

The Good Life | Week Three

Beliefs About the Good Life From the Story of the Prodigal:

- Good _____ (The _____)

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

¹³ "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything."

Luke 15:11-16

The belief - "Good stuff leads to a good life."

- Good _____ (The _____)

The belief - "Good works lead to a good life."

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!"

Luke 15:28-30

- Good _____ (The _____)

The good life begins at the end of _____.

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!’¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.”

Luke 15:17-19

Sonship is not about _____, but rather about _____.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹ *“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’*

²² *“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate.²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”*

Luke 15:20-24

The belief - “A good _____ gives good _____ and it compels me to do good _____ and be _____.”

The _____ - The Good News

- **God offers _____ through Jesus Christ.**

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
Romans 3:23*

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Romans 10:9-10

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Romans 10:13

- _____ is required for grace to be received.

Repentance means to _____.

Repentance begins with Godly _____.

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

2 Corinthians 7:10

Godly Sorrow	Worldly Sorrow
Vertical	
	Self Focused
Spiritual	
	Demanding
Active	
	Hopeless
Grateful	
	Temporary
Humble	

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1-2

“...but he answered his father, ‘Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹And he said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost and is found.’”

Luke 15:29-32 (ESV)

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the beliefs about the good life that we learned from the story of the prodigal son, do you find yourself living out or believing most in your life? Why do you think this is?
2. What are some ways you have followed your own desires or relied on yourself versus following and relying on God?
3. Think about this statement, “The good life begins at the end of me.” What do you think this means? Why do you think this is true?
4. When Carl talked about “godly sorrow” versus “worldly sorrow,” what stood out to you most? Take a look at the chart together in your booklets.

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

2 Corinthians 7:10

5. Share an example of how have you seen worldly sorrow (i.e., not wanting to get caught or not wanting to face the consequences of your actions) lead to more trouble and frustration in your life.
6. How have you seen godly sorrow (i.e., deep remorse for your sin and disobedience) lead to a healthier spiritual walk?
7. When you think about the grace of God, it truly is scandalous and illogical. As you consider the grace that God, your perfect Father, has shown to you, how are you compelled to respond?

Additional Challenge For Personal Reflection:

Take some time this week to focus on the grace of God in your life. Reflect back on times that God protected you or helped bring you through something, even if you didn't realize it was God at the time.

Week Three | Weekly Reflections

Day 1 | Good Isn't Good Enough

Read Luke 15:11-32

1. What kind of message does it send when the younger son asks his father for his inheritance early?
2. What did the younger son think would bring him happiness? What actually happened?

Read Matthew 6:19-21

3. How does the accumulation of more stuff end up leaving our souls more empty than when we started? What should we be trying to store up instead?
4. Why was the older son in Jesus' story angry with his father? Do you feel like his anger is understandable? Why or why not?
5. Have you ever felt like you could change how much God loved you by how hard you worked to please him? How did this affect your relationship with God...positively or negatively?

Point of interest:

The truth is, we all find ourselves in one of characters in the parable of the prodigal son. Either we are the prodigal son who is broken and ashamed, and in need of God's grace to piece us back together. Or we are the older brother and we think that our "good works" have earned us some sort of favor in the Father's (God's) eyes. Here are two realities that we all have to face: 1) To the broken God says, "You can be made beautiful through God's grace." To the beautiful, God says, "You are broken, and it is only through God's grace that you can be made beautiful."

6. Which one of the brothers do you most identify with in the parable of the prodigal son and why?

Reflect on the following verse today:

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
Romans 3:23

Day 2 | Good Grace

Read Luke 15:20-24

1. How does the father respond to the prodigal son returning home?

Point of Interest:

When the father sees his son returning, he runs after him. In order to run after his son, he would have had to lift his robe above his knees, exposing his legs. As a man of stature in ancient middle eastern culture, he would have essentially dishonored himself by running after his son. However, because of the father's great love for his son and joy in his return, had to embrace his son. This is the same way that God pursues every one of us.

2. Do you think that the son deserved the kind of celebration to which he returned?
3. This parable of the prodigal son is a spiritual illustration of each of us—at some point we have all abandoned God, gone our own way, and have sought to find purpose and satisfaction on our own. Do you feel like you deserve the kind of celebration from your Heavenly Father that the prodigal received?
4. Explain what you think grace is. How does your definition compare to the actions of the father in the prodigal son parable?
5. Rewrite Romans 6:23 in your own words.

Day 3 | Real Repentance

1. What is your typical response to doing something wrong?
2. Think about this quote: "Repentance is required for grace to be received." What do you think this means?

Point of Interest:

The Greek word for repentance is the word "metánoia." This word literally means "a change of mind." True repentance isn't just feeling sorry, feeling like you messed up, or saying, "My bad." True repentance is to see something the way God sees it and to change the way you look at it and think about it. It's a real-life change to the way you live your life.

3. In what ways does God's love motivate you to turn from the sin and temptation in your life...or is it something you take for granted and tend not to pay attention to? What would actively turning from these things look like for you?

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance, and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Romans 2:4

4. What does Paul say in Romans 2:4 is the thing that leads us to repentance?

Read 1 John 1:6-10

5. One of the first steps of repentance is to admit and confess your sin. How does confessing our sin help us change? Take some time to confess out loud some things that you want to change.
6. Rewrite Romans 5:8 in your own words.

Reflect on the following quote today:

"God's grace flows through the funnel of repentance."

Day 4 | Shame Off You (Part 1)

Read John 8:1-11

1. How would you feel if you were the woman in the story?
2. According to the law, what should this woman's penalty have been?
3. How does Jesus respond to the questions that these teachers asked? What can we learn from his response?
4. How does Jesus disqualify every person who tries to judge her?
5. In what way does Jesus challenge the woman at the end of this story? Why is this so important? What is the connection between dealing with our shame and leaving our life of sin?
6. Take a look at your life as a whole. How has shame affected the way that you live and pursue God day to day?
7. How has Jesus done away with our sin and shame?

Point of Interest:

In Genesis 3:6-24, we see how God dealt with the shame of Adam and Eve. They were now made aware that they were naked, and because of this they felt shame and fear. In verse 21, we see that God makes garments of skin to clothe them. What this truly symbolizes is that one day God was going to cover our shame by forgiving the sins of the world through his son Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross.

Day 5 | A Day of Reflection

Rewrite 2 Corinthians 7:10 in your own words.

Take a look at the chart below. What key differences stand out to you?

<i>Godly Sorrow</i>	<i>Worldly Sorrow</i>
Vertical	Horizontal
God-Focused	Self-Focused
Spiritual	Emotional
Willing	Demanding
Active	Passive
Hopeful	Hopeless
Grateful	Begrudging
Persevering	Temporary
Humble	Prideful

Memorize the following verse this week:

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Romans 10:13