

The Good Life | Week Two

What you _____ determines how you _____.

What you believe _____ God determines how you _____ to God.

Four Lies That Promise The “Good Life”:

1. Follow the _____.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 1:1-5

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 1:16-17

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

2. There's no such thing as _____ truth.

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

John 14:6-7

3. Follow your _____.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Jeremiah 17:9 (ESV)

(Jesus) *“For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²²adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”*

Mark 7:21-23

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Ephesians 4:22-24

In your anger do not sin.

Ephesians 4:26

4. Center yourself around _____.

- _____ - seeing your own happiness and pleasure as the most important thing in life
- _____
- _____

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹*Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²²and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.*

Matthew 4:18-22

The paradox in our culture is that the very thing that _____
the “good life” is the thing that _____ us of it.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which one of the four “good lies” have you been tempted to believe the most in your life and why do you think that is?
2. What is “absolute truth?” Several common phrases we hear today are “truth is relative” or “this is my truth.” Why is it so easy to fall into the trap of believing that everyone has their own truth?
3. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” When you hear that statement, how does it challenge your thoughts on truth?

When we buy into the lie that we are the center of our own universe and we center ourselves around ourselves, it leads to us making decisions on what we want or what we feel.

4. What are some negative impacts that can come from following our feelings? Can you give an example of how following your feelings has negatively impacted you personally?
5. Many times in our life most of us have followed our feelings, emotions, and desires in one way or another AND that has led to some level of dysfunction or brokenness for us. What are some steps we should take to find wholeness and healing?

Additional Questions For Personal Reflection:

- What are some ways you can take ownership of your feelings and emotions instead of allowing them to affect your actions?
- Take a look at what pursuits you invest a good majority of your time, energy, or money into, and reflect how much of a lasting impact those things have.
- Take some time this week to truly think about how much of your life you have spent chasing things that culture says are “good,” but may have actually kept you from what is good (best) according to God's standards. Make a list of those things and how have they stolen joy from your life?

Week Two | Weekly Reflections

Day 1 | Good Lies

Read Genesis 3:1-7

1. What is the lie that Adam and Eve listened to in Genesis 3? What was so tempting about this lie?
2. Look at Genesis 2:15-17 and contrast what God said to Adam (and by implication to Eve) with what Eve hears from the serpent in Genesis 3:1-5. In that moment, Eve chose to exchange a truth she knew for a lie. Why do you think she made the choice? In what ways do you (and all of us) do this in similar ways?

Read John 8:31-47

3. What does Jesus say we must do to know the truth? What is the result of knowing the truth?
4. Rewrite John 8:31-32 in your own words.
5. Name some times in your life when you have known a truth about God, yet avoided it or ignored it because it made you uncomfortable or because it was hard to believe?
6. What are some lies that we often hear in our culture that keep us from the life God wants us to live?
7. What are some lies that you have been telling yourself and how have they kept you from experiencing freedom? Try to look up and list truths from Scripture to combat those lies (don't be afraid to ask for help if this is new for you or you aren't sure where to begin).

Day 2 | The Truth

Read John 14:5-14

1. Rewrite John 14:6-7 in your own words.
2. According to Jesus in John 14, what are some truths about Jesus that are necessary for us to believe? Write them down.
3. Do you find it difficult or easy to trust Jesus? Why or why not?

Point of Interest:

In Jesus' day, people rejected his claims that he was the Son of God and concluded that for him to claim that he was the Son of God made him out to be a liar. If he was lying about this, nothing he said would be credible or believable. However, if he really is the Son of God, then *everything* he says matters more than we could ever imagine!

Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose, I was born and for this purpose, I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."

John 18:37

4. If Jesus is the truth, how should that shape the way we see the world around us? How does it change the way we see ourselves or others?
5. Why do you think that culture runs away from the idea of "absolute truth?" Why do you think Jesus wants our lives built on truth?

Day 3 | Good Life Taken

Read Genesis 3:14-24

1. What does God say are some of the consequences of sin?
2. Why did God have to banish Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden?

Point of Interest:

Adam and Eve were convinced that doing the very thing God told them not to do would be the thing that would bring them the “good life.” Instead, it was the thing that cost them the good life. Sin makes a promise that it can’t keep. It tricks us into believing that it can truly satisfy us, while trapping us in a cycle of continual discontentment.

3. When we read stories like this from Genesis 3:14-24, it’s easy to think we will avoid sin at all costs. Why do you think is it still so easy to fall into sin regardless of the notion that “I would never do that”?
4. Read Genesis 3:21. What does God do before he sends Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden? What is the significance of this and what event does this foreshadow?

Read 1 John 2:1-6 & 15-17

5. What do we see is happening to the world and its desires in verses 15-17?
6. Spend some time thinking about today’s reading. Sin robs us of everything God has intended for us; however, God never abandons us. How can we still find hope despite the consequences of sin?

(Jesus) *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*

John 10:10 (NASB)

...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 (ESV)

Day 4 | Jesus, Our Joy and Satisfaction

“The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

—Westminster Catechism

1. What are some things (pursuits, hobbies, interests, relationships, etc.) that are at the “center” of your life, that is, things that your life revolves around right now?
2. Do any or all of the things you identified above serve to glorify God and/or help you to enjoy God in some way? How so?
3. What do you think it means to delight yourself in the Lord?

“God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.”

—John Piper

5. Do you think that God is glorified by what you are currently satisfied in? Why or why not?
6. What are some ways that you have made yourself the center of your own universe? Why do we tend to do this and what are some of the consequences of this?
7. Are there any changes you need to make in your life so that you can find more joy and satisfaction in God?

Spend some time reflecting on the following verses:

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence, there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 16:11 (ESV)

Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Psalm 37:4 (ESV)

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.”

Hebrews 1:1-4 (ESV)

Day 5 | A Day of Reflection

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.”

Romans 7:15-20

How have you seen this cycle that Paul confesses play out in your own life?

What is your biggest struggle when it comes to “doing what you do not want to do?”

What are some action steps you can take to begin the process of overcoming the struggle with sin? Write them down along with action steps you will take to follow through (consider some form of outside accountability for the steps you identify).