

## JOHN 10.10: JESUS OFFERS LIFE WITH A PURPOSE

*(International Evening, Chelmsford 28/1/07)*

Have you enjoyed yourself this evening?  
Are you sure you are not feeling miserable?

I have here two books:

- ***The Misery of Christianity*** by Joachim Karl, a former German pastor who left the church, who states: "*Christianity has cheated too many of their lives*".
- ***Surprised by Joy*** by CS Lewis. It tells of the joy that Jesus brought to his life when he became a Christian.

Which of those two authors was correct?

Honesty compels me to say that there have been some expressions of the Christian faith which have made peoples' lives well & truly miserable.

Some of us here can think back to childhoods where Sundays were dull & boring in the extreme.

They were dull & boring because Xian people felt that was how the sabbath was rightly observed.

They forgot that "**the sabbath was made for the good of human beings**" and that we "**were not made for the sabbath**" (Mk 2.28).

Yes there have been times when the Gospel has been perverted and when people have been cheated of life.

But that has never been true of Jesus.

Jesus has never cheated anybody of life - rather the reverse is true.

Rather it was to enable us to live life to the full that Jesus came into this world.

Jesus said: "**I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness**" (John 10.10)

Jesus offers "**abundant**" life (NRSV) – what Christians of a past generation used to call 'Life with a capital L'

Yes, rightly understood ***Christianity is life-giving, not life-taking.***

It has been said: "*Religion may offer a man a burial service, but Christ offers every man new, abundant & everlasting life*" (Wilma Reed).

One aspect of this new life that Jesus offers is that it is a life with a purpose.

Only this week I came across again these lines from Shakespeare's ***Macbeth***:

*Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time,  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing* (Macbeth, act 5, scene 4)

[John 10.7-10]

By contrast Jesus offers life with a purpose

In 22 days we as a church will begin a 40 day journey called *40 Days of Purpose*  
We will be reading together Rick Warren's *40 Days of Purpose*, subtitled '*What on earth am I here for?*'

At the launch event on Sat evening 10 Feb we will be giving out free copies of the book – and then for a period of 6 weeks we shall be discussing it together in small groups.

Let me invite you to sign up for one of these groups.

We would love everyone here to join this journey

Yes, this spiritual growth course is for everybody – Christians and non-Christians alike

We believe that God has a purpose for each one of us

Come and discover that purpose

Come and discover the purpose, the meaning that Jesus can give to your life

**“I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness”**