



# THE TRENTON BULLETIN

## I Died Last Night (Jack Harriman)

I was told of a man who once each year went to his banker and said, "Sir, I died last night. Tell me what happened to my estate and the financial well-being of my family." The man was trying to determine the readiness of his financial arrangements in the event of his death.

But had the event taken place, the man's financial arrangements would not have been his greatest concern. Other questions would have been far more pressing.

Had I become a Christian while living?

Did I obey the gospel?

Had I been born again?

Was I baptized into Christ?

Was I a faithful Christian?

Did I finish my course?

Was I faithful unto death?

Was I the kind of husband and father that God would have me to be?

Will my children become Christians and be faithful as a result of my teaching and example?

Am I, even though dead, yet speaking to my friends and brothers and sisters in Christ in a way that will encourage them to so live as to get to heaven? All of this makes me want to live better. One day it will be said of us – he or she died last night.

## The Right Object (Selected)

Abraham Lincoln once told of a farmer trying to teach his son how to plow a straight furrow. In the time-honored tradition, he told the boy to keep his eyes on some object at the other end of the field and plow straight for it. The boy started plowing, and the farmer went about his chores.

When he returned after several hours to check on the boy's progress, he was shocked to find instead

of straight rows something that looked like a question mark. The boy had obeyed his father's instructions. He had fixed his eyes on something at the other side of the field – a cow. Unfortunately, the cow had moved.

Evidently, that father forgot to tell his son to look for a stable object, one that wouldn't shift or move around. That's one mistake we don't have to make. We can fix our eyes on Jesus, who never changes.

**JONATHAN EDWARDS, ONE OF THE GREAT PREACHERS OF EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY, ONCE MADE THIS RESOLUTION: "RESOLVED, NEVER TO DO ANYTHING, WHICH I SHOULD BE AFRAID TO DO IF IT WERE THE LAST HOUR OF LIFE."**

## Illusions Of Permanence (Dan S. Shipley)

An illusion of permanence is the senior citizen of seventy-five negotiating for a thirty-year home loan. It is the combat soldier who knows nothing can happen to him because his guaranteed-for-life pen is still writing like new. It is the aging grandmother who exchanges her dignity for the fashion of miniskirts and gaudy paint.

The wealthy farmer of Luke 12 who, shortly before his unexpected demise, was thinking in terms of many years while planning a future that did not include God. It is every Felix who seeks a more convenient season in which to obey the Lord. It is all who live as if they anticipated an almost indefinite earthly existence. Few escape the beguiling effects wrought by these illusions of permanence.

But the Bible dispels these illusions. God describes man's earthly tenure in such terms as shadow, season, and vapor — words calculated to discourage our feeling at home in the body. As one more concerned with our eternal welfare than with our earthly comforts and prosperity, He teaches that a man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses (Luke 12:15); that here we are but pilgrims without an abiding city (1 Peter 2:11;

Hebrews 13:14). David's perspective is essential: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am" (Psalm 39:4).

However, many, though professing otherwise, seemingly prefer illusions to truth. They remind me of the merchant who erects a large and expensive neon sign to advertise his 'Going-Out-Of-Business' sale — you doubt that he is. Similarly, some who talk of preparing for eternity show big signs of planning to be in business on this old earth for many years. Investments of time, talents and resources reveal where one's treasure is — and his heart (Matthew 6:19-21).

The farmer's illusions of permanence were shattered with these words: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." The time of this day is best redeemed in remembering that this night is never far from any mortal.



### Christ, the Master Builder (Selected)

Agostino d'Antonio, a sculptor of Florence, wrought diligently but unsuccessfully on a large piece of marble. "I can do nothing with it," he finally said. Other sculptors tried their hand at it, but they too gave up the task. The stone lay on a rubbish heap for forty years.

Out strolling one day, Michelangelo saw the stone and its latent possibilities and ordered it brought to his studio. He began to work on it, and ultimately, his vision and work were crowned with success.

From that seemingly worthless stone, he carved one of the world's masterpieces of sculpture - David! The secret lay in Michelangelo, not in the stone.

Look at life - your own with all its disappointments and the lives of others with all that

### THEOPHILUS

*Some Love Darkness*



God has accomplished in them or all that He is able to accomplish. Expect Him to produce a masterpiece because you know the quality of the work of the Master Builder, Christ.

### Seven Minds (Selected)

1. Mind your tongue. Don't let it speak hasty, cruel, unkind, or wicked words.
2. Mind your eyes. Don't permit them to look at degrading books, pictures, or objects.
3. Mind your ears. Don't let them listen to evil songs or words.
4. Mind your lips. Don't let strong drink enter your mouth and guard your lips from gossip.
5. Mind your hands. Don't let them do evil to others.
6. Mind your feet. Don't let them follow in the footsteps of evil.
7. Mind your heart. Don't let the love of sin dwell in it. Ask Jesus Christ to make it His throne.