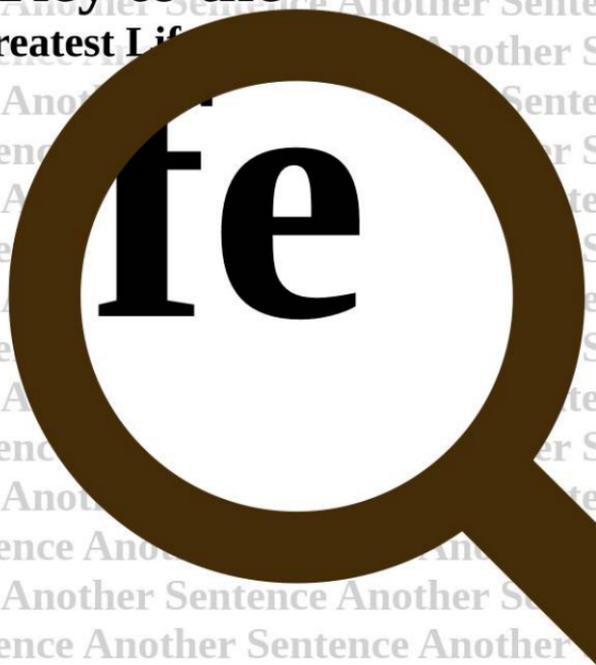


One Sentence

You Wish You Knew

The Key to the
Greatest Life



Frank Warner

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An Ocean of Sentences

Sentences. They are an essential part of our communication. We use them to express our thoughts and feelings, and we listen to others as they express themselves.

Sentences have different value. “I love you” sounds much better than “I hate you.” But the question is: Is there *one* sentence that is in some way the most valuable? Is there one to which way may say, I wouldn’t want to live without this. Can we find such a sentence?

If there is such, chances are, that it is not easy to find it. Not because it is hidden under a large stone or behind a locked door, but because of the enormous amount of speaking that surrounds it and makes it like a needle in a haystack.

We live in an ocean of sentences. One survey showed that socially active people say about one thousand sentences a day. Women say more than one thousand sentences a day, men say less than nine hundred, and the average is close to one thousand.

Let’s do a little counting:

1 hour = 60 minutes.

1 day = 24 hours.

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If we suppose that we sleep about 8 hours a day, this leaves us 16 waking hours.

This means that we have about 16×60 waking minutes a day.

$$16 \times 60 = 960.$$

This is how many waking minutes we have a day, and this is about how many sentences we say a day. This means that, as a rough average, we say one sentence a minute.

Let's go on counting. We may suppose that an average lifetime is about 75 years. Of course, our life can be shorter or longer, 50, 60, 90, or even 100 years. Let's count with 75 now.

$$1 \text{ year} = 365 \text{ days.}$$

$$75 \times 365 = 27,375.$$

This means that we live about twenty-seven thousand days on this earth.

If we multiply the 27,000 days with the 1000 sentences we say a day, that is:

$$27,000 \times 1000 = 27,000,000.$$

This means that we say about twenty-seven million sentences in our lifetime.

At the time of the writing of this book, about 7.5 billion people live on the earth.

So let's multiply the 27 million with the 7.5 billion. Here it is:

$$27,000,000 \times 7,500,000,000 \sim 200,000,000,000,000,000.$$

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It is two hundred quadrillion. That is a two at the front followed by seventeen zeros. That is, roughly, how many sentences humanity says in our lifetime.

How many is two hundred quadrillion? It is a lot. Our brains are just not tuned to handle such big numbers. We can just agree that we really live in an ocean of sentences.

Starting a Search

But our question is: Is there *one* sentence that somehow emerges out of this ocean? Is there some truth hidden somewhere that is more precious than money, gold, or diamonds? Is there one sentence to which we can say: We must not live and die without hearing this one sentence?

Are we willing to start a search? Will we start the adventure to find the sentence we wish we knew? Will we put on our diving suit and jump into the ocean of sentences to find that one? Or will we put on our hiking equipment and walk into the jungle of words and sentences of news, messages, and opinions that try impose themselves on us from every direction?

Our life is short. Do we remember? About 27,000 days. It seems a lot when we lived only about 5,000, but after we pass 20,000, the remaining thousands begin to seem less and less promising.

So let us do ourselves a favor. Let us try to find the treasure.

An Interesting Tale

There was an interesting attempt. If you are familiar with self-help and business literature, then you've probably heard or read this story.

It is told in a nice, little tale format, and it is about a king who wanted to learn wisdom. He called his wise men to himself and told them to bring him the wisdom of the world. The wise men went out to other countries, near and far; they spoke with kings and wise men, people of power and knowledge; and they brought back to their king a massive amount of materials they collected.

The king looked at the huge pile and said: This is good, but too much.

So the wise men went back to their places and began to reduce the amount of the wisdom materials. Later they came back to the king and said: King, we brought you the summary of wisdom. Here it is: ten books.

The king looked at the ten books and said: It is still too much.

So the wise men went back again. They were thinking, straining, picking and choosing; and sometime later they came back to the king and said: King, we summed up the

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wisdom of the world as you have asked. Here it is: only one book.

The king looked at the book and said: This is much better, but it is still too much.

So one more time, the wise men went back, and they thought, argued, made choices; and finally, they came back to the king. They said: King, here we have the wisdom of the world summarized for you. And it is one sentence.

What was the sentence? The sentence was: Nothing is for free.

Good Enough?

Well, this is nice and interesting and fun. This sentence has value. It can do good to people who think they can get something without doing anything for it. Or it can be a good wake-up call for those who want to give little and receive much. It is true that finally, sooner or later, we will pay the price for everything.

But personally, I don't think that this is the one sentence that we need the most. I tell you why. What does "Nothing is for free" mean? Let me rephrase the sentence. What it means is: Everything has a price. Everything costs something.

So we have the words: nothing, everything, something. Is there something about these words that does not satisfy us? Well, I tell you why they don't satisfy me: They are too general. They are vague. They are not specific.

It is like a mother sending her child to the grocery store, telling him: Son, take some money with you because you will have to pay something for everything you buy. The only problem is that the child does not know what he should buy: bread, milk, vegetables, or sugar.

So What Do We Need?

If we want a sentence that really helps us, then that sentence has to be specific. It has to tell us what is the best. Not everything, not nothing, not something; but only one thing. It has to point at the best.

This may seem simple at first, but if we have a sentence that tells us what is the best, we may encounter some problems.

If someone stands up and says: This is the best; it may quickly raise controversy. Doubt and disagreement may come. Someone else may say: How do you know? Why are you so sure about it? Is it really the best? I don't think what you say is the best. I think something else is the best.

There are so many opinions and ideas and theories. Subjective thinking is esteemed highly nowadays. So even if there is a sentence that points at the best, it is hidden in a huge pile of other viewpoints, opposing opinions, and diverse sentences.

So we may assume that our sentence will be somewhat unpopular. Not everybody will like it. The reason that the sentence "Nothing is for free" is so popular is that it is not

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specific. And as such, it does not hurt many people. But at the same time, the help it provides is also limited.

So our sentence has to tell us what is the best. The best thing, the best person, the best situation, or the best condition we can be in. It has to point at the best.

What Can We Say About It?

What can we say about the thing that is the best for us? What is the best situation, the best condition like?

First of all, it must have a lot of joy in it. Great, great, great joy. If something does not make us happy, it cannot be so good. So there has to be joy.

Also, that joy has to be lasting.

If a young man falls in love with a beautiful young girl and she returns his feelings, this makes him very happy. He feels that he is on top of the whole world. Life is beautiful. But if one month later the girl says to him that now she is in love with another boy, then the young man's joy disappears in a moment. The joy was great, but it did not last long.

So what we need is great joy and lasting joy, joy for a long time. This means that in our joy we need some kind of safety, some kind of security. We need to be in a condition that is safe, in which we don't lose quickly what we have. What can be that situation?

How Do We Get It?

So we need to know what is the best for us, but it is not enough. We also need to know how to get the best, how to get into that situation.

If we want to get into a good school, we need to have a good mind and we have to study a lot. If we want to be great musicians, we need to have musical talents and we have to practice a lot. If we want to be sports champions, we need a fit body, talent, and a lot of training. So it is not enough to know what is the best; we also need to know how to get it, receive it, obtain it, attain to it, or get into it.

If there is such a sentence that we really need to know, it has to tell us what is the best and also how we get it. This means that the sentence has to have at least two parts. One part must tell us what is the best, and the other part must tell us how we get it. If that sentence exists, then it must be a really great one. Well, I believe, that sentence exists, and I will write it to you... later.

Where Do We Find It?

Let us continue our search. Let us get nearer to our sentence. We already know some things about it. It tells us what is the best and also how to have it. Let's try to see where and how we find such a sentence.

Our sentence should be found somewhere. We may guess that such a great sentence was told by somebody; and if that sentence was remarkable, then it was also recorded somewhere. It should be found printed in a book, scribed on a parchment, or engraved on a stone. We may also guess that it can be found on the Internet.

I offer one method. This is not the only way, and it may not even necessarily be the best method, but it is one possible way: let's look at bestsellers.

We could look for average sellers and worst sellers, but they seem to be unlikely targets. The difficulty with average sellers is that it is hard to find out what is the average. And even if we find it, probably there are so many writings in that category that it hardly narrows our search.

If we look for worst sellers, we get into another kind of problem. Depending on our definition of what is a worst

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seller, we are looking for writings or books which were sold in 0 or 1 copy. If it is 0, then only the author has it. It may be you, but it is improbable. If only 1 copy was sold, the chance that you were the buyer is almost nothing.

So let us try the bestsellers. If a sentence is really great, surely, there are some people who love it. Maybe there are many who don't like it or reject it, but probably there are many people who like it. So let us see the bestsellers.

Let's see the top three bestselling authors of all time.

Number 3 is an English woman. Her name is: Agatha Christie. She lived mostly in the 20th century, and she is best known for her detective novels. Actually, I've read many of her books, and I've enjoyed them greatly. She could write very well. Her books were interesting, exciting, and funny. The number of her books that were sold are estimated between 2.5 and 4 billion. That's a lot of copies.

Number 2 is also English. He was a man by the name: William Shakespeare. He lived in the 16th and 17th century and is best known as a playwright and poet. His stories are interesting, and they also contain moral messages. The number of his book sales are close Agatha Christie's numbers. The estimates are also between 2.5 and 4 billion. So we cannot even be absolutely sure who is number 2 and who is number 3.

Our question however is: Do we find our sentence in their writings?

I've read most of Agatha Christie's books, and I liked their moral stand, but a sentence that fits our criteria, I did

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not find in them. To be honest, I haven't read much from William Shakespeare, so I've run an Internet search. That did not bring up a positive match, and I don't think we can find our sentence in his writings, but I cannot be totally sure.

Let's go now to the top of the best-seller list. The all-time bestseller is: the Bible. The estimate of the sales is 6 billion, and they say that every year 100 million full Bibles are sold. I've also read that the largest Bible society sells 400 million New Testaments a year.

Can we find the sentence we are looking for in the Bible? If it is such a great book as some say it is, then it must contain great sentences.

I know that the Bible is not an easy-to-read book. First of all, it is big. Most copies that we can buy today are 1000 to 2000 pages, depending on the printing. It is a long book with very different writings in it. Some parts of it are easy to read, while others are quite difficult.

Can we make it somewhat easier for ourselves? Let's try.

The Bible contains two main parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is about three times as long as the New; but I think that about three-quarters of the most important information is contained in the New Testament, which is about one-quarter of the whole Bible. So if someone wants to read the Bible, I definitely recommend starting with the New Testament.

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As we begin to read the New Testament, we quickly find that the central figure is Jesus. We read a little about His childhood, and then we learn that He was about thirty years old when He began to preach.

As we look at the world today, I think we can safely say that Jesus was one of the best speakers of the human history. It is possible that He was the best speaker of the human history. His influence is still a great world shaper.

When Jesus began to preach, He knew what to say.

Let's imagine; if you would have the chance to speak to a large audience and you could say only one sentence, what would you say? The stage would be yours, lights and cameras would be focused on you, and a large audience would wait for your words. What would you do? Could you express yourself in one sentence?

Maybe we would want to say, "Let us love each other," but could we tell people how to love each other more? Maybe we would want to express our desire for world peace, but I think the vast majority of the people in the world want world peace and we still don't have it.

So let's listen to what Jesus said. We don't have to read far. The first book in the New Testament is the Gospel of Matthew. As we start reading it, we soon get to Chapter 4, and we find a sentence there. This is what it says: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say..." and here comes the sentence. Are you ready? Here it is. This is the sentence: "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say..."

**“Repent: for the kingdom of heaven
is at hand.”**

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Jesus preached in a way that His listeners understood and remembered His message. When people went to their homes after hearing a sermon from Jesus and were asked what was preached, they did not give vague answers. They could tell what Jesus said. He said: “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

I think Jesus could make this impression in two ways. One way could be that He said the sentence only once but prepared it very well. This is the case with the sentence: “Nothing is for free.” That little story is well built up. At the end, everybody is waiting for the sentence. And when we hear or read it, we are open and receptive. So it may be enough to say the sentence only once, and people will remember it.

The other way to make people remember what we say is to repeat the sentence we want to emphasize. Maybe Jesus said in His sermons: “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” and later repeated it several times: “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

I don’t know which method Jesus used; I guess He used both. But we know for sure that as Jesus began to preach, those who recorded His preaching came up with the message in one sentence; and it was: “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Is This Really It?

Is this really the sentence? Yes, it is! Why? Because the kingdom of heaven is the best place, the best situation, the best condition we can ever be in. The greatest joy that is available to people is God's joy in the kingdom of heaven.

The Bible says that the kingdom of heaven is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. There is the greatest joy. It is not a place where the unrighteous rule over the righteous or where tyrants oppress honorable people. There is peace based on righteousness. Because everybody is happy and content with the righteous state, there is peace. And there is such joy with God in heaven that is much better than anything on the earth.

The kingdom of heaven is an eternal kingdom. It lasts forever. If we will get in there, we will never lose it. We will not lose it in one month, and we will not lose it in one year or ten years. There we will not die like we do on the earth after sixty, seventy, or eighty years. The kingdom of heaven lasts forever.

The kingdom of heaven is the best place, the best condition, the best situation to be in.

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I myself have experienced the joy of God, and it is much better than anything else I have ever experienced without God. And I am sure that if you will experience it, you will feel the same.

Why is Jesus' sentence so great? Because it points at the greatest thing: the kingdom of heaven. And it also tells us how to get there. It is: repent.

What Is Repentance?

What does “repent” mean? The Bible uses at least three words that are translated as “repentance.” One of these means to “think after.” Its equivalent today would be a slang phrase: think again. What does it say to us? It says: Do you think you are all right? Think again. Do you think you are living the best possible life? Think again. Do you think you are walking on the right way? Think again.

Jesus, God, the Bible call us to think again: Are we in the right position? Are we in the right place? Have we surrounded ourselves with the best people? Are we doing what is best? Are we the possible best we can be? The Bible says: repent – think again, rethink it.

Another word that is translated as “repent” means to “sigh.” It means to be sorry. Sorry for what? Sorry for our sins and for our whole previous life we lived without God. It means realizing that we are not good people but sinners. By our own standard, we are probably good. Our own standard is usually subject to the principle: I am good. But if we get nearer to God and see His standard, we realize that we are dirty sinners.

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A third word that is translated as “repent” means to “turn back.” It means that we were going in one direction, and we have to recognize that it is not the right direction, so we have to turn back. It’s like we’re riding on a train, and we see that the landscape doesn’t look like we’ve expected. And we are thinking: Am I on the right train? We have to recognize: No! Repentance means recognizing that we are not doing the right thing and we are not going the right way. So what shall we do? We get off our train and get on another one, which will take us to the right destination.

This is repentance: we realize that without God we are going in the wrong direction. We recognize this and turn around. We turn back from our own way and begin to walk on God’s way. We turn away from living to ourselves, we turn to God, and we begin to live for Him.

This is repentance: turning from our ways, from ourselves, from the world, and from sin – to God; and starting to live with Him and for Him, and walking on His way.

There is a great description of repentance in the Old Testament, in the book of Isaiah:

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Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near:
Let the wicked forsake his way,
and the unrighteous man his thoughts:
and let him return unto the Lord,
and he will have mercy upon him;
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

“Let him return unto the Lord” – this is repentance. The unrighteous man has to leave his sins, his thoughts, his way of thinking, and he must return to the Lord. Why? Because God’s thoughts are so high above men’s thoughts, your thoughts, my thoughts, as the heavens are higher than the earth. And we have to turn because God’s ways are above men’s ways as the heavens are higher than the earth. That’s why we have to think after, think again, change our thoughts, turn to God, and walk with Him.

Repent. This is the way into the kingdom of heaven: the best place, the best situation, the best possible life, the greatest joy, which lasts forever.

This is what God has for you and me. I came to know God over thirty-five years ago, and this is still the best thing of my life. And this can be a should be the best thing in your life too. If you want to know how to live your life,

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if you want to know what to do with your life, and you don't know God yet, then this is the sentence for you: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This is the sentence you need to hear.

Many people say many things. But if you want to know the one sentence that shows the way to go, this is it. So let this one sentence keep ringing in your ears and move you to act accordingly:

"Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17

Notes:

1. I hope this little writing was a blessing to you. If it is so, I appreciate if you write a positive review on its Kindle page.

If you do, I ask you one thing though: No spoiler! Please, do not write the sentence in your review. For those who haven't read this booklet yet, it would be like reading a crime story knowing in advance who the murderer was. For them, it would make the book like a lion without teeth. It would spoil their reading experience. So no spoiler, please. Thanks!

2. Bible quotations are from the King James Version and King James 2000 version © Robert A. Couric.

3. Bible Software: e-Sword © Rick Meyers

4. If you would like to know more about this theme; I wrote a much longer, much deeper book titled: *Work Out Your Own Salvation with Fear and Trembling: The Bible Way to Eternal Life*. You can get it also on Amazon.

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B078KJ3SQT>

Thank you, and God bless you!