

Making The Most Of Your Life

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I. Introductory Remarks.

A real popular phrase we have all heard says, "Get A Life". In this message today I want encourage you to "get a life" that is full of God's blessings and rewards. I want to talk about the life that you have been given in God and what a Great life it is. If I were to ask you what is it that you want out of life, what would you tell me? I believe most of us want a rich and rewarding life that experiences fulfillment in many ways.

Is your life one that you are happy and content with or are you looking for something more than what you have. Are you making the most of your life that God has given to you by making it count for something or are you simply spinning your wheels in frustration and discontentment?

James 4:13-15 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

In all reality we really have very little time to make our lives count for something. Does your world make sense to you or do you feel that you spend most of your time accomplishing very little? Do you feel like you are simply spinning your wheels and expending your precious energy on things that have very little value or consequences?

II. You Can Have A Full And Rewarding Life.

I believe most of us have an inborn need of really desiring to be useful. We all search for the meaning of our existence. We have a need to know that there is purpose in what we do. We want to feel like we really are needed and that the tasks and responsibilities that we perform in life are important and necessary and that they count for something. The average person is probably discontent with the way his or her life is going.

Are you happy with your life? Do you have a rewarding marriage & family life? Are you fulfilling your life-long ambitions or have you settled into a complacency that has simply accepted the mediocrity of life? God has promised us a full and rewarding life filled with excitement and purpose.

Psalms 16:11 *You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

John 10:10 *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

Do these seem like an empty promises to you and that God is simply baiting you to get your attention or do you really believe that God is able help you make the most of your life with rich rewards?

What is your home life like? Are you experiencing all that God wants for you in you marriage and your family? Is there a major discontentment in your home or are you truly walking in the most that God has for you? What about your work? Are you satisfied or does it all seem futile to you? What about your service to God and the church? Are you just spinning your wheels or are you making your life count in the things that you are involved in?

II. What Is Needed For A Rich & Rewarding Life.

1. You Must Have A Sense Of Purpose And Destiny.

Proverbs 29:18 *Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law.*

2 Timothy 1:9 *...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.*

A life without purpose will cause us to chase many endless rainbows that only bring dissatisfaction, heartache, disillusionment, a sense of failure, apathy, emptiness, and a sense of total worthlessness.

This doesn't sound like the abundant life that God has promised us does it? You see, if my dream is an end in itself it will leave me empty and still wanting.

- **Illustration: Businessmen say lives `empty'.**

A study of 4,126 male business executives reveals widespread dissatisfaction with the corporate experience. Forty-eight percent of all middle managers said that despite years spent striving to achieve their professional goals, their lives seemed "empty and meaningless." 68% of senior executives said that they had

neglected their family lives to pursue professional goals, and half said they would spend less time working and more time with their wives and children if they could start over again. The question that men are asking today is: "What am I doing all this for?" Before, the payoff was security and long-term employment. But corporations don't return loyalty as they used to, and men today are saying they don't see the investment as being worth it. So says Jan Halper of the Palo Alto Consulting Center who conducted the survey. (San Francisco Chronicle, 1989)

- **King Solomon came up with this same conclusion.**

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 *Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart rejoiced in all my labor; and this was my reward from all my labor. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.*

When Solomon lost sight of God's purpose, the things in his life became worthless and futile. As a result he became very dissatisfied and discontent with his life.

We must look to God's purpose in all that we do. We must see the things that we do as God given tasks understanding that God wants us to work out His purpose in our lives no matter what it is we are involved in. This will keep you from chasing empty rainbows. If my dream is an end in itself it will become an empty pursuit.

Ecclesiastes 3:9-13 *What profit has the worker from that in which he labors? I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied. He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives, and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor; it is the gift of God.*

Business people, do you want to get the most out of your life as a business person? If so acknowledge God in all your ways and He will direct your steps. Working man, do you want to get the most out of your life? Working mother, do you want to make your life count? If so, acknowledge God in all of your ways and He will direct your steps. Husband & wife, do you want to get the most out of your marriage? If so, acknowledge God in all of your ways. He will cause you to see that you are a team working together for His purpose in your family and ministries. Father and mother, do you want to get the most out of your lives in

raising your children? If so, acknowledge God in all of your ways and you will see His purpose and reward coming alive in your children and family atmosphere.

2. Find Contentment In What You Are Doing.

Philippians 4:11-13 *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

1 Timothy 6:6-8 *But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*

Many people are not content with the work they are doing because the grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence. They are dissatisfied even when their circumstances are favorable. Instead of doing their duty cheerfully and conscientiously as unto the Lord, they yield to a spirit of covetousness. As a result, they miss God's best for their lives and fail to see the blessings they already have.

- **Illustration: Acres of Diamonds.**

An ancient Persian legend tells of a wealthy man by the name of Al Haffed who owned a large farm. One evening a visitor related to him tales of fabulous amounts of diamonds that could be found in other parts of the world, and of the great riches they could bring him. The vision of all this wealth made him feel poor by comparison. So instead of caring for his own prosperous farm, he sold it and set out to find these treasures. But the search proved to be fruitless. Finally, penniless and in despair, he committed suicide by jumping into the sea. Meanwhile, the man who had purchased his farm noticed one day the glint of an unusual stone in a shallow stream on the property. He reached into the water, and to his amazement he pulled out a huge diamond. Later when working in his garden, he uncovered many more valuable gems. Poor Al Haffed had spent his life traveling to distant lands seeking jewels when the farm he had left behind were all the precious stones his heart could have ever desired.

Hebrews 13:5-6 *Let your conduct be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor*

forsake you." So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

We live in a society that teaches and trains us to want and covet what our neighbor has. It is promoted everywhere we go. We compare status, home, clothes, income, vehicles, and many other things. As a result we are never satisfied or content with our lives. If this is where our thoughts are at, we will pursue these things as well. As a result we come up empty and unsatisfied because these are not the things that bring us gain. It is godliness with contentment that brings us gain. These are only empty illusions from the devil of which he uses to destroy the real life and joy that Christ wants us to have in this life.

We must humble ourselves and accept God's placement for our lives and then allow Him to exalt us in due time. This means being the best that we can be for Christ in whatever it is that we are doing or where it is that He has us planted; work, business, homemaker, mother, father, ministry or whatever. Be content and allow God to use you as a sweet smelling fragrance where you are at. This is the key.

James 4:10 *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

Many times people come into the kingdom, who are discontent with the world, but they go on living their lives for themselves and never really make the most of their lives. As a result discontentment continues.

Sometimes Christians start out doing great but when trials, trouble, anxiety and problems begin to occur they begin to focus once again on the empty promises of the enemy and as a result they slip into a greater state of discontentment and end up making very little of their lives.

3. We Must Evaluate Our Priorities From Time To Time.

Proverbs 23:4-5 *Do not overwork to be rich; because of your own understanding, cease! Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven.*

Being rich is not necessarily that which equates with making the most of your life. Do you have peace in your home? Are you bearing fruit in the kingdom? Do you have a happy and rewarding marriage? Are your children living peaceably with one another and growing in the Lord?

We need to ask ourselves, why am I discontent and dissatisfied? What is going on in my life that is making me this way? Why am I not making the most of my Life? Are my priorities out of order? Am I putting more time and energy into those areas that are very little consequence? Should I be putting more time into my family and my marriage and service to God?

Proverbs 21:5 *The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.*