

Dear friends,

I would like to draw your attention to the boxes of envelopes at the back of the Church. If you use your envelopes regularly or you requested for them, you will find them at the back. If you are online givers and we have over 400 families that give online, you don't need envelopes. If you have questions or have difficulty finding your box please feel free to talk to a staff member.

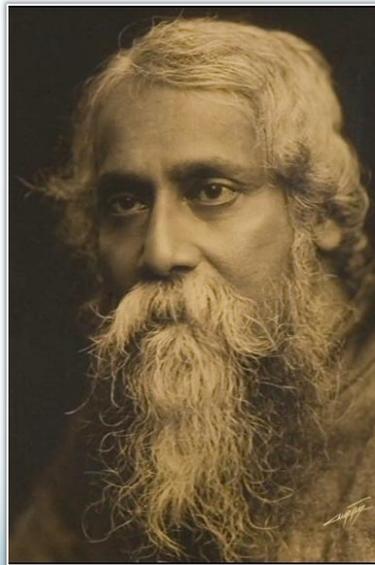
Let me start this morning with a story. A woman came up behind her husband while he was enjoying his morning coffee and slapped him on the back of the head. "I found a piece of paper in your pants pocket with the name Marylou written on it," she said, furious. "You had better have an explanation." "Calm down, honey," the man replied. "Remember last week when I was at the races? That was the name of the horse I bet on." The next morning his wife sneaked up again and whacked him. "What was that for?" he complained. "Your horse called last night."

When your heart is empty or impoverished for love, our lives change. We are no more truthful to others or even ourselves. We drift away from the core purpose of our lives.

Rabindranath Tagore, the only Indian poet to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for Literature in 1913, for his work, Gitanjali starts on of his poems this way: I would like to sing this verse for you.

**T is my
prayer t o
my Lord
Strike, strike at
t he root of
penury in my
heart.**

Rabindranath Tagore



At a time when hatred, divisions and narrow-mindedness plagued India and the world, Rabindranath Tagore asks God to "strike at the root of penury in my heart." Penury means extreme poverty or impoverishment. It is interesting to note that Tagore sees the key element for change as lying within your heart. Strike at the root of impoverishment or extreme devastation that is embedded in my heart, which shadows everything about me or you— What I want to be, what I should do with my life, my goals, my ambitions, my dreams for my future.

In the Gospel Jesus says to the crowds, "Do not work for the food that perishes." He is not, of course,

saying, "Do not work for a living." Jesus is not advocating welfare. What he means is, "Do not work merely to get food." Food is important. It is necessary for life, and you have to earn it. But does not let that be the sole reason for your working- do not get caught in the trappings of consumerism. The book of proverbs states it better,

A life devoted to things is a dead life, a stump;



A God-shaped life is a flourishing tree

[Proverbs 11: 28](#)



Jesus says, "Work for the food which endures to eternal life." The true Bread that came down from Heaven, which is He Himself.

I don't know if you have heard this version of the creation story.

On the first day, God created the dog and said: "Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of 20 years." The dog said: "That's a long time to be barking. How about only 10 years and I'll give you back the other 10?" So God agreed.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said: "Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a 20-year life span." The monkey said: "Monkey tricks for 20 years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back 10 like the Dog did?" And God agreed.

On the third day, God created the cow and said "You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of 60 years." The cow said: "That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for 60 years. How about 20 and I'll give back the other 40?" And God agreed again.

On the fourth day, God created man and said: "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you 20 years." But man said: "Only 20 years? Could you possibly give me my 20, the 40 the cow gave back, the 10 the monkey gave back, and the 10 the dog gave back -- that makes 80, OK?" "OK," God said. "As long as you're sure."

So that is why for our first 20 years we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. For the next 40 years we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next 10 years we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren. And for the last 10 years we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

The moral of the story is – this is a man’s life. There is nothing more to life. Rick Warren in his “The Purpose Driven Life,” says

The purpose of life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind or even your happiness. It is far greater than your family, your career, or even your wildest dreams and ambitions.



If you want to know why you were placed on this planet, you must begin with **GOD.**

You were made by God and for God- and until you understand that, life will never make sense.

Look at the Exodus story – the people of God grumbled against Moses and God, who had just liberated them from slavery. Why? All they were thinking about was food. "Would that we had died at the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt, as we sat by our fleshpots and ate our fill of bread! But you had to lead us into this desert to make the whole community die of famine!" For God’s sake, they

were in chains and treated worse than animals. What about the Promised Land? A land flowing with milk and honey? What about being chosen by God, a people set apart to lead the world unto himself.

These people, like many today, clearly felt that the most important thing in life is to keep alive, to be healthy, strong and economically sufficient. This is why people work. In this election year, candidates are being evaluated by the voters, not on their integrity, or their character, or what they propose to do about improving the moral conditions of this country, but on what will they do about the economy, how they will improve living conditions. It is the economy stupid.



We take God out of our lives –
It is mammon that governs us.



And when take God out of
lives, we don't see the light at
the end of the tunnel. It is
despair.

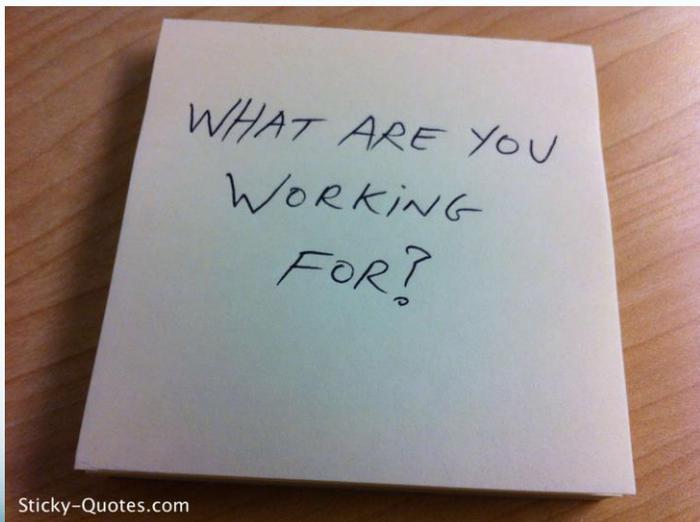
Rabindranath Tagore traces out the spiritual poverty in him (the Godlessness and oblivion) and, hence, prays to God, his Maker to strike at the root of the spiritual poverty, which is in his heart. it

will show the reason why God has placed him on this earth. He prays to God for making him spiritually strong so that he may bear joys and sorrows. He may be helpful in serving his fellow beings with love and sympathy. He wants to surrender himself with love to the will of God. I would like to share with you his entire poem and sing that for you. (The congregation joins in the singing of the refrain.)

**This is my prayer to thee, my Lord -- strike,
strike at the root of penury in my heart.**

- ◆ Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.
- ◆ Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.
- ◆ Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might.
- ◆ Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.
- ◆ And give me the strength to surrender my strength to thy will with love.

I would like to give you two questions this Sunday for reflection.



What are you working for?

ARE YOU REALLY LIVING
LIFE...

OR ARE YOU JUST PAYING
BILLS UNTIL YOU DIE

Are you really living life or are you just paying bills until you die?