

The Game of Life

I. Slide#1 **Announce:**

- A. Slide#1b Wed night dinners -
- B. Slide#2 Ministry opportunities: We are looking for someone to drive a couple in their 80's, who just moved to Murrieta(in Colony) to some dr. appointments, once or twice a month to Riv Kaiser.
 1. Let Linda Nielsen our church secretary know.
- C. Slide#3 Panel discussion on Video Games & HT.

II. Intro:

- A. Slide#4 Illustration: **The Game of Life** is played by a lucky turn of the wheel and a few choices you have to make along the way. The hope often along the way is to get past a Pay Day to the next. To make a few good decisions in spite of what the turn of the wheel or roll of the dice deals you. You decide whether to start off with a **career** or go to **college**. You get married. You buy a house. You have kids. If you are lucky you get a carload of them because you get paid along the way to have them! You do charitable work and make some investments. You get some good breaks all by turning a wheel. Then if you race through fast enough and collect the most money along the way you get to retire – either to Countryside Estates/the Poor house or to Millionaire Estates. *This is the game of Life.*
 1. Very often this is how **the real game of life** appears to be. It seems to start somewhere after high school graduation and you either **pick a career or go to college**.
 2. Slide#5 Let's see what **God** has to say about *the Game of Life*.
- B. Prayer:
- C. Title: *The Game of Life*
- D. Outline: **The Charge & The Choice.**

III. Slide#6 **THE CHARGE (1-10)**

- A. (2) **Return?** - Funny that, they hadn't even **got into** the land yet...let alone, be **removed** from the land...let alone, the need to be **returned** to the land.
 1. Israel enjoyed **the blessings in the land** for less than 1,000 years. They entered Canaan about 1400bc, and Babylon conquered Israel about 587bc. (813 yrs) BKC
 2. **And you return** sounds like Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; **and when you have returned to Me**, strengthen your brethren. Lk.22:31,32
 3. Don't you love that He sees the end from the beginning? He knows what you need before you need it? He's provided a way out before you got in trouble?

- B. Here Moses lets them know, they **won't** be able to fulfill the **Law**. This is **grace** introduced early.
1. **The hands might not be able** to present a victim for the altar, **The feet might not be able** to travel to the intended place of worship, **but Slide#7 The heart could travel to God**.
 2. Yes, the poor crushed, broken, contrite **heart** could go directly to God, **and God** in the depth of His compassion & tender mercy, **could** meet the **heart**, bind it up, & fill it to overflowing with the rich comfort & consolation of His love, & the full joy of His salvation. C.H.Mackintosh
- C. (4,5) No matter **how far** you've strayed, **even** if you visited the **most repulsive places**, **even still...He will gather you...He will bring you**. (He will **gather** you, **fetch** you, **multiply** you)
1. **Jonah**, how far have you been? - **Prodigal**, how far have you been?

IV. Slide#8 **THE CHOICE (11-20)**

- A. (11) **The Law** was not **incomprehensible** (too mysterious/difficult) **or inaccessible** (far off/beyond your reach).
1. **Though the Law had a heavenly origin...**God clearly revealed it to Israel so there was no need for anyone to **ascend into heaven** to get it **nor** did anyone need to **travel across an ocean** to **get it**. **Nor did Israel need a special interpreter of the Law before they could obey it**.
 2. **The Law was already written down** and Israel had been familiar with its demands in the wilderness. **So** Moses could say that the word is **very near you**.
 - a) They could **speak it (it is in your mouth)** and they **knew it (it is in your heart)**.
- B. (12-15) **The Gospel** also was not **incomprehensible** (too mysterious/difficult) **or inaccessible** (far off/beyond your reach). Look what Paul said...
1. **Read Rom.10:6-9**.
- C. **Slide#9 (15) What is God's will for my life?** We've all asked ourselves the question. **But what if you can't figure it? What if you don't recognize it?** As one said, **God's will seemed like a needle in a haystack. Hidden. Obscured by lookalikes. Outnumbered by counterfeits.** DailyBread4/6/14
1. But usually **our view of God's will** is wrong **because our view of God** is wrong.
 2. **God takes no pleasure in seeing us lost, wandering, searching**. He wants us to know His will. **He makes it clear, and He makes it simple**. He doesn't even make it multiple-choice.
 3. **He gives just 2 choices: life and good or death and evil (vs.15)**.
 - a) In case the best choice **isn't** obvious, **He even says which one to choose...Choose life**.
 - b) To **choose life** is to **choose God Himself** and **obey** His Word.
 4. **God's will for us is life. His Word** is life. And Jesus is the Word.

5. God may not give a **prescription** for *every decision*, **but** He gave us a **perfect example** to follow...**Jesus**.
6. The **right choice** may not be **easy**, **but** when **the Word** is our **guide** and **Worship** is our **goal**, God will grant us the wisdom to make life-affirming choices.

D. **Slide#10 Choose Life** (19,20)

- E. The primary word for **life** in the **OT** signifies **active existence**. The prominent idea is **movement**. Gen.7:21 **And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man.**
 1. **An expectant mother** is very much aware of the presence of life as she feels the **movement** of the unborn child within her.
- F. In the **NT** we see that there are predominately 2 words that are used.
 1. The first is **Bios** which is about life as our present earthly existence.
 2. The second is **Zoe** which speaks of a spiritual eternal life.
 - a) *It signifies a state of vitality. It is life intensive. It's life as God has it & gave to the Son to have in Himself*(Jn5:26). *It's life that we receive through His grace when we trust in Christ.*
 - b) **Bios** is life **extensive**...**Zoe** is life **intensive**.
- G. Life, as it is described in Scripture, whether **physical** or **spiritual**, is more than an abstract energizing force. It is the actual exercising of God-given ability as He designed it as part of **creation**. In Genesis 2:7 we read: **"Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."**
 1. As God's creation we have both of the **physical** and **spiritual** aspects of life. **But we know from scripture that both these dimensions of life are found *only* in relation to God.**
 - a) **Moses told them to choose life...by loving** the Lord your God, **by obeying** His voice, **and by holding fast** to Him; *for He is your life and the length of your days.*
 - b) Life is found in our relationship with God.
 - (1) John said, **In Him/Jesus was life, and the life was the Light of men.** Jn1:4
- H. People often don't choose life **because** they don't respect life.
 1. **Thus its consequences are:** Abortion, Murder, Hate, Prejudice, Violence, Abuse, Suicide, Euthanasia.
 2. All of these are **fruits** of rejecting life, **but** not the **root**. **The root** behind rejecting life is **rejecting the God** who gives it.
- I. **Slide#11 Why is it important to choose life?**
 1. Life is sacred. God creates life. God protects life. God values life.

a) **Illustration:** Have you ever done a piece of needlework, or woodworking, or ceramics for someone special to you? Or for yourself? Or what about an organization, a ministry, a campaign that you founded? *You always have a very special place in your heart for that which you had a primary role in creating, don't you?* Imagine how God feels when He creates each one of us, and then we are simply "thrown away?"

J. Life is **valuable**...no matter what condition it is in.

1. One soul is **worth** more than everything in this world
2. Every soul has a **destiny** in God (there are accidents in God)
3. Jesus reached out to those who no one else deemed **valuable**
4. God didn't **abort** us in our sin.
5. Our **value**? **The precious blood of Jesus.**
6. We are valuable to God because He **made** us and **loves** us.

K. **Illustration:** Pastor/author Max Lucado tells in his book, *The Applause of Heaven*, about a **sweater** that hangs in his closet. He says he seldom wears it -- it's too small, the sleeves are too short, the shoulders too tight, some of the buttons are missing, the thread is frizzled. **Logically**, he says, he should throw out that sweater since he has no use for it and will never wear it again. It simply takes up space in his closet. **That's what logic says.** **But love**, he reports, won't let him. Why not? **What's unusual about that sweater?**

To start with, it has no label, no tag telling you "Wash in cold water." That's because it wasn't made in a factory, produced on an assembly line as the product of a nameless employee earning a living. **Rather**, it was the creation of a devoted mother expressing her love -- his mother. **That sweater** is unique, one of a kind, irreplaceable. Each strand was chosen with care, each thread selected with affection. And so, even though that sweater has lost all of its use, it has lost none of its value. **It is valuable not because of its function, but because of its MAKER.** So is each life.

L. **Slide#12 Life is a choice:** You are here today because **God** and your parents *chose LIFE*.

1. Some of you will be tempted in **ending your own life**, as some of the bible greats.
2. **But Choose Life.**

M. **Eternal life is your choice:** God made His choice by sending Jesus Christ to die for you. **Now** You must choose **eternal life**. You must choose **Jesus**. **Choose Eternal Life.**

N. **Christians, the daily Victorious life is your choice also:** That you may **love** the Lord your God, that you may **obey** His voice, and that you may **cling** to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days.

1. Some of you will be tempted to only view life by today...looking at the micro & not macro. Don't give up...**Choose Life.**