choose your vocation, and spend it for God. Spend it well.**

**\* \* \* \* \***

**THE END OF THIS SERMON**