



How is Jesus "The Life"? (Part III)

John 14:6: (NASB) *Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.*



What do you think of when you hear the statement, "Ah, this is the life!" Ease, fortune and comfort? Well, Jesus said he is "The Life" - so what does that mean and does that statement still develop the same picture in your head? It probably does not. How is Jesus "The Life" and how should that affect our daily experiences?

(This is Part III of a three-part series from October 11 and November 8, 2015.) Here is a recap from the last program, *How is Jesus "The Truth"?*

recap
recap

Just as God created the world to be inhabited, He also created it to be ruled in righteousness. His rule of righteousness was allowed to be challenged and usurped by Satan. Jesus is changing that. Jesus is God's anti-Satan serum of truth - Jesus restores that which was lost!

Jesus' mission was to bring heaven's intentions back to ruling the earth. He was "The Truth" when it came to paving the way back to God.

The Truth

At Passover, Moses delivered the firstborn and the rest of the Hebrews from slavery, representing Jesus delivering the world from Satan. Jesus also represented the Passover lamb, whose sacrifice delivers the firstborn. "The Truth" of Jesus is that the deliverance of the "church of the firstborn" (Hebrews 10:23) is the conduit through which the world is delivered! There are two pictures showing the two aspects of salvation.

So often we focus on Jesus as the Lamb of God and we forget about the other part of "The Truth" of Jesus - the part where he is a lion! The lion represents kingly authority, gained by being the sacrificial Lamb of God and remaining faithful to God's always-higher purposes.

The Truth of Jesus is he will be known for delivering Israel back to their homeland - now in progress.

The Truth of Jesus is that his government will be worldwide, God's original design. It is all about establishing world order and world peace with a firm hand of justice but with love and mercy as well.

Let's look at what would make some say, "This is the life!"

 **\$32 million house, Lap of Luxury Summer Special**

- *Hi, I'm Alison Morris. Welcome to the Lap of Luxury Summer Special. We begin here in Bridgehampton on the exclusive Dune Road. This \$32 million home is situated right on the beach and it has extraordinary bay views. Come on! Let's check it out!*



- *Hi, Alison! Welcome to the beach. I'm Dana Trotter with Sotheby's International Realty. We have 250 feet of beachfront here, pool, tennis, and surrounded by preserve, so what you see is what you get. You're not going to have a house next to you. Extreme privacy.*
- *There's been a house on this extremely private beachfront property since the 1920's. This latest version was completely renovated in 2005 with new windows and doors to enhance the stunning views.*



Let's start with the long term - the big picture - and then work back to how to get there.



Here is the context of Jesus as The Life - the future fulfillment:

John 14:1-6: (NASB) ¹*Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me.*

This takes place the night before the crucifixion and Verse 1 is a command to his Apostles. This will be the basis of OUR personal actions NOW to be a part of The Life later.

²*In my Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.*

Verse 2 establishes where The Life in the future will be - it gives us an address:

³*If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*

Verse 3 promises us the ability to be transported to The Life.

⁴*And you know the way where I am going.* ⁵*Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know where you are going, how do we know the way?* ⁶*Jesus said to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.*

These verses are the reason for our program. How do you follow Jesus? You understand he is the pathway and he represents the truth of God's plan. You also understand he shows us a future fulfillment of life and a present, active fulfillment of life as well.

Just a few hours later that same night, Jesus prays for his followers to live The Life:

John 17:24: (NASB) *Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given me, be with me where I am, so that they may see my glory which You have given me, for You loved me before the foundation of the world.*

Jesus now expands the meaning to all of his followers that would come after his death. We can take this personally as we are living in the time of the Gospel call.



We don't know much about The Life promised to the faithful in the future, but we do know enough - it will be a life like that of Jesus himself!

1 John 3:2-3: (NASB) ²*Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when he appears, we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is.* ³*And everyone who has this hope fixed on him purifies himself, just as he is pure.*

In order to have that future hope, we have to do something today.

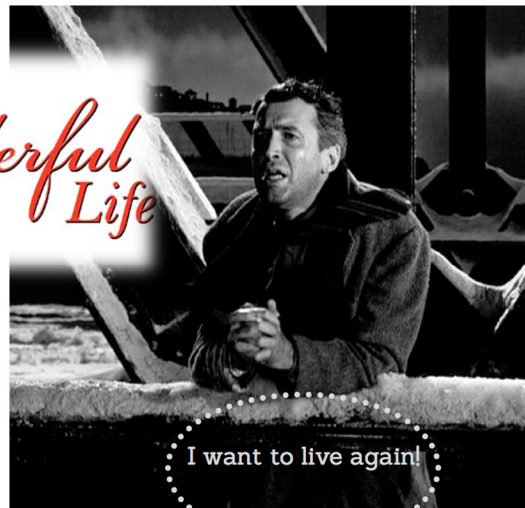
Back to John 14:1: How do we not let our hearts be troubled and how do we "believe" in Jesus?

Our hearts are strengthened when we focus on The Life Jesus gave us and we live based on that focus.

 **I want to live again, *It's a Wonderful Life, Movie (1946)***

- *(George Bailey) Clarence! Get me back! Get me back! I don't care what happens to me! Get me back to my wife and kids! Happy times please, please! I want to live again! I want to live again! I want to live again! Please God, let me live again...*

It's a Wonderful Life



In the movie, George Bailey ended up living his life for other people, sacrificing his own desires to help others. He made so many people better off and essentially saved a community.

Let The Life Jesus offers you now make you shine!



But how do you do that?

1 First, know that if you were called or are being called, it is for a good reason:

Romans 8:28: (NASB) *and we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

If you are being drawn to becoming a footstep follower of Christ, God is unequivocally working with you and through you. How are you responding?

The reason for the call is for His purpose - just like Jesus was called for God's purpose as well. It is a BRIGHT and different purpose.

2 Second, know that who you are does fit in!

1 Corinthians 12:14-18: (NASB) *¹⁴For the body is not one member, but many. ¹⁵If the foot says, because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear says, because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.*

Your strength and weakness, your dogmatic approach or your welcoming spirit, your brilliance of mind or your sensitive heart - all are a part of the whole - and the whole is the body of Christ!

Believing in Jesus is not something we say with our lips one day and that is it. The way we live our lives must correspondingly change.

3 Third, know that you have something to do!

Exodus 4:1-2: (NASB) *¹Then Moses said, what if they will not believe me or listen to what I say? For they may say, The LORD has not appeared to you. ²The LORD said to him, what is that in your hand? And he said, a staff.*

The staff would be a symbol that God would help Moses do what he needed to do. Moses needed to do the work, but God worked through him.

Each of us has something in our hand. It may be an opportunity, a present day challenge or a lesson from our past. It may be the power of prayer or fellowship or study. It may be the power of an open ear.



What is that in YOUR hand? Whatever it is, it is yours to use in The Life Jesus gave you!

4 Fourth, let your light shine - be the example - BE the Gospel as it may be the only version some will ever "read" in this life!

Matthew 5:13-16: (NASB) *¹³You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*



Shine! When your character shines in the darkness of our day, you are living The Life!



Great...we are all nice and shiny, now what do we do?



Private tennis and pool, *Lap of Luxury Summer Special*

- *What's so unique about it is that you are sitting on the dune's crest so you have views all the way down the beach to the east and then you have views to the west and across the street over the bay. Incredible sunsets here. If you were to try and rebuild this house, you would have to set it way back off the beach. The house is six bedrooms, six baths. Extremely rare to have tennis on the beach. This is one of three houses in Bridgehampton with a tennis court, so that's a pre-existing nonconforming; you could never get it today.*
- *And it's a hard, true green clay court with an irrigation system so it never dries out. The pool? Equally impressive. Heated saltwater Gunite pool. 6x6 Jacuzzi spa. It's extremely private here as well, so when you're sitting by the pool when it's a chilly day on the beach, you can get some shelter here and get your privacy sitting by the pool.*

What a lifestyle! Wouldn't that be cool? The Life we are talking about is very different and, if you are in the right mindset, very attractive.

**Let The Life Jesus offers you
now make you shine!**

**Let this help you
manage your moments!**



Ephesians 5:13-16: (NASB) ¹³But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴For this reason it says, awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, **And Christ will shine on you.** ¹⁵Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

Six steps for managing our moments so our life is immersed in living The Life:



Proverbs 29:18: (KJV) *Where there is no vision, the people perish:*

With knowledge and technology come choices - lots and lots of choices - embedded in various shades of grey, all designed to capture our hearts and imaginations. This is distraction but not a vision. The vision is a focused picture of what your life is supposed to be about.

James 1:8: (KJV) *A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

Focus hard on this! Are we double-minded in our Christianity? Be brutally honest with the mirror! **KNOW YOUR GOD!**



Matthew 6:24: (KJV) *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Imagine the quality of our thoughts when the Almighty is "true north"!

George Bailey seems to have his priorities back in order...



Wonderful drafty house, It's a Wonderful Life, Movie (1946)

- (George Bailey) *Hey! Merry Christmas, Mr. Potter!*
- (Potter) *Happy New Year to you! In jail! Go on home. They're waiting for you.*
- (George Bailey) *Mary! Mary! Mary! Well, hello, Mr. Bank Examiner!*
- (Bank examiner) *Mr. Bailey, there's a deficit.*
- (George Bailey) *I know. \$8,000.*
- (Bank examiner) *I've got a couple of papers.*
- (George Bailey) *I bet it's a warrant for my arrest. Isn't it wonderful? I'm going to jail! Merry Christmas. Reporters. Where's Mary? Mary! Look at this wonderful old drafty house! Mary? Have you seen my wife?*
- (Kids) *Merry Christmas, Daddy!*
- (George Bailey) *Kids!*



George is gloriously happy to be in his life - he found what is important. Compare the "drafty old house" with the tennis courts by the ocean. George



has perspective on something higher...just like we do! He found his priority and was ready to accept what came next with open arms.



Ephesians 5:25: (NASB) *Husbands, love your wives. Your spouse is a priority*

Ephesians 6:4: (NASB) *Fathers...bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Your children are a priority*

1 Timothy 5:8: (NASB) *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. It is a priority to take care of yourself and your family members.*

Galatians 6:10: (NASB) *...let us do good to all people... Doing good to all is a priority.*

2 Timothy 2:15: (NASB) *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. It is a priority to study and know the truth of the Scriptures.*

John 15:12: (NASB) *This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. The brotherhood is a priority.*

Galatians 6:2: (NASB) *Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. It is a priority to take care of one another.*

All of these and more must, of necessity, be melded together into a harmonious recipe for humble and focused service to the glory of God!



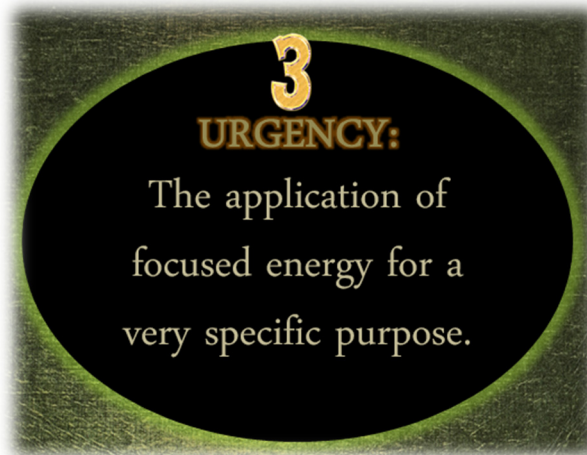
All of these priorities have their time, and those trying to live The Life according to Jesus must learn how to put them in perspective under the umbrella of "following Christ." Be fully engaged!



Galatians 5:17: (NASB) *For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.*

There is always another road to choose, and there is always another internal battle to be fought. Armed with VISION and PRIORITIES, we are able to choose rightly - even if our humanness would rather not.

Find a way to have contentment and fulfillment in the moments, challenges and difficulties in living The Life for Christ, which means a life of sacrifice and a life *different* than those around us.



 **Book a helicopter, *Lap of Luxury Summer Special***

- *If you own a home like this, you're definitely not taking the Jitney (a Southampton bus company) out to the Hamptons. What better way to get here than your own helicopter?*
- *Welcome to the 34th Street Heliport, the home of Blade, a luxury app that lets you book seats on helicopter flights to the Hamptons, the New York City airports, even Mohegan Sun (casino).*
- *Our main corridor is between Manhattan and the Hamptons and we fly to South Hampton, East Hampton and Montauk. Primarily out of East 34th Street with a backdrop of this wonderful lounge, and it's very simple. You download the app from the App Store. Once you register, put in your credit card, you then simply select the route that you want to go.*
- *A trip to the Hamptons is around 45 minutes and that seat will run \$575. Get to Mohegan Sun in just under an hour for \$625 or book an entire chopper to Teterboro for \$895 and be on the tarmac in a flash.*
- *It takes about four minutes to get from Manhattan to Teterboro versus 45 minutes.*



Urgently strain forward towards that which is most valuable! That is what Jesus always did and that is what The Life he has laid out for us requires us to do.



Our urgency:

Philippians 3:12-16: (NASB) ¹²*Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.* ¹³*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but **one thing I do**: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,* ¹⁴*press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* ¹⁵*Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;* ¹⁶*however, let us **keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.***

The idea of being a follower of Christ is a standard. Once we reach that point, we are to accelerate, work harder and focus on the goal.



Here we can see the VISION and PRIORITIES in place and the deep URGENCY to fulfill them. Without urgency, vision and priorities become "just another thing" in life and are merely theoretical - kind of like New Year's resolutions.

The first three steps are the necessary elements we must have in place to *redeem the time*. (Colossians 4:5) These next three things are the "how to" part of the equation. They represent what must be in place in our hearts and minds to back up and execute the VISION, PRIORITIES and URGENCY we have chosen.



 They are coming, *It's a Wonderful Life, Movie (1946)*

- *(George Bailey) You have no idea what's happened to me!*
- *(Mary Bailey) You have no idea what happened! Come on, George! Come on downstairs! Quick, they're on their way! Come on in here now. Now you stand right over here by the tree, right there and don't move.*
- *(Kids) What's happening, Mom?*
- *(Mary Bailey) I hear them coming now. George, it's a miracle! It's a miracle! Come on in Uncle Billy, everybody in here!*

Find those things which inspire your spiritual growth and drink them in!

Inspiration works best when we have someone whose struggle we can observe:

2 Corinthians 12:7-10: (NASB) ⁷*Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh (most*



likely his eyesight), a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! ⁸Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. ⁹And He has said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

The Apostle Paul saw his difficult experiences as positive ones.

He is saying, "My inspiration comes because I am weak. The fact I have these things holding me back and holding me down are inspiring because they make me realize that when I am weak, I can be strong in Christ." His own difficulties motivated him to work harder and be more dedicated.

There are hundreds - perhaps thousands - of biblical accounts, promises and prophecies we are at liberty to make our own for the sake of inspiring us to redeem the time so we can live The Life.

What about the lives of other Christians here and now?

Look at who inspired the Apostle Paul:

1 Thessalonians 2:19: (NASB) *For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?*

He looked to the churches he established for great inspiration.

Inspiration changes everything! It is a core value of Christianity that helps us move forward in every circumstance.

Once we are inspired, what comes next?
What could possibly top inspiration?



INSPIRATION without PERSPIRATION is a waste of time. The inspiration must press us to urgent action.



Private jet, Lap of Luxury Summer Special

- You would love to board a private plane to fly with Vista Jet, a global aviation company that charters flights nearly anywhere in the world by the hour.
- Vista Jet is the only truly global private aviation company with point-to-point non-stop access anywhere in the world with as little as 24 hours' notice, guaranteed availability.
- Need a private plane to Europe or even Africa tomorrow? No problem.
- If you're on the Global 5000 which can fly up to a little over eleven hours non-stop, popular routes from Teterboro are: Teterboro to London, Teterboro to Niece, Teterboro to LA. This aircraft is around \$15,950 an hour.
- The nearly \$16,000 rate includes everything from the gas to cabin hostess service and a wealth of the amenities.
- The level of service, the attention to detail, the quality of products that they use, so you only drink out of Kristoff or you'll only drink Don Perignon, that's kind of a house champagne.



That is indeed one way to "live the life," but that is NOT The Life we are called to live:

1 Peter 5:6-9: (NASB) ⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

So there is rest...yet:

⁸Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.

While there is rest in the Spirit, we have to be alert because we are being hunted. The perspiration of our experiences is critically important for us to live The Life given to us in Christ.

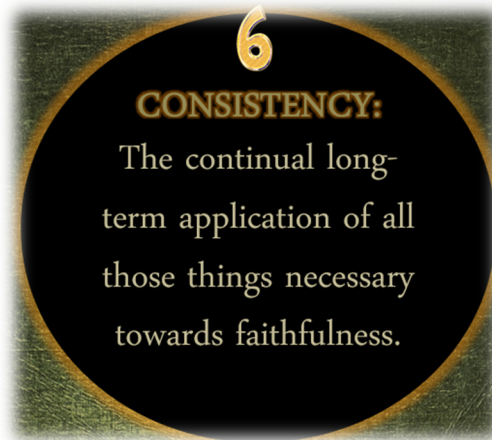
Nothing replaces hard work! We hear the adage, "work smarter, not harder," and this is true; yet for true Christians, our "working smarter" is working through the power and influence of God. That enables us to work harder and more productively at those things of greatest importance.



A caller from Connecticut reiterates John 14:6: *I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.* The life our Lord Jesus offers us is one of peace and humility, magnified by showing us the way to the Father. Ultimately all life comes from the Father.

Why would we be willing to sweat for the cause of Christ?

Philippians 3:7-11: (NASB) ⁷But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹and may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death; ¹¹in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.



 Hark the herald, *It's a Wonderful Life, Movie (1946)*

- (Ernie Bishop) *Just a minute! Quiet everybody! Quiet, quiet. Now get this, it's from London.*
- (Mary Bailey) *Oh!*
- (Ernie Bishop) *Mr. Gower cabled you: "Need cash" STOP "My office instructed to advance you up to \$25,000" STOP "Hee-Haw and Merry Christmas, Sam Wainwright."*
- (Group singing) *"Hark the Herald Angels, Sing!"*



Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never give in – **Winston Churchill**

Revelation 2:10: (NASB) *Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

How do we check ourselves to be sure we are consistently following the right path, the right thoughts, the right attitudes and the right actions?

Here is the answer!

Philippians 4:4-8: (NASB) *⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ⁵Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

We are to rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS - not just when we feel like it or when things are going our way. Rejoicing is a life choice, not just an emotion based on our external circumstances.

Dwell on these things - this shows consistency. What do we always go back to - our troubles and difficulties? How do we make our consistency to be that of spiritual things? The answer is to make the choice to rejoice in the Lord.



Now that we know how to manage our time, what could possibly go wrong?

**Let The Life Jesus offers you
now make you shine!**

**Let this help you
manage your moments!**

**Let this help you embrace
hardship and persecution!**

One last comparison!

 **Diamonds, Lap of Luxury Summer Special**



- *If you want to acquire a major piece of jewelry or major stone anywhere in the world, the first and last place you will go is Graft Diamonds.*
- *Started by Lawrence Graft in London, Graft Diamonds has been in the United States for 15 years and has cornered the market on fabulous extraordinary stones.*
- *If you're looking for a diamond which is, let's say, flawless 15-20 carats, there isn't really anywhere else you can go other than Graft to acquire that type of stuff.*
- *Here at the Graft store on Madison Avenue, there are plenty of those magnificent pieces. President Henri Barguidjian showed us a few of his favorite bobbles.*
- *Let's start with the big one. Now that's a 50-caret fancy intense yellow radiant cut. This is one of two stones a year that we find of that size. This is extremely, extremely rare.*
- *Price tag? About \$5 million.*

The Life Jesus gave us is entirely different. It is The Life of peace, harmony and dealing with difficulty all at the same time.

Hebrews 12:3-4: (NASB) ³For consider him who has **endured <5278>** such hostility by sinners against himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. ⁴You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin.



Wherever and whenever there is persecution, it creates a crossroads. We can go down the road of caving into persecution's pressure or choose the high road of principled endurance. This second choice is The Life!

Richest man in town, *It's a Wonderful Life, Movie (1946)*

- *Mary, I got him here from the airport just as quick as I could. That fool flew up here in a blizzard!*
- *Harry, how about your banquet in New York?*
- *Oh, I left right in the middle of it, as soon as I got Mary's telegram.*
- *Good idea, Ernie! A toast! To my big brother George. The richest man in town!*



He was the "richest man in town" because he built a life based on goodness, charity, honesty and integrity. He lived for others. The community rallied around him. This is an example of The Life living for others.

1 Peter 3:13-17: (NASB) ¹³Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed.

No one can harm what you are living for and your standing with God.

Persecution for the right reasons brings blessing:

And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, ¹⁵but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

The secret for blessing from persecution lies in what our deepest focus is seeing. If it is Christ, we will always be ready to answer with a spiritual mind. As humans, we are called *new creatures in Christ*. We are earthly beings trying to live according to a spiritual will. These can be at odds with each other and we always want to choose the higher road.

¹⁶and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

Just because we may be able to represent Christ, and even "win" when falsely accused, does not mean our conscience is on autopilot. Persecution can spur retaliation if we are not focused!

We want to look at The Life through Christ-likeness and not the eyes of opulence, possessions, ease and "me first!"

Persecution can and often does come from those who are close - those whose influence is important to us:

Luke 21:16-19: (NASB) ¹⁶But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, ¹⁷and you will be hated by all because of my name. ¹⁸Yet not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹By your **endurance <5281>** you will gain your lives.



Because persecution is difficult, we are constantly reminded of what enduring it produces:

Matthew 5:10-12: (NASB) ¹⁰Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

It is a fight! Our endurance finds its nourishment in the strength of God:

Ephesians 6:10-12: (NASB) ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.



What is The Life? It means we mold our lives around letting our lights shine. That light comes from God through Jesus in us that shines through our character, actions, thoughts and integrity. We manage our moments each day. By doing so, we are more prepared when hardship and persecution comes. We understand the power of the VISION, URGENCY, PRIORITY, INSPIRATION, PERSPIRATION and CONSISTENCY.

Be alive in Christ! This is The Life!

*So, how is Jesus The Life?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*





**And now even more to think about...
only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!**

We want to find true Christian abundance and thereby live The Life!

Here is an appropriate Christian attitude towards earthly gain:

James 4:13-17: (NASB) ¹³Come now, you who say, today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit. ¹⁴Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that. ¹⁶But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. ¹⁷Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Let us place our unwavering faith in the righteousness of God!

James 4:1-4: (NASB) ¹What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? ²You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Whom do you serve?

Does God want our entrance into the kingdom to be hard and hampered or happy and hopeful?

Mark 10:23-27: (NASB) ²³And Jesus, looking around, said to his disciples, how hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁴The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. ²⁶They were even more astonished and said to him, then who can be saved? ²⁷Looking at them, Jesus said, with people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.

Our true abundance in living The Life comes as a result of trial:

James 1:2-4: (NASB) ²Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance <5281>**. ⁴And let **endurance <5281>** have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Our trials, our difficulties in life that are brought on by the circumstances of our humanness beg for endurance, for it is in these very experiences that we can, we must as Christians realize the reality of our faith with a long term, endurance based approach.

The reason for our trials and afflictions:

Hebrews 12:7-13: (NASB) ⁷It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons... He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. ¹¹All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. ¹²Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, ¹³and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb, which is lame, may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.



A perspective through which we can see our trials and afflictions as tools:

2 Corinthians 4:16-18: (NASB) ¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. (So, it's all good - even if it doesn't look that way) ¹⁷For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

A long view and a big picture of our experience inspires endurance.

The results of our trials and afflictions - as long as we apply endurance:

James 1:12: (NASB) Blessed is a man who **perseveres under <5278>** trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Carry that developmental weight of experience until we complete it according to God's standard.

Summing up our endurance through trial and affliction:

1 Corinthians 9:24-27: (NASB) ²⁴Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; ²⁷but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

Run to win means you know why you are running - self-control is an outgrowth of knowing and embracing the why - fighting to win through self discipline is an intense, "do it now" picture.



Grandpa Rick and Grandma Trish welcome Autumn Hope, born December 11, 2015

