

Only One Life Ephesians 5:15-21

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

You have only one life; what are you _____ with it? Does your life matter, or are you chasing after the _____? The Bible teaches us _____ to live an abundant life. It helps us to distinguish what's wise from what's foolish; what's important from what doesn't matter; what's good from what's evil. You can search the world over and never find a book that will _____ you like the Bible.

Living without God's teaching in your life is like sewing with a needle that has no _____ or like writing your biography with a pen empty of _____. Some years ago psychologist William Marston asked 3000 people, "What do you have to live for?" He found that 94% were simply enduring the present while waiting for the _____. They were waiting for something to happen someday. They wanted to finish school, or watch their children grow up, or take a long vacation, or retire. They were _____, not realizing that all anyone ever has is today, because yesterday is gone and tomorrow is only a hope.

Solomon said, "Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was _____ and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 2:11). You might look at your life and wonder what _____ you've made in this world. Is your life merely a striving after wind?

C. T. Studd, nearly a hundred years ago, wrote two lines that make one pause and consider what _____ in life. He wrote "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last." Because there's _____ to life than the here and now, we must consider our eternal destiny and what matters when this life is over.

Our reading today comes from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 5:15-21.

God gives us life one day at a time, and it's _____. Jacob, when he was 130 years old, told Pharaoh, "few and unpleasant have been the years of my life" (Genesis 47:9). One hundred and thirty years still seems long to me, but Jacob called them "_____." David said, "LORD, make me to know my _____ And what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am. Behold, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my lifetime as nothing in Your sight; Surely every man at his best is a mere _____" (Psalm 39:4-5).

How we live matters, and whether we remember God through our lives is crucial to how we spend _____. The Preacher, Solomon, wrote, "Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to _____ for all these things" (Ecclesiastes 11:9).

We must take notice of God's Word where he says, "Therefore be _____ how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17). I'd like to suggest some things that we must take time to do:

First, take time to _____. God said through the prophet Isaiah, "Incline your _____, and come to Me: hear and your soul shall live" (Isaiah 55:3). Above anyone else, we must listen to _____ and hear His voice in all matters. The psalmist said, "Thy testimonies also are my _____; They are my counselors" (Psalm 119:24). God's Word always gives the best counsel, because God has no limits to His _____. God's Word is also a blessing in _____ times. Psalm 119:50 says, "This is my comfort in my affliction, That Thy word has revived me." Again, in verse 52, "I have remembered Thine ordinances from of old, O LORD, And comfort myself."

Read Psalm 1.

The Scriptures also encourage us to listen to _____, to wise people. Everyone needs a listening ear at times. Listening is the first _____ to loving. Listening encourages and solves _____; it brings comfort and it brings healing. Your life will be richer by far the more you _____ to listen. Proverbs 11:14 says, "Where there is no guidance, the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is _____." Proverbs 15:22 says, "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they _____." Getting godly and wise advice can make the difference between success and failure. "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

Second, take time to _____. I don't know everything that I want to know, for sure; but I suspect you feel that way too at times. Psalm 119:105 says, "Thy word is a _____ to my feet, And a _____ to my path." I want to know what God says. Psalm 119:98-99 says, "Thy commandments make me _____ than my enemies, For they are ever mine. I have more insight than all my teachers, For Thy testimonies are my meditation." God gives us _____ wisdom that guides us now and leads us to eternal life.

Psalm 119:133 says, "Establish my footsteps in Thy _____, And do not let any iniquity have dominion over me." We need to know what will _____ us and what will _____ us.

The Lord Jesus promises, "If any man is willing to do His _____, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself" (John 7:17). The more you put God's Word into _____, the more you realize the Bible truly is from God Himself.

The Scriptures _____ us how to think, how to deal with others, and how to behave. Paul said, "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Could you say that? Could you encourage _____ to live like you live, to think like you think, or to treat others the way you treat them? When we follow Christ, we know we're doing the _____ thing. You can study many things, but only knowledge of God can give you _____ life. How sad to think that many people are brilliant when it comes to _____ things but know nearly

nothing about the Lord Jesus Christ. “Only one life, ‘twill soon be past, Only what’s done for Christ will last.”

Third, take time to laugh and _____. Proverbs 17:22 says, “A joyful heart is _____ medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones.” Many people have forgotten how to laugh or _____ life. Their lives are sad, dreary, and drab. We should learn to laugh at ourselves, to enjoy others without embarrassing them, and especially to rejoice in the _____! Paul, while in _____, wrote, “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4). He found a way to _____ joy in life even in the harshest of circumstances.

Rejoicing is not merely being _____. Rejoicing comes from something _____ and precious. Ezra 8:10 says, “the joy of the LORD is your _____.” Because we know the Lord, we can rejoice in all His _____ and _____. This joy gives us strength, hope, and promise. After love, joy is the second quality of the _____ of the Spirit. The more we count our blessings, the more that we’ll find joy in life. God is the giver of all _____ gifts. James 1:17 says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from _____, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” God gives us every good thing that we _____. Let’s learn to rejoice _____ day. “Only one life, ‘twill soon be past, Only what’s done for Christ will last.”

Fourth, take time to _____ others. There are many _____ things happening all around us, calling for us to lend a _____. Mark 9 tells of the boy who was afflicted with a _____ that made him deaf and mute. This demon often _____ him to have convulsions and be thrown into the fire and the water. When Jesus commanded the demon to come out of him, the boy convulsed on the ground and lay motionless like he was _____. Verse 27 says, “But Jesus took him by the hand, and _____ him up.” Jesus gave him the _____ that he needed. Jesus forgave _____, gave sight to the blind, healed the _____, raised the dead, and gave _____ to the poor (Luke 4:17-21). He blessed _____. He came in contact with.

Galatians 6:2 urges us, “Bear one another’s _____, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” There are still many surrounding us who need a helping hand of _____. Many people are too _____ with personal pursuits and pleasures to lift the less fortunate; but the more we bless others, the more we find blessing. Send a note, make a phone call, give a compliment, smile, encourage, and show that you _____! First Thessalonians 5:11 says, “Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing.” You have “only one life; ‘twill soon be past; only what’s done for Christ will last.”

Fifth, take time to _____. First John 4:16 says, “God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.” The man who doesn’t love is not _____—he’s just merely existing. Everybody needs love and to be loved. **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.** Because Jesus loved us, we can know _____ to love others. **Read 1 John 3:16-18.**

I have a dear friend who _____ his wife a few years ago. Each time we meet, Jasper

reminds me to _____ and spend time with my wife and my loved ones while I can. I know he's right. It's time to love our families and our neighbors as _____. Today is all you have; all any of us have. When you take time to love, you're _____ God. More than anything, we _____ to love God and love other people! **Read Colossians 3:12-14.** Beyond _____, put on love. "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last."

If your life isn't what you want it to be, today is the best day to _____. You can begin today to listen, learn, laugh, lift, and love! You can become the salt and the light of the world by becoming a _____ of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is "the way, and the truth, and the life. And no one comes to the Father _____ through" Him (John 14:6). The Lord Jesus came that you "may have _____ and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Don't waste your life chasing after _____ in the here and now and then miss heaven. If you place all your _____ on your passions and your pleasures in this life, they will soon _____; but if you place your hope in the Lord, you can find _____ blessings in this life and the life to come.

Read Isaiah 1:18-20. In Christ, we have hope that we can be _____, that we can transform our lives into the kind of people that God can use to _____ the whole world. You only have one life, and it will not _____ on this earth forever. Serve the Lord and make the _____ of your days! The most important things in life are always expensive; but there is a far greater _____ to doing nothing and being unprepared. Life is brief; and as we age, each year passes more quickly than the last one. This means what matters becomes more and more _____. Cougan Collins recently asked, "If you knew the day you would die, would that _____ the way that you live?"

There are many uncertainties in life, and we can't foresee what the _____ holds; but you must prepare for at least one divine appointment. One day you'll stand before the throne of God to give an _____ for your life. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is _____ for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil" (2 Corinthians 5:10). What do you see when you look at yourself? Are you the person that God could _____? Are you living for the Lord or are you chasing after the wind? Don't waste your life with the things that don't matter. Build your house upon the rock by _____ to the Lord Jesus and doing what He says! Make your life count for eternity!

The best thing you can do is to place your _____ in Christ Jesus who created you. Since you're made in the _____ of God, let God work in and through you to make a difference in this world. Trust in the Lord and in His words and promises. Turn from sin and follow the Lord in repentance. Confess to everyone that you believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and let _____ know that you belong to Him. Upon confession, be _____ into Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Act 2:38). Your commitment to follow Jesus will be the most important decision that you'll ever make. So do it today!