

NOV 20 05 HOW CAN I MAKE A LIFE AND NOT JUST A LIVING?

THANKSGIVING SUNDAY **Luke 18:18-30**

Concluding our preaching on Back to the Basics

Today were asking the question:

HOW CAN I MAKE A LIFE AND NOT JUST A LIVING?

What is the source of a good life?

You remember that singing fish that you could hang on the wall.

It was a bass that would drive you nuts.

One of those gifts you could give to our brother in law.

It would sing “Don’t worry be happy.”

1. THE GOOD LIFE IS NOT THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

Even though it is built into our United States Constitution as our inalienable right.

When you ask parents “What are their dream for their children?”

They say: “To just be happy!”

We seem to believe that if we have a good marriage, healthy children, prominent careers, strong bodies, and a secure 401K, our lives will be good.

And we will live in a Garrison Keillor community where

All the women are strong, all the men are good looking

and all the children above average.

1. THE GOOD LIFE IS NOT THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

2. THE GOOD LIFE IS NOT OWNING MANY POSSESSION

In Tennessee Williams play “Cat on a hot tin roof,

a father and his son talk in the basement filled with the father’s possessions.

The son asks his father, “Big Daddy, why’d you buy all this junk?”

His father **sadly** answers, “Because I wanted to live.

I wanted my life to amount to something.”

Only in America do we build houses with three car garages:

With monthly mortgages in the thousands.

We have espresso coffee, the World Wide Web,

sports utility vehicles, and caller ID.

And we have less happiness, more depression,

more fragile relationships,

more suicide,

more drug addiction

more jobs but with less security then ever before.

THE world solution is to: “I will tear down my barns and build bigger barns.”

2. THE GOOD LIFE IS NOT OWNING AS MANY POSSESSION AS YOU CAN.

3. THE GOOD LIFE IS NOT PLACING ALL THE EMPHASIS ON SELF.

What kind of generation are we raising?

One for self or service?

A Newspaper asked kids to write and send in their "DEEP THOUGHTS" just like John Handey this is a couple of their responses.

- 1. Angie 13 said: Give me the strength to change the things I can, the grace to accept the things I cannot, and a great big bag of money. –**
- 2. Joe 15 said: Once, I wept for I had no shoes. Then I came upon a man who had no feet. So I took his shoes. I mean, its' not like he really needed them, right?**
- 3. Sue said: If we could just get everyone to close their eyes and visualize world peace for an hour, imagine how serene and quiet it would be until the looting started.- Sue age 15**

Have these young people assessed it correctly.

That we really are a self interested America.

Like big Daddy set out to please ourselves.

Exchanging our spouse because they don't meet my needs.

Working second jobs for that additional ten percent of income.

Our bodies are run down.

Our families are stressed out.

And even when we come back from vacation we are exhausted.

And we never take any blame for anything that happens.

That starts very young.

A six year old boy knocked at his neighbors door and said

That something of his had found its way into their garage, and he wanted it back.

Upon opening the garage door, The neighbor noticed two additions

a base- ball and a broken window sporting a baseball-sized hole.

She asked the boy: "How do you suppose this ball got in here?"

The little boy, taking one look at the ball, one look at the window,

"Wow! I must have thrown it right through that hole!"

Do we as Christian have any edge over the world?

Do we have the possibility and opportunity

To HOW WE CAN MAKE A LIFE MORE THEN JUST A LIVING.

Our scripture lesson shows us:

I. THE LAWYER ASKS THE RIGHT QUESTION

Luke 18: 18 **A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"**

Matthew, Mark and Luke all three gospels describe the young man as:

rich, young, moral, religious, sincere, a ruler, "a religious leader,"

He had all the things that a rich lawyer could buy.

Yet he came to ask Jesus

How can I make a life and not just a Living?

He asked Jesus the right question:

How many young people do you know stop to think about eternity?
 Maybe if a classmate is killed or commits suicide, or die of cancer.
 But most often youth thinks only about getting the most out of life.
 NOW.

Or did this young man just want Jesus to affirm his lifestyle.
 That he was ok.
 Just as good as the local people said he was.
 And by our own efforts and life he could make it to heaven?

Good teacher, What should I do to get eternal life?

- I. THE LAYWER ASKED THE RIGHT QUESTION**
- II. THE LAWYER CAME TO THE RIGHT PERSON**

The lawyer came to Jesus. Said Good Teacher:
 He had sense to know Jesus was not an ordinary man.
 But Jesus said:

Verse 19 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone.

Jesus saw that this young man was inexperienced.
 He saw that he was looking at life from a shallow perspective.
 He said: "If you are calling me good in an absolute sense then you're calling me God.
 If your calling me God, then will you follow me as God?"

You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honor your father and mother. Luke 18:20

The young man's answer shows he is either
 not very honest or he is simply ignorant as a young leader.

"All these I have kept since I was a boy," Luke 18:21

Really?

How many of you have kept the 10 commandment?

How about 6 commandments?

Or maybe three?

Never taken God name in vain #3

Never dishonored your parents #5

Never murdered anyone?

Lusted after another person's spouse.

If you say yes you have just broke the ninth commandment about lying.

Rom.3:20- "No man can justify himself before God by a perfect performance of the Law's demands - indeed it is the straightedge of the Law that shows us how crooked we are." (Phillips)

God didn't give these commands to make us feel better
 but so we would see our sin clearly.
 And understand our need for a Savior.

But this young man was saying,
 "I don't need to be changed.
 I am already perfect.

22When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Here the young man hits a snag.
 Because the scripture says:

Luke says: "When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. Luke 18:23

Jesus had just shown him that he had broken the first two commandments.
 Thou shalt have no other God's before me.
 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.

Jesus was saying we are born into sin.
 And all the good deeds in the world can't erase our sinfulness.
 Doing good things does not change bad people into good people.

**I. THE LAYWER ASKED THE RIGHT QUESTION
 II. THE LAWYER CAME TO THE RIGHT PERSON
 III. THE LAWYER MADE THE WRONG DECISION.**

The way to make a life and not just a living is to

Is to make the right decisions

The first is to

1. Love God first
2. And to love your neighbor as yourself.

But he chose to love himself.

The early church grew not because they knocked on doors
 And had a great Welcoming and Evangelism committee.
 Passed out Halloween tracts.
 But because of the way they lived their lives, loving, caring for one another.
"See how they love one another."
 People want to be loved.

In the Peanuts comic- Charles Schultz

Has Lucy talking to Charlie and she if frustrated and says:
 The problem with you Charlie is that your so Buggable and so Huggable.
 Look at the person sitting next to you:
 Likely their probably both "huggable and buggable."

The first Christians were compassionate toward everyone,
 Especially the poor, slaves, and outcasts.

How do we treat people today?
Especially those who come to our church today who have never
Been raised in the church. They don't know what goes on and we must not laugh or make
fun of them.

**In one church an usher was seating people before service began, when he greeted
two young people who were strangers and he asked them-“Where would you like to sit?”
The young man looked nervous and confused and said: Non smoking please.**

Think about it:
That young man had it right,
I don't want to sit in the smoking section either
That's what the rich young ruler wanted to know
Where's the 'nonsmoking section?
Where do I sit with heaven or hell?

**Jesus said: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and
with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is
like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on
these two commandments.” Matthew 22:37-40**

Do you love your neighbor as yourself?
Beginning with your little brother or sister?
Your mom or dad?
Or you spouse?
One man said, early in my marriage

I was having trouble figuring out what "mood" my wife was in.
So I had a brilliant idea and bought her a mood ring - it worked great!
When she was in a good mood, it would turn a pleasant shade of blue,
and when she was in a bad mood, it would leave a red mark on my forehead!

We must go beyond the pain of our relationships,
The emptiness of our lives to see a new truth.
Jesus said to the Young lawyer **"You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and
give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." Luke
18:22**
When the young man heard this he walked away very sad. Matthew 19:22

III. THE LAWYER MADE A WRONG DECISION

IV. THE LAWYER DECISION MADE AN ETERNAL DIFERENCE

**OUR CHOICES IN LIFE MAKE THE DIFFERNCE IN WEATHER
WE WILL JUST MAKE A LIVING OR HAVE A LIFE.**

To choose incorrectly will leaven you sitting in the smoking section for eternity.

**²³When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth.
²⁴Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!
²⁵Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Luke 18:23-25**

You and I can miss the blessing if we allow selfishness to guide us.
 Our own desire or experiences to lead us.
 We need to follow the Word of God.

**The good life is not giving up sex, smoking and alcohol,
 Like the old saying.
 I Don't smoke, drink or chew' and stay away from those that do!!**

The good life moves us on to take risks

At loving God at all cost.

And loving one another.

Caring for one another.

If you have the resources, land, money, to benefit the church in helping others.

Then step up.

If you have the gifts of service that benefit the children of God

Then step up.

If you have the talents that bless the ministry and understanding of a loving God.

Then step up.

If you have **hand** that can lift.

Feet that can lead

Tongue that can speak

Ears that can listen

Heart that can love

Then step up.

Jesus was asking the rich young ruler to give up his riches,
 so he could make room for God's riches.
 The true riches that being a servant can bring.
 But the young man thought Jesus was interfering with his life.

He was like the little boy sitting on a park bench right after Halloween munching on one candy bar after another. After the 6th candy bar the man on the bench across from him said, "**Son, you know eating all that candy isn't good for you. It will give you acne, rot your teeth, make you fat.**" Johnny replied, "My grandfather lived to be 107 years old." The man asked, "Did your grandfather eat 6 candy bars at a time?" Little Johnny answered, "No, he but he knew how to mind his own business!"

I'm sure the rich young ruler was thinking
 I sure he wished Jesus would have minded his own business.
 Maybe that's what you're thinking this morning.
But that is one luxury as a Christian that God won't allow.

He won't let you just mind your own business.
He commands us to Love God and Our neighbor as ourselves.

Which will it be for you today?

Will you just make a living OR MAKE A LIFE?

Living for self, or living to serve?

Living for long hours and lonely night,

Or Living to laugh and love as God has called us.

The challenge and choice is ours

Lets not make the same mistake of the rich young ruler.

²⁹"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life." Luke 18:29-30