

The Good Life

‡ Introduction

- When you look around you see lots of commercials and people claiming to improve your life.
 - Google search provides 443 million hits for “the good life”
 - *The Good Life* Books
 - Amazon.com- 5,742 book results
 - *The Good Life* Magazine
 - The Good Life Church
 - The punk band Weezer even has a song called *The Good Life*
 - There is even a whole line of clothing that states that life is good.
 - People try to convince us:
 - If I could just get a new house, I would be happy.
 - If I could just look like him or her, I would be happy.
- Marketing targets needs we do not know we have that would improve our lives and make us feel better.
 - Circuit City manager- “People are never just looking. There is always something that they ‘need.’ Your job is to convince them of their ‘need.’”
 - People will spend lots of money and even spend money they do not have in the hopes that these new possessions will make them happy.
 - Maxing out 3 credit cards at Circuit City
- What are some things that in your mind would be highlights of a good life?
 - Write answers from class on the board
 - Fame

- Money
 - Power
- Lets look again at some of the shirts that are produced by the Life is Good clothing line.
 - As you see the images try to come up with what you think they are promoting as the good life.
- ‡ With all of these people claiming to know what defines a good life, we will first look at some people who lived the good life and then seek to see what a truly good life is according to God's Word.
- ‡ People who lived the good life
 - Johnny Cash- "Hurt" Video (3:50)
 - Won the Best Video of All Time Award by the UK Guardian
 - "one of the most intense and affecting videos in memory." – *Rolling Stone*
 - "In the short history of music videos, few have had the emotional heft and visual impact of the clip shot by director Mark Romanek in the Tennessee home of the ailing country legend." – MTV
 - Cash's last words were words of sorrow and guilt of a life that was wasted on temporal gain, earthly pleasure, and immoral behavior
 - Solomon - **Ecclesiastes**
 - All is vanity- "Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity." 1: 2 ESV
 - "Everything is meaningless," says the Teacher, "completely meaningless."- 1: 2 NLT
 - Knowledge
 - "And I applied my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is an unhappy

business that God has given the children of man to be busy with. I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.” - 1: 13-14

- Seeking Pleasure and Self-Fulfillment
 - “I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I also had great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of children of man. So I became great and surpassed all that were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil and this was my reward for all my toil. **Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after the wind, and**

**there was nothing to be gained
under the sun.”- 2: 4-11**

- Hard Work
 - “What has a man from all the toil and striving of heart with which he toils beneath the sun? For all his days are full of sorrow, and his work is a vexation. Even in the night his heart does not rest. This is also vanity.”- 2: 22-23

‡ A higher calling- **Philippians 3**

- “But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed I count everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness of God that depends on faith – that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it on my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead. I press on towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think in this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained. Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. For many, of

whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies to the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him to subject all things to himself.” –

Philippians 3: 7-21 ESV

- We have been called to so much more than the good life as depicted in the Life is Good clothing line.
- Nothing else compares to the greatness of knowing Christ- v. 7-8
 - Note the good life is not the easy life.
 - Paul says “I have suffered the loss of all things” in order to gain Christ
- What does this higher calling involve?
 - Realizing that everything else is worthless (vanity) compared to Christ and our relationship with Him- v. 8
 - “For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ...”- Philippians 3: 8a ESV
 - Rubbish
 - Strive after holiness because Christ has saved you
 - “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.” – Philippians 3: 12 ESV
 - Forgetting your past and striving for a better future
 - “But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead.” – Philippians 3: 13b ESV

- Realize that each day you are being watched
 - “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.” – Philippians 3: 17 ESV
 - “If you really want to understand a man, Don’t just listen to what he says but watch what he does.”- Maurice Blandel (French Philosopher)
 - Live each day with eternity in mind
 - “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him to subject all things to himself.”- Philippians 3: 20-21 ESV
- ‡ Step out of your comfort zone and allow God to use you.
 - God has created us in His image and He has a special place to use us to advance His kingdom for the glory of His name!
 - “The second you step out of your comfort zone, you step into God’s comfort zone.”- Mark Cahill
 - “Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God.”- William Carrey
 - My story of how God used me and continues to use me
 - Cash and Solomon both allowed God to use them to spread truth to others. They understood through their own attempts to find fulfillment in the American dream what it means to truly live life to the fullest.
 - Cash in final interviews
 - “I just don’t have any fear of death. I haven’t lost minutes sleep over it. I’m very much at peace with myself and with my God. I accept this disease because it is the will of God; it’s Him working in my life.

And when He sees fit to take me from this world, I'll be reunited with some good people I haven't seen for a while."

- "That great light is a light that now leads me and directs me and guides me. That great light is the light of this world. That great light is the light out of this world, and into that better world. And I'm lookin' forward to walkin' into it with that great light."
- What step do you need to take?