FOR ME TO LIVE IS...?
Philippians 1:21-23

INTRODUCTION:
1. People live for various reasons.
   A. Each of us lives for one reason or the other.
      1. None of us lives just to be living.
      2. We may say we do, but in reality this is not true.
   2. What is the end of your desires?
      A. What do you hope to accomplish in this life?
      B. What do you live for?
   3. The Apostle Paul said, “For me to live is Christ.”
      A. In respect to this thought of Paul, what would we place at the conclusion of the statement, “For me to live is...”?
   4. In this lesson we want to consider some things to see if we agree with Paul, “For me to live is Christ.”

BODY:
1. SOME PEOPLE LIVE FOR PLEASURE
   A. In other words, “For me to live is pleasure.”
      1. Pleasure was the “god” of the prodigal son - Luke 15:13.
         A. It is evident that at this point in his life he lived for no other purpose than pleasure.
   B. Pleasure is offered by the world.
      1. Solomon, if he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes, taught of this - Ecclesiastes 11:9 a.
      C. However, the pleasure that is offered by this world is a temporary one - Ecclesiastes 11:9 b; Hebrews 11:24, 25.
   D. This is not to say that we should not have a pleasurable life.
      1. But it is to say, “For me to live is pleasure” is wrong.
2. SOME PEOPLE LIVE FOR POPULARITY
   A. Or, “For me to live is popularity.”
      1. Popularity was the “god” of Pilate - Mark 15:15.
      B. Popularity is offered by the world - Matthew 27:17, 18.
   C. But the popularity that is offered by the world is a temporary one - Acts 12:20-23.
   D. Here, too, we are not saying it is wrong to be popular.
      1. But it is wrong to assume the attitude of “For me to live is popularity.”
3. SOME PEOPLE LIVE FOR POSSESSIONS
   A. In other words, “For me to live is my possessions.”
      1. Possessions were the “god” of the rich fool - Luke 12:19.
         A. This was the very reason that he lived, that he might add to that which was already in his possession.
   B. Possessions are, of course, offered by the world - Luke 12:16, 17.
   C. But these possession are only temporary - Luke 12:15, 20; Proverbs 1:31.
   D. Here, as well as the other points, we want it clear that we are not saying that it is wrong to have possessions.
      1. But we are saying, it is wrong to have the idea “For me to live is my possessions.”
4. SOME PEOPLE LIVE FOR POWER
   A. “For me to life is power.”
      1. Power was the “god” of Nimrod - Genesis 10:8, 9.
   B. Power is offered by the world - Daniel 4:30.
   C. But this power is only temporary - Daniel 4:31-33.
   D. Power does not necessarily have to be wrong.
      1. But to live for power and nothing else is wrong.

CONCLUSION:
1. Many other things could be said here, but these should suffice.
   A. As children of God, our lives should be lived in service to God - Romans 12:1.
   B. Each of us should be able to truthfully say, “For me to live is Christ.”
2. If anything stands between us and our being able to say this, lets get rid of it - Matthew 6:33.
WHY RELIGIOUS DIVISION IS SINFUL

It does not take the proverbial “rocket scientist” to determine that the world is woefully divided religiously. Thousands upon thousands of religions exist with beliefs that are as opposite as can be. For the most part, man is happy with all of this. However, what about God, how does He feel about it? Should one conduct a careful study of the Bible, it would not take them long to see that such division is contrary to the Lord’s desire for the world.

Passages such as Psalms 133:1 clearly indicate God’s feelings concerning unity. Note carefully what the Psalmist states, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” You may also want to give proper attention to Amos 3:3, and the question asked there, “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” Of course, the answer to this is clearly a resounding no!

Religious division is sinful because it promotes division instead of unity. John 17:20-23 contains what can correctly be referred to as the “Lord’s Prayer” as Jesus prayed for unity among believers, both in the present and the future. As long as division exists, this prayer of Jesus will remain a sign of the contrary spirit among men.

Religious division is sinful because it sets aside the Word of God for sectarian words of men. Jesus stated “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:9. Whenever the teachings of man are put on an equal plane as the Word of God problems arise. Paul warned of such in Galatians 1:6-9 as he wrote “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” In other words, a great anathema was placed upon those who would pervert the precious teachings of God such as had been done by the Judaizing teachers.

Religious division is sinful because it promotes many contradictory “plans of salvation.” The New Testament has clearly indicated that there is but one way to God. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6. The Apostle Peter indicated that salvation is found in none other than the Lord, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12. Nearly every religious organization that exists has a little different “twist” on how one is saved. Yet the New Testament shows that salvation comes by obedience to the Lord and His plan. Note the inspired comments by the author of the Book of Hebrews, “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” Hebrews 5:9. The New Testament is clear that in order for one to be saved they must believe (Hebrews 11:6), repent (Acts 17:30), confess the name of Jesus (Romans 10:9, 10), and submit themselves to be immersed in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Any other plan is not in accord to the plan issued by God.

The New Testament teaches that there is a right way and a wrong way to approach God, “Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” Matthew 7:21. The wise man stated, “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Proverbs 14:12.

As we ponder the issue of religious division, we need to be committed to teaching and practicing nothing other than what the New Testament provides us. Given the fact that we have “all things that pertain to life and godliness,” (2 Peter 1:3), and that which results in the “man of God” being made “perfect” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17), let us seek to follow His word in order to attain that which He would have us to have.