

****Bumper Video –**

Good Life Title

What does “Living the good life” mean...?

Sitting in a limo sipping high dollar champagne... swimming through mountains of money like Scrooge Mc Duck.. Is that living the Good Life?

Looking at Pinterest and thinking if I could get my home to look like that... If I could finish a project like that... If I could be a good parent like the blog you follow or the article that was shared on social media.. Is that living the Good Life?

If my spouse would love me like that one scene in that movie... If I could have that emotional or physical experience...

If I could ever look like the person on the cover of that fitness magazine...

If I could ever get all this work done... If I could ever get that Job or promotion or raise...

Many people when asked what living the good life is would dream of a different life...

If I could just add something or change something... then we would be living the good life.

The good life seems elusive..

But when we get that change or obtain that object...what happens? We find something else new to change or to obtain... We realize that although we got what we wanted, it's still not the Good Life... It's a never ending cycle... it's like the good life is right in front of you but you are on a treadmill running to catch it.

SHOW OF HANDS – Have you ever stopped and thought “there has got to be more than life than this”?

Built inside of us is this drive for better... we know that a better life is out there for us... we read the self help books, we educate ourselves in school, we apply for the job promotion, we invest our money... we believe the good life is out there but it eludes us.

We sometimes believe the myth that we aren't good enough to live the good life... We aren't smart enough... Lucky enough... If we had what someone else had then we would have the good life... We blame others... If my spouse was different, if my kids weren't like they are, if my boss weren't a jerk...

And all the while the good life seems to elude us.

Christians haven't been great at living the good life either..

Christians are often just as clueless as non-Christians as to what the Good Life is and how to live it.

John 10:10-11 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. "I am the

good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.(NIV)

The good shepherd gives his life. We believe that the Good Life can be found in Christ and the life He gives.

Good Life Good Shepherd

So what does that life look like? Jesus, the good shepherd wants to have life “in the fullest possible way.” What does that like?

Well we only have time to scratch the surface of that question today and over the next 2 weeks.

The full answer to that question is found in Jesus Christ. The fullest life possible looks exactly like Jesus. After all this Full Life, this Abundant Life is the Life the Good Shepherd gives... and He gives His own life.

And while you contemplate on what that means to the fullest degree... we are going to focus on 3 things that must be present if you are going to live the Good Life that comes from Jesus Christ.

Good Life 3 THINGS

1. Joy
2. Blessing
3. Greater things to come

The life that Jesus gives is marked with Joy.

In fact, I would ask you to check your mental picture of Jesus and make sure you see Jesus living a life filled with Joy. There is

prophecy of Him being a man of sorrows acquainted with grief... and while we believe this is true we also believe Jesus wasn't sad all the time.

People liked being around Jesus. People that didn't like being around the Pharisees loved being around Jesus. Sinners, tax collectors, drunks, sick people... they all liked being around Jesus.

Can I suggest to you that Jesus was actually fun to be around. That maybe he could laugh at jokes...

If your mental picture of Jesus doesn't ever smile you need to think again.

The Kingdom of God is marked with JOY. Joy is a defining characteristic.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,(NIV)

Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.(NIV)

When you find this Kingdom you will joyfully give up anything, sell everything to be in this Kingdom.

Christianity has long been presented as this... If you want to come into this Kingdom... if you don't want God to smash you with His

anger and fury... you need to with much sadness sell everything you have... You need to feel and act like unhappy, uncool, loser.

Read it again Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.(NIV)

Coming into God's Kingdom is Joyful. Living in God's Kingdom is Joyful. Not fearful or depressing...

It's ok to get so happy that you shout about it.

Psalm 118:15 Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: "The LORD's right hand has done mighty things!(NIV)

Psalm 100:1-5 Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.(NIV)

Christians don't always live this out. The world is way better at living this out than we are.

In this world when good things happens no one is embarrassed to shout about it. Have you ever seen someone win the lottery in a calm quite way? No Never! The world understands that Joy gets a

little loud sometimes. Joy dances sometimes. Joy laughs and has a good time. The world knows this...

The Church of Jesus ought to know this! The greatest thing that could ever happen to you has in fact happened to you. You have been accepted in the Kingdom of Heaven. It's ok to get happy about that. It's ok to grin ear to ear. It's ok to laugh, shout, lift your hands and sing!

Luke 15:10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."(NIV)

**When was the last time you just got happy thinking about Jesus?
That is living the Good Life.**

When was the last time you truly celebrated when something good happened in your life?

Many times, the reason we aren't happy is not because good things aren't happening, it's not because good things aren't present... The reason we aren't happy is that we have stopped celebrating the good life we have been given.

Maybe we have bought into the idea that we need the next thing, we need more money, we need to add something to our life to have the Good Life... If that's the case you will never be happy with what you have and you will never stop to celebrate.

When was the last time you truly celebrated when something good happened in your life?

When was the last time you truly celebrated when something good happened in someone else's life?

Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.(NIV)

Maybe you aren't happy because you never celebrate anything... You have the good life but not really LIVING it.

If you aren't celebrating the good I bet you that you celebrating the bad... You are focusing and magnifying the bad... This is robbing you of Joy.

That is not the Life the Good Shepherd gave you. There should be celebrations in your life.

[BRICKS]

You might be saying "But it's hard to be happy when I am carrying this **Burden.**"

Let's talk about the burdens of life and one of the main things that robs us of happiness.

A Burden is a heavy load that you need to carry. We carry many burdens in life... to make this simple to understand I will simplify them down to 2 burdens and symbolize them with these bricks.

#1 Provision #2 Relationships

Each of us carry these 2 burdens.

Provision burdens represent all of the things you need to do... You need to go to work, make money, do things, make dinner, clean the house, maintain your automobile, buying groceries... These are actions you have to do...

Relationship burdens represent all of the interconnected relationships you need to maintain. This is often just as much work as your day job and often more important. This could be making and keeping promises, having open communication, admitting your mistakes and asking forgiveness, or simply spending time.

You are carrying these 2 bricks right now... and so are people in your life. **{Cue Sarah}**

It's still possible to be Happy and joyful with these burdens. In fact aspects of these burdens bring us great joy...

But if our priorities start to get out of order then these burdens and cares can become destructive.

In the parable of the seed Jesus says one of the word of God fell upon thorny ground and the "CARES OF THE WORLD" choked the word and kept it from growing. These burdens, these cares can hurt your relationship with God.

They can also damage your other relationships and steal joy from the people you care about.

Notice that my wife, Sarah and I are both carrying 2 bricks. We each have the responsibilities of provision & relationship. BUT HERE IS WHAT HAPPENS WITH BURDENS... Sometimes they get too heavy and you need some help.

So we ask someone else to help bear our burden. And this is scriptural – Galatians 6:2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.(NIV)

So I'm busy at work so I need to really concentrate on this provisions brick and I tell my wife I'm going to be late until I get this project done... I will be less available to her and the children... My presence & help in the home will be less. I ASK MY WIFE TO BEAR THIS BURDEN.

She takes this brick burden and allows me to focus needed time and energy on this other burden.

This is scriptural, but here is what often happens that isn't scriptural. WE NEVER TAKE THE BURDEN BRICK BACK.

Even after the project at work is finished... we may not take back our burden.

We are to share each other's burden, but we aren't meant to share that burden FOREVER.

The longer Sarah has to bear my burden the more it wears on her... In the end this can end up stealing Joy and happiness from Sarah. She is bearing burdens she was not meant to carry forever.

We do this to each other...

We do it to spouses...

We do it to our kids...

We do it to our friends...

It steals Joy.

But it doesn't just steal their joy. It doesn't just steal Sarah's joy... It steals my joy!

I was meant to bear these burdens. And there is joy to be found in these burdens. There is happiness in carrying these responsibilities.

On the Job and in the Home, there is happiness to be found even in burdens.

Stop resenting your responsibilities.

Stop pushing all your burdens onto others... They weren't meant to carry them and it can take away their joy.

INSTEAD... 1Peter 5:7 Cast all your Cares/Anxiety/Burden on him because he cares for you.

God wants you to be Happy

I've heard it preached in church before "God doesn't want you to be happy... he wants you to be saved.." And while I understood that they meant to say being saved is more important than being happy, I have to say God wants you to be Saved & Happy!

Psalm 51:12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.(NIV)

If you are saved but not full of Joy right now then you should make Psalm 51:12 your prayer. Restore the Joy of your salvation God!

The Good life is marked with Joy!

...But what about **Sorrow**?

Sorrow is scriptural. In fact some sorrow comes from God – Like 2 Cor 7:10

Here are 2 things I want you to know about sorrow.

Sorrow leads

Sorrow can you lead to better or to worse, toward God or away from God.

2 Corinthians 7:10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.(NIV)

Godly sorrow brings you.. leads you.. to repentance...

Sorrow will lead you somewhere... where is sorrow leading you? To better or worse?

Sorrow is temporary

You shouldn't be continually sad. If you have been sad so long you have trouble remembering when you were last happy – You are not living the good life!

Psalm 30:5 ...weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

There might be some times of sadness. There are sad things that can happen in this broken world... But **Sorrow is temporary**

Even in those times when you are sad you need to know “Joy is coming...” It is in it's way. You were not meant to be sad forever – The Joy of the Lord, Your strength, is on its way. Get ready!

And while sorrow is temporary... But scripture tells us of an Everlasting Joy...

Isaiah 35:10 and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.(NIV)

Matthew 25:21 "His master replied, `Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'(NIV)

MUSICIAN

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Are you living the good life? **Good Life Good Shepherd**

Are you happy right now? What if you could be happy again?

I believe with everything in me that you can be happy again.

We do 3 things every time we come to Redemption Church. We are about to do the 3rd thing and open these altars for a time for you to talk to God.

When you come and talk to God today.. I'm telling you have faith that God will do something in your life... That God will come and bring His Joy...

It is going to happen... not because of you... not because of the sermon... but because God wants you to have Joy.