

Series: Ultimate Living

Message Title: Ultimate Living (part 1)

Message & Scripture Highlights:

Have a few people read the following scriptures:

3 John 2

Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper in every way and [that your body] may keep well, even as your soul keeps well *and* prospers.

Proverbs 1:32

For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

Proverbs 14:12

There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death.

Discussion Part 1:

Discuss among yourselves the word ‘prosper’. Are you offended by it? Has the present day culture so hijacked the term that it’s hard to receive 3 John 2? Would Satan want you to have the life of 3 John 2. or not? Would it seem plausible that he might want to offend you, even deceive you into resisting, refusing the outcome of 3 John 2? Now pair these thoughts with the principals of Proverbs 1:32 & 14:12.

S.Marshall thoughts:

I’m always amazed at the deep rooted resistance many Christians have to the outcome of 3 John 2, and yet they’ll tell you they believe in God’s Word. Yes, prosperity in select areas of life has made of fool of humanity for thousands of years. There’s the strong man who can’t control his anger. What about the rich kid who never learns to work, or value the little things? Then there’s the super talented person with no character or morals. Prosperity does ruin fools, but that doesn’t make it bad. People drown in water, but that still doesn’t change the fact we need it for life. People even book vacations by bodies of water because they enjoy the view and activities.

Have someone read:

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans and thoughts that I have for you,’ says the Lord, ‘thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.

Romans 4:16

Therefore, [inheriting] the promise depends entirely on faith, in order that it may be given as an act of grace, so that the promise will be [legally] guaranteed to all the descendants [of Abraham]—not only for those who keep the Law, but also for those who share the faith of Abraham, who is the [spiritual] father of us all.

Discussion Part 2:

If a good person of upstanding character and great influence made you a promise, would you have any expectations? How much more should you honor God by trusting in His Word? If He promises you His plans, His goodness and welfare, wouldn't you consider that the ultimate living by any standard?

Stephen Marshall Thoughts:

It was challenging for me to settle on the title for this series. Jesus came to give us life and give to us more abundantly (John 10:10), but the enemy has worked his lies to deceive people into denying that abundant life. Oh not overtly, but by simply taking difficult circumstances in life and accepting it as God's will to cope. You not having God's 'Ultimate Living' does not mean that He didn't provide it for you. Has someone ever given you a gift card you forgot to use? Have you ever had a supply of something needed that you forgot about? Have you ever had a letter, text, voicemail from someone who was praying for you and you didn't even know they cared? There's so much we don't know. Get ready to discover the Ultimate Living that God was planting in your future thousands of years ago. After all, He is God!

Life Application:

Breathe in and breathe out. Do it a few times. Now breathe in and hold it for as long as you can. Who held their breath for over a minute? If all of life responds to cycles like the circular ventilation your lungs perform, this week apply this principal to an area of your life that's stuck, or dying, or hurting. For example, if you're discouraged in your heart, give encouragement out to a few choice people with an expectation that it will 'breathe' back into your heart from God's supply. Do this.

Now Pray The Word:

Get someone (or a few people) to lead out in prayer based on the Truth talked about. Pray according to the above scriptures:

“Precious Father God show us Your glory! Cause Your face to shine upon us and with Your favor we can truly be experience Ultimate Living. You wish for us to prosper, be in good health, even as our souls prosper. We agree with Your will. We say “yes” to Your great plans for us! Yes Lord!! ...” (Continue to pray specifically for one another's needs ...)