

How to Have the Good Life

“For he that will love life, and see good days.”

I Peter 3:10

Introduction:

1. Our text, I Peter 3:10-12, which is only part of I Peter 3:8-14, is taken from David in Psalm 34:12-16, which is only a part of Psalm 34:4-20. Read them both and see the offer of a good life to the righteous.
2. This message is a warning. Take it lightly at your own certain peril in the future (Proverbs 8:32-36).
3. Life can be good. But there is in all men a great propensity to destruction by rebellion and slothfulness.

I. Why So Many Problems?

- A. Man has many problems that are clearly a result of gross ignorance and sinful rebellion.
 1. Our nation is declining rapidly just like the other great nations deteriorated.
 2. Marital, domestic, financial, professional, and relational problems are Legion.
 3. Man reacts as the intelligent animal he is with drugs, drunkenness, sensitivity sessions, bitterness, violence, support groups, psychological counseling, etc.
 4. It is discouraging and even sickening to see the pain caused by sin problems.
 5. But we do not truly care about “man,” for we are concerned about God’s saints.
 6. I am particularly distressed by the marital and family problems of Christians.
- B. God described everything in Eden as “very good” (Genesis 1:31). What happened?
 1. A perfect marriage in a perfect world with eternal life was not good enough, as Satan seduced our first mother into thinking she could improve on God’s word, and her husband forfeited his leadership and followed her to keep her happy.
 2. And so it is today, women think themselves wise with much truth-less learning, and their weak husbands abdicate their leadership and follow like puppies.
 3. As the wise man preaches, God made man upright with glorious potential and perfect bliss, but he has sought out many inventions to find happiness (Ec 7:29).
- C. Most problems in life, if not all, have their root in a spiritual problem with God.
 1. There are two aspects to this problem, yet the two are inseparably connected – men do not seek God with all their heart, and they refuse to obey His precepts.
 2. And this spiritual problem exists for saints when they compromise obedience.
 3. It is not that there are no solutions, it is rather that most will not use them; it is not that we do not know enough, it is rather that we will not do what we know.
 4. There is no substitute for taking God’s Word, all of it, and running with it, now!
 5. The greatest slogan in the world at this time is “Just Do It.” This simple and dogmatic approach to bodily exercise puts most Christians to shame, who have received the precious truth of God, but linger in disobedience and indecision.

II. What Is the Answer?

- A. *First*, the LORD created us for Himself and His own pleasure (Prov 16:4; Rev 4:11).
 1. He commands us to love Him with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength.
 2. He will not accept competitors or distractions or compromises, as Lord of all.
 3. He is a jealous God, and His name is Jealous. Don’t cheat Him (Exodus 34:14).
 4. He told Eli, them that honor me – I will honor, and vice versa (I Samuel 2:30).
 5. Therefore, He must be the end of all we think, say, do, plan, desire, and value.

- B. Second, the LORD gave laws governing our lives and our relationships, and we lose if we think we can try a different or modified approach and succeed (Psalm 119:128, 113).
1. Do you believe the law of gravity? His laws of wisdom are even more sure.
 2. Learning and keeping Solomon's wisdom is life, peace, and favour (Prov 3:1-4).
 3. Wisdom – knowledge of God and His laws – brings life or death (Prov 8:32-36).
 4. The Lord can overthrow these laws, if we disobey elsewhere, as Israel learned when they worked hard at farming but neglected His house (Haggai 1:2-11).
 5. And the Lord can exceed these laws, if we seek Him fervently (I Sam 16:6-13).
- C. Third, the LORD will not be mocked, and it is folly to deceive ourselves (Gal 6:7).
1. He has guaranteed that your every sin will find you out (Numbers 32:23).
 2. There is no escape – the way of transgressors is hard (Pr 13:15; 4:19; Ps 36:1-2).
 3. Thorns are a nasty, irritating, harsh thing, so don't be froward (Pr 15:19; 22:5).
 4. This is so true Paul reasoned of the folly of unconverted lifestyles (Rom 6:21).
 5. How much do you believe God? Are you better than Eve and Adam in Eden?
- D. Consider a few examples of His laws leading to blessing and prosperity or vice versa.
1. Death and hell, figuratively, are by sparing the rod (Pr 23:13-14; 29:15; 19:18).
 2. Happiness and joy are by the route of godly training (Prov 29:17; 10:1; 15:20).
 3. Honoring the office of parent is a simple rule for the good life (Ephesians 6:2-3).
 4. Zealous diligence and time urgency at work beats safe pacing (Pro 10:4; 12:24).
 5. Saving a portion of your labor will bless you in days to come (Pro 6:6-8; 30:25).
 6. Speculating for an easier way to make money will bring ruin (Pro 14:23; 28:19).
 7. Why does the man who says he can't afford to give always end up poorer than the man who says he can't afford not to give (Prov 3:9-10; Mal 3:7-12)? Or in other words, how does the man who gives money away get rich and the man who keeps his money gets poor (Prov 11:24; Luke 6:38)?
 8. Generosity comes back in a way you cannot understand naturally (Pr 11:24-26).
 9. Friends come by friendliness, and this is surer than gravity (Prov 18:24; 22:11).
 10. Cherishing and nourishing your wife is loving yourself, husbands (Eph 5:25-33).
 11. A woman will be praised – not for beauty or favor – but fearing God (Pr 31:30).
 12. Letting God's kingdom take second place in your life brings pain (Hag 1:2-11).
 13. These simple examples are to show the consequences of Bible compromise.
- E. Jesus came so we might have life, and we might have it more abundantly (John 10:10).
1. The abundant life is first spiritual – for with eternal life and His Spirit, we have within us God's Presence and the fellowship of His Son with grace and peace.
 2. The abundant life is only then natural – for by spiritual strength we can keep His laws that protect and bless our lives, families, fortunes, and plans.

III. How Can I Have It?

- A. Consider your ways and success; self-examination is good; if something is not working as it should, then there is a problem that you need to solve (Haggai 1:5-7; II Cor 13:5).
- B. Repent for sins, and repudiate and confess them to the Lord (Prov 28:13; Job 33:27).
- C. Do the first works after remembering from where you have fallen and repenting.
1. Jesus Christ is a great King, and lukewarm and weak efforts bring judgment.
 2. He absolutely curses any man bringing Him less than the very best (Mal 1:14).
 3. He absolutely demands first love, even if actions are noble and great (Re 2:1-5).
 4. He absolutely rejects lukewarm service, regardless of any thoughts (Re 3:14-20).
- D. Simplify your life to what God requires, and don't allow additions, as one of the devil's chief devices in this generation is distraction by excessive activity (Eph 5:16; Lu 21:34).

- E. Learn God's priorities, which are laid out in Proverbs and other Scriptures (Matt 6:33).
- F. Reject man's wisdom, for he has no light; it is all in Scripture (Ps 119:128; Isaiah 8:20).
- G. Make decisions by faith, rejecting fate, feelings, and/or fortune (Heb 11:6; II Cor 5:7).
- H. Choose true success rather than the world's vain and vexing measures (I Tim 6:6-10).
- F. Lose your life by choosing His way for your life; don't try to save your life (Mat 16:25).
- I. Build Godly habits by establishing godly discipline in your life to maintain (I Tim 4:7).
- J. Maximize your marriage, for it is part of a two-edged sword to cut your life with pain.
 - 1. A great marriage requires walking with the Lord (Galatians 5:22-23; Phil 4:13).
 - 2. You can only walk with God by having a great marriage (I Pet 3:7; Mal 2:13).
 - 3. Compromise on either side destroys the other; both must be done together.
- K. Honor your parents, for the parent-child relationship is also part of a two-edged sword.
 - 1. You can only walk with God by making these relationships right (Luke 1:17).
 - 2. Any child not honoring their parents is facing great trouble in life (Eph 6:2-3).
- L. Be scared, for He will not be mocked, and He will grind any man cheating Him.
- M. Don't be scared, His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matt 11:28-30; I John 5:3).

Conclusion:

- 1. Promises of blessings and reward are not Scripturally wrong, as Paul reminded children (Eph 6:2-3).
- 2. Threats of trouble and punishment are not Scripturally wrong, as Paul threatened saints (II Cor 5:11).
- 3. A blessed life is peace and joy with God regardless of circumstances and realizing the precious fruit of righteousness, both of which are obtained by walking with God above all else and obeying His Word.
- 4. What doth hinder thee from walking with thy God and keeping all His commandments cheerfully?