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MINISTRIES

“The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below.”

Your Best Life Later

Many have heard of the popular book “Your Best Life Now” written by Joel Osteen. The book is all about achieving your most successful and happy life right now. But this attitude is the epitome of a faith out of alignment with what God intended. It is evidence that the focus is off.

The aim of our life is not to have our best life now, nor is our focus to be about ourselves. In fact, the Bible teaches us the exact opposite. Our focus is not to be about us, but about loving God and loving others, which ultimately brings glory to God. Also, our best life is not to be now. It can't be. Our best life occurs following the resurrection into eternal life. This is the hope we have and what we have to look forward to.

Most of us already know this, but sometimes it is easy to get caught up in the self-focused teaching that is so popular now. It draws people in great numbers to hear something that will make them feel good about themselves.

The world is changing at lightning speed and not for the better. Most of us know why. It is not a surprise. We were told such things in advance.

Matthew 24:12

[And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.](#)

Perhaps your focus needs realignment. We would submit that we all need a perspective adjustment from time to time. For the remainder of this teaching, we would like to take some time to offer some perspective related to all of this.

What does it mean to love God and love others? Why is that important? How does that differ from today's common worldview? Should we be seeking our best life now, or seeking our best life later? And, how do these things relate?

Loving God and Loving Others

King Solomon was declared to be a man of great wisdom, and God blessed him. Yet, he also made a lot of mistakes in his life. If there is anyone who displayed a self-centered attitude for a good portion of his life, Solomon certainly takes the cake.

Ecclesiastes 2:10

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.

1 Kings 11:1-3

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, “You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart.

1 Kings 11:8-9

And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods. And the Lord [YHWH] was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the Lord [YHWH], the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice

We reap what we sow. Solomon held nothing back and lived his life to the full, enjoying all the world had to offer. But his heart grew cold toward YHWH. He ended up worshipping other gods, and Solomon’s fate may have been completely different if he did not truly repent later in life. Not only did he write about his mistakes in detail—fortunately for our benefit—but he also personally learned a lot from them. He did summarize what he thought of his life of excess and his “self-centered” pursuits.

Ecclesiastes 1:2

Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.

Ecclesiastes 1:14

I have seen everything that is done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and a striving after wind.

After experiencing firsthand the pointlessness of a life devoted to self and pleasure, Solomon concluded:

Ecclesiastes 12:13

The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

After years of focusing on only himself and his desires, Solomon eventually realized the error of his ways. Through all of his experiences, he came to the conclusion that the whole point of his existence—and in fact, every person’s existence—is to fear God and keep his commandments.

That conclusion is the exact opposite of how Solomon had been living. Solomon had been living a life that was all about him, to satisfy every fleshly desire. Yet, to keep the commandments of God means to live a life that is centered on loving God and loving others. As our Messiah taught us:

Matthew 22:36-40

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

The commandments to love God (Deuteronomy 6:4) and love others (Leviticus 19:18) are obviously not the only commandments found in the Bible. That was not our Messiah’s point. The point being made is that all commandments in the Bible are related in some way to loving God and/or loving others. As Paul wrote, love is the fulfillment of the law (Romans 13:10).

In living out our lives according to God’s intended purpose, by loving God and loving others, we are giving all glory to him. That is our purpose, and the whole duty of man.

How exactly are we to love God and love others? Well, that is what all of the commandments in the Bible detail out for us.

Your Best Life Later

Solomon, for some time, focused only on what he could get out of this life. Ultimately, however, he realized that this life is really pointless without God. What does that mean?

If you are an atheist, living your best life now does not matter, at least in the long run. In fact, your life does not matter at all in such a worldview. In such a worldview, the whole point of existing is simply to not exist, and that is the same fate and purpose of everyone and everything around you—a fate of non-existence rooted in no real purpose. Solomon realized that in the end, that he would die. Whatever he did do or didn’t do, without God, nothing really mattered in the end. It was all worthless.

In the biblical faith, whether our lives are good or bad, ultimately, it does not matter. However, this is the case for a completely different and more profound reason than for the atheist. In the biblical faith, we realize that this world is broken, even if we have everything the world offers. Just as Solomon at one time had everything he thought he wanted, he realized that it is all trivial compared to the eternal perfection and grand purpose we will experience following the resurrection in the world to come.

1 Thessalonians 4:13

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

John 5:28-29

Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

This is not to say that YHWH won’t bless us in this life, nor are we to have an expectation that our lives will be a miserable existence. Sometimes, however, it is simply a good reminder, especially should things not be perceived as going well for us, that this now is not our forever. Our focus should be on giving glory to God, despite any of the problems we face.

Many today see no further than the horizons of this world. To correct our shortsightedness, God prescribes a vision correction that allows us to look through the lens of eternity. Suddenly we realize this

present life is but a brief window of opportunity to invest in what will last for eternity.

Not only will an eternal perspective change our actions, it will also change our attitudes. Living with eternity in mind will infuse us with a joy and purpose that can sustain us in daily life, even as we face hard things.

2 Corinthians 4:18

as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

This life is short compared to eternity. Do we want our best life to be this life, which is less than a nanosecond as compared to the scope of eternity?

Paul Washer once preached:

These Olympians, how majestic they are, but only for a moment. They start training when they are four and five years old; they never do anything but train until they're twenty-two, they run a nine second race for a medal they hang up and that's it...Oh, this life is a vapor.

-Paul Washer, *Live for Eternity, I'll Be Honest: Will You?* www.illbehonest.com

But we have so much more to look forward to than this life. For all intents and purposes, our best life is later.

1 Corinthians 15:52-55

in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:

“Death is swallowed up in victory.”

“O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

Until that day, regardless of what life may throw at us, may we focus on loving God and loving others, as we all wait for the resurrection to come.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries

WEBSITE: www.TestEverything.net & www.ExaminatoTodo.net

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