

Exploring & Living Your Real Life

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2,3 Larry: Uk & Bulg Fundraiser. Tanzania. Gen Hope.
- B. Slide4 Sun Night of Prayer, next Sun.
- C. Slide5 Brookdale Senior Living. Jim Laffin. 19 yrs. Sun 2-3pm. Fill out *Min App* in info Booth.
- D. Prayer: *Lord, our love for U springs from **Your own excellence**, rather than from our need of U.*

II. Slide6 Intro: Finding & Exploring Your Real Life

- A. Slide7 Jonathan Edwards's, *The Religious Affections*, is considered one of the great classics of evangelical literature. (You can access online for free) [think *affections* = *how affect you*. *What you eat can affect you*]
 1. This was all because of the **revivals** of the 1730s-40s, aka the *First Great Awakening*, when many people claimed their hearts had been **profoundly stirred by God**. This colonial pastor (from *New England...Patriots fan I'm sure*) took on the task of sorting out what place *religious affections*, have in the Christian life.
 - a) He enumerates 12 factors that are indicative of true conversion & regeneration. Chief among these last factors *is the fruit of holy living - or Christian practice carried out in the believer's life*. [That's what Paul talks to the Col ch about here]
- B. If you been **raised to new life** (2:12) what are the *implications* of that life?
- C. So we now move from **doctrine to personal application**, as Truth is something to *live* as well as to *learn*.
 1. All that Paul has said about **Christ**, & our **relationship** to Him, **our lives should be different!** **How** are our lives made different?
 2. **In Our Minds** (1-4). **In Our Bodies** (5-7). **In Our Attitudes** (8-11).
- D. Slide8 Msg, vs.1-3 *So if you're serious about living this new resurrection life with Christ, act like it. Pursue the things over which Christ presides. Don't shuffle along, eyes to the ground, absorbed with the things right in front of you. Look up, and be alert to what is going on around Christ - that's where the action is. See things from **his** perspective. Your old life is dead. **Your new life, which is your real life** - even though invisible to spectators - is with Christ in God. **He is your life**.* [not a Joel Olsteen book, *Your Best Life Now*]

III. Slide9 YOUR REAL LIFE (1-11)

A. Slide10 IN OUR MINDS (1-4)

B. Spiritual maturity begins in the **mind**, where our **priorities & perspectives** are formed.

C. Slide11a Co-Resurrected (1)

D. **If** we've **died** to our *old life, old ways, & old self*; **&** have been **raised** to our *new life, new way, new purpose*; **then** the new life should have the focus of our attention.

1. Slide11b We must **Seek & Set**.

2. Lightfoot put it, **You must not only seek heaven; you must also think heaven.**

E. If your focus is on things **heavenly**, you will obey God in things on **earth**.

1. We belong to **the realm** where He is, **&** we must focus our hopes, desires, **&** **ambitions on that realm.**

F. (1,2) **Seek those things which are above...Set your mind on things above -**

1. **A small girl was watching her mother working among the flowers. "Mother,"** Slide11c **she said, "I know why flowers grow; they want to get out of the dirt."**

2. **What is the mysterious force which causes a sprouting seed to grow up instead of down?**

3. Slide11b It's obviously **the sunlight above** which **attracts** the plant to itself.

a) **Plants always seek the sunlight** (eg: **house plants** turn & bend to reach the light from the window. **Sunflowers** trace the sun's path East to West. **Dandelions** open only on sunny days, **but** remain closed on dark days) **It's the power of the sun.**

b) As a **plant**, **so are we** to **seek those things which are above** (*be attracted to...*).

4. Slide12 **The sun** is 93 million miles away from a **flower** on earth, **yet the sun's life is in the flower.** *Oswald Chambers*

G. (3) **Hidden** - The idea of life being hidden in God suggests **3 thoughts**:¹

1. Hidden in **Secrecy**. Hidden for **Safety**. Hidden in **Security**.

2. We talk as if **living a sanctified life** were the most **uncertain & insecure thing we could do**. **Yet** it is the most **secure** thing possible, **because** it has Almighty God **in & behind** it.

¹ Linguistic Key to the Greek NT; pg.578

- a) The most **dangerous & unsure** thing is to *try to live w/o God*.²
- H. **Slide13 (4) Christ who is our life** - He is the **source** of our life, the **substance**, **sustenance**, & **solace** of our life.
1. **Jesus is not peripheral** to life; **He is life**. He **imparts** God's life. He is the **center** around which life should be **oriented**.
 2. Robert Murray M'Cheyne used to say, *For every look you take at your sinful self, take ten looks at Christ*. [learn this!]
 3. People are **not changed** by imposing *legalistic restrictions* on what they eat or drink (2:16). They are **changed** by *the power of Christ*.
- I. **Slide14 IN OUR BODIES (5-7)**
- J. **First** we saw spiritual maturity began in the **mind**, where our **priorities & perspectives** are formed. **Now**, Paul moves from the **mind** to the **body**.
1. **And he demands its mortification & nothing less!**
- K. (5) **Put to death** - mortify, or reckon as dead.
1. **If you want to grow in Christ you must** take God's view concerning **immoral practices & put them to death**.
 2. Death to self in order that sin might be rendered ineffective in the believers life
- L. **Put to death you members** - according to the Rabbis, *there are as many commandments & restraints in the law, as the body has members*. (S. Schweizer; LKGNT)
- M. **Slide15 Suckers** on fruit trees must be constantly **pruned off** if there's to be **fruit** (grow from base)
1. **Thus the same tree may bring forth 2 kinds** of fruit, **wild & tame**.
 2. The **more** the tree produces of one kind, the **less** there will be of the other.
 3. **We too are trees**. By nature we are **wild**, due to our birth from father **Adam**.
 4. **When we are born of the Spirit**, a bud-graft of the divine life is introduced **within us**. This enables us to produce the **fruit of the Spirit**.
 5. The **old nature** is still there, & if left **without pruning** will stunt the new growth & render it fruitless.
- a) This is the reason for **the battle** in the Christian life (**both natures in same body/plant**).

² My Utmost for His Highest; Dec.24

b) The **secret of victory** is getting rid of the suckers...i.e. the *works of the flesh*.

N. **Slide16 IN OUR ATTITUDES** (8-11)

O. **First** we saw spiritual maturity began in the **mind**, where our **priorities & perspectives** are formed. **Second**, Paul dealt with the death of the members of our **body**. **Now**, he addresses our **attitudes**.

1. Like **clothes**, some **attitudes** belong to the wardrobe of the old-self (*anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language, lying*).

a) These vices all relate to *dysfunction among the community of believers*.
Believers must no longer participate in these actions.

P. Paul says, toss those old rags **out** because, when God united us with Christ, **He updated our style**. [gav us a new label. *Custom made by the creator*. Inspected by #1. The Master Inspector]

Q. **He has given us new clothes to wear** (see vs.12,13).

R. **Like Lazarus** (Jn.11:44) you must get rid of the **grave-clothes** that belong to the old life.

1. Put off the **old sins** that bound you. *Christ has set you free*.

2. God wants you to wear the **grace-clothes**, not the **grave-clothes**.

S. **Slide17** (11) **Christ is all & in all** - in all His fullness, in each believer, in the categories just listed.

1. He is **everything** to us in life's **disappointments**, in **sickness, trial & trouble**.
He is in every time of **temptation & most of all...in the hour of death**.

2. He is both **loving & almighty**.

3. His is **love to the utmost**. *Yes, Christ is ALL*.

T. **Christ is all and in all** - The standard categories of race and social status that normally divide people do not apply to those who are in Christ, there is equality.

1. This does not mean that Christians cease to have ethnic and social identities; **rather**, it means that people are not excluded from new life in Christ because of such distinctions. **Moreover, these distinctions must not cause divisions in the community of believers**.

2. **All believers are defined by Christ and are included in Christ**.

IV. Slide18 WEAR LOVE (12-17)

- A. What is the identifying mark of a **Hindu**? (Bindi/u; a drop/dot. Forehead decoration. Forehead is the exit point for *kundalini energy*. Thus wear Bindi to help **retain energy & strengthen concentration** & protect from demons & bad luck)
 What is the identifying mark of a **Punjabi/Sikh religion**? (Turban)
 What is the identifying mark of a **Jew**? (yarmulke/kippah)
 What is the identifying mark of a **Mormon**? (wh/Shirt, tie, name badge, 1st name *elder*)
 What is the identifying mark of a **JW**? (Watch Tower/Awake magazines)
 What is the identifying mark of a **Christian**? (wears a cross? Christian Tee shirt?)
 What is the identifying mark of a **Genuine Believer**? (*Love*)
- B. **Not only** is the believer to **put off** the evils of the old life(vs.8,9) **but** he is to **put on** the graces of the new life.
1. Believers have advertised to the world what we *don't do, don't see, don't read, don't say*. Maybe now we show them what we've **put on**? What we **do**.
- C. Slide19a **OUR POSITION** (12a)
- D. These **3 descriptions** tell of what the Christian **is** in the sight of God.
- E. **Elect**, chosen of God. **And Holy**, consecrated for God. **And Loved**, by God.
1. We belong to His **redeemed community** because of **His saving initiative**.
 - a) So we must be clothed with a **new kind of life**. *His kind of life*.
- F. Slide19b **OUR PRINCIPLES** (12b-14)
- G. Often **clothes** are an indication of **personality** [Hipster, surf apparel, business suit, western, mini-skirt, Muslim women's burka] so the **impression & expression** of these graces will show **whose we are & whom we serve**.
- H. **Tender mercies** - a heart of compassion. *Because with the affections right...everything else should follow*.
- I. **Kindness** - meeting the needs of others, through kind deeds.
- J. **Humility** - recognizing ones own weakness & recognizing of the power of God.
- K. **Meekness** - gentle attitude, kind acts towards others, often in the face of opposition.

- L. **Longsuffering** - a *long holding out* of the mind, **before** it gives room to **action or passion**.
- M. **Bearing with one another** - to put up with someone.
1. Every **social group** has its *set of problems*, & **the church** is no exception :)
 2. We must have **Christian graces** that enhance our relationships.
- N. **Forgiving one another** - In all matters of **complaint & blame**, this *readiness to forgive* should be shown.
- O. **Love** - *above all these things put on love*.
1. **The unbeliever** makes himself **the center** of his life; **the Christian** makes **others the center** of his life.
 2. **Slide19c Love** is the identifying mark of the genuine believer.
- P. What a wonderful picture of **Christian living** here.
- Q. **Slide19d OUR PROCESS** (15,16a)
- R. **The Peace of God rule in your hearts** (15)
1. **Rule** = peace is to be the **umpire** or **arbiter** deciding & ruling the life.
 - a) It settles the differences, especially where there is any **conflict** of **thoughts & feelings**. Under such circumstances *the peace of God* is to decide.
 - b) It stresses **harmony in the group** rather than **personal** peace.
- S. **Be thankful** - (Pres. tense) a continual action pointing to a habit of life. *Habitually Thankful*.
- T. **The Word of Christ dwell in you richly** (16)
1. **Jesus** is the **author & subject** of their contents.
 2. Jesus told the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus, **These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses & the Prophets & the Psalms concerning Me**.
 - a) *Take Him out of the bible & you take the sun out of our world, & the soul out of the body.* (William Jay, *Morning Exercises*, pg.401)
 3. **The Word** is to be **dwelling in us as in a home**.
- U. **Slide19e OUR PROGRESS** (16b,17)

- V. **Key:** Singing with **grace** *in your hearts* to the **Lord** - *Here is our deepest challenge.*
1. Speaks of our **inner life** **in-tune** w/God; **our soul's personal fellowship** w/God
 2. When we **put on love**, have the **peace of God**, & have the **Word of Christ** hidden in our lives, the result...singing w/grace in our hearts to the Lord.

W. **Do all** *in the name of the Lord Jesus* (17)

1. Now he takes it **outward**...to our **entire life**. **Everything** *is included in this.*
2. Christianity is a religion of **principles**, **not rules**, & everything is to be done to the **glory of God**. [1 Cor.10:31 **Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God**]

* **Communion:** Bread - Cup