

# What is life for?

## Lesson for Sunday, October 31, 2021

### Introduction:

- What are the big questions of life? *Allow for discussion...*
- Throughout human history, one of the deepest questions that humans have wrestled with is: What is life for? Or, to summarize it in one word: Purpose.
- Different people have different answers to this deep question:
  - “Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can’t help them, at least don’t hurt them.” —*The Dalai Lama*
  - “The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.” —*Nelson Henderson*
  - “Life is meant to be fun, and joyous and fulfilling. May each of yours be that.” —*Jim Henson*
  - “Every moment of your life is infinitely creative and the universe is endlessly bountiful. Just put forth a clear enough request, and everything your heart desires must come to you.” —*Mahatma Gandhi*
- Read today’s text: Colossians 3:12-14 and point out the phrase in verse 14, “above all.”
  - As Christians, our meaning in life is found in living for the purpose that God created us for. Thankfully, Scripture is very clear what that should be.

### OUTLINE:

#### 1. LEARNING FROM JESUS

- a. At the beginning of Jesus’s earthly ministry, He met Satan face to face. Read Luke 4:1-2.
  - i. The 1<sup>st</sup> temptation: Use His divine power to provide pleasure (vs. 3-4).
  - ii. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Temptation: Bow to Satan for Power & wealth (vs. 5-8).
  - iii. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Temptation: Presume upon God; abdicate personal responsibility (vs. 9-12).
- b. As Jesus rejected each temptation, He was essentially saying to Satan, “I will not live for pleasure, power or wealth, nor will I surrender responsibility for my life to others.”
- c. In Matthew 20:28, we see that Jesus was also focused on others.
- d. In these texts we see that Jesus was crystal clear regarding the unifying principle that would guide His earthly life: *Obedience to the Father & love for all people*.
- e. Compare how this relates to our text in Colossians 3:14.

#### 2. LIVING IN THE WORLD

- a. Even though we are living over 2000 years later, the temptations have not changed. Satan is still circulating the same ideas that challenge the principle that guided the life of Jesus.
- b. **Put Yourself-First:** the belief that *fulfillment is found in direct pursuit of one’s own happiness*. This is a “me first” philosophy. “What’s in it for me?” “It’s all about me.”

- c. **Put Experience First:** the belief that *fulfillment is found in the experiences of life*. This is the “YOLO” philosophy (You Only Live Once). See it all, do it all, feel it all!
  - d. **Put Pleasure First:** The belief that fulfillment is found in life’s pleasures. These people confuse good times with a good life. Think of the hedonist, the party life, or even something that seems innocent like kids’ sports, traveling, hobbies – all that keep us from God’s best.
  - e. **Put Freedom First:** The belief that *total autonomy and personal freedom will bring fulfillment*. This is the principle of self-expression.
  - f. **Put success first:** The belief that fulfillment is found in money, achievement, position, winning, etc.
  - g. Review these points and ask: What do all these temptations have in common?
    - i. Answer: They each put self-first, and God and others last.
    - ii. Can you think of a Bible character/book of the Bible that refutes this theory? Solomon and Ecclesiastes!
3. LIVING ALIGNED WITH JESUS
- a. We have seen the life that Jesus lived. A life driven by obedience to God and love toward others.
    - i. Jesus was the most admired and most influential figure in history.
    - ii. Jesus did none of the things associated with greatness today: position, riches, achievements, etc.
    - iii. His life principle was love. Read John 10:11. His life was all about others.
  - b. Think about the teachings of Jesus.
    - i. Six Times: “Whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospels shall find it.”
    - ii. John 12:24 — “Except a seed fall into the ground & die, it abideth alone, but if it die it brings forth much fruit” (a productive life).
  - c. How much does your life principle align with the life principle of Jesus?
    - i. ILL: The preschool song, “JOY.”
    - ii. The secret to a joyful life is putting Jesus first, Yourself last, and Others in between.
    - iii. When our joy is missing, things are out of order.

APPLICATION:

- How do we daily keep these priorities in the right order for our lives?
- Talk specifically about your class: If we were following the example of Jesus, what would our class look like on Sunday morning?