

The Three Stages of Life

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* The first story is author unknown.

There are three stages to life. It is a rarity that we understand how they are connected. The first stage is from conception to birth. The second is from birth to death. The third is from death to eternal life. To help to understand this sequence, I would like to tell you a story how each phase of life follows the same pattern.

One day a mother conceived twins. One child was a girl and the other a boy. Months passed and they developed. As they grew they sang for joy. "How great it is to be alive!" Together they explored their mother's womb. When they discovered their mother's life cord, they shouted for joy: "How great is our mother's love, that she shares her life with us!" Soon they began to change drastically. "What does this mean?" asked the boy. "It means that our life in the womb is coming to an end," said the girl. "But I don't want to leave the womb!" said the boy. "I want to stay here forever." "We have no choice," said the girl. "But maybe there is life after birth." "How can that be?" asked the boy. "We will shed our mother's cord - how is life possible without it? Besides, there is evidence in the womb that others were here before us, and none of them ever came back to tell us that there is life after birth. No, this is the end." And so the boy fell into deep despair saying, "If life in the womb ends in death what is its purpose? What is its meaning? Maybe we don't have a mother. Maybe we made her up to feel good." "But we must have a mother," said the girl. "How else did we get here? How else do we stay alive?" And so the last days in the womb were filled with deep questioning and fear. Finally, the moment of birth arrived. When the twins opened their eyes, they cried for joy. What they saw exceeded their wildest dreams.

One day a mother gave birth to twins. One child was a girl, the other a boy. Months passed and they grew. As infants they cried with joy; how great it is to be alive and have a mother to feed us, cloth us and take care of us. They giggled with joy and cried for attention. As children, they played with glee and enjoyed exploring their new world; how great it is that our mother protects us from harm. She must love us so very much that she shares her time with us. As a youngster they began to learn what family life is all about so they could share the love of life; how great it is that our mother knows so

much that we place our trust in her. As teenagers they began to seek their independence and began to question parental authority by self assertion. As young adults they began to search the world for a different meaning for the love their mother had given them. Their life was changing and doubts and questions began to form from worldly experiences. Maybe our mother wasn't such a smart mother after all. Other young adults are doing things we were taught not to do. Life is not as easy as we thought. Maybe we should seek other goals. As adults they began to change and question the meaning of life. "Is it only to grow old and die?" asked the boy. "How futile is that!" "Our mother wouldn't lie to us," said the girl. "She shared her special gift of life with us. There must be more!" "Look at all the graves," said the boy. "There were many here before us but no one has come back to tell us there is more to life!" "We must put our trust in what our mother told us," said the girl. "That God's grace is our life cord to our new birth." "No," he said, "there is no purpose in life, only to get old, struggle and suffer, and then die." So their last days on earth were filled with deep questioning and fear. Finally the moment of death arrived. As their eyes closed for the last time to worldly light, their souls responded to an extremely bright light. What they now saw exceeded their wildest dreams.

'Eye had not seen, ear had not heard...' nor had it entered their worldly minds what God had prepared for them. How great it is to be alive, that our God should love us so much that He gave up His life on the cross! The treasure of heavenly love is now revealed. All the hurts, sadness, pain, sorrows, doubts, and evils of all kinds have vanished. Standing in this eternal light we wear either a white robe or a black robe. To wear a white robe we enter God's kingdom of light everlasting. If we wear a black robe we enter the kingdom of Satan, a darkness of everlasting regret; to know what we could have had and lost; the result of our choices in our worldly life. If you love me, keep my commands and this third stage of life in everlasting light is yours forever. It is only through the virtue of faith and love, which is the life cord of God's grace that we live forever through each stage of life.