

How to Live a Fulfilled Life

Many self-help books have been written on this subject and many have turned to these books to try to learn how to be content. The bible gives better instructions about how to live a happy life than any other book.

How do you describe a fulfilled life? One contemporary author describes it this way; a sense of contentment and wellbeing. Another says feeling happiness and satisfaction, and purpose. Another says living a worthwhile life, having a positive attitude, and leaving a great legacy. Some say having strong social relationships, money and a high IQ. Unfortunately, some have the idea of happiness as eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow you die.

We keep longing for it, searching for it, yet sadly only one third of Americans surveyed said they were happy.

Happiness is less an emotion and more a decision. It's less about getting and more about giving; less about being loved and more about loving others.

I challenge each of you to seek these three ways to gain a fulfilled life:

Love God

Verses 35-40 in the book of Matthew chapter 22 say, "One Pharisee, who was an expert in the Law of Moses asked Jesus this question to test Him. Which command in the law is most important? Jesus answered "Love the Lord thy God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. And the second command is like the first: Love your neighbor as you love yourself."" Proverbs 8:17 says "I have loved them that loved me; and those that seek me early shall find me." The reason God loved you is because He chose to love you. We should choose to love Him. The proof of our love for God is found in John 14:15, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." You were made by God and for God. Until you understand that your life will never be fulfilled.

Love Others

This is the second part of the greatest command. This kind of love is agape love. We are to have an unselfish affection for others. Learn to see others as a source of joy rather than a source of frustration and pain. When you think something positive about another and genuinely believe it, voice it to him and others. We have a chance to bring the best out of people. Meet others with a sincere greeting. At any gathering you will find two groups of people, those who say I'm so glad to see you and those whose attitude is I'm so glad you got to see me. Let people know that you are truly glad to see them. We are to serve our neighbor. When you see a need that you can fill, fill it. The bible tells us to serve widows and orphans, the sick, and those less fortunate than us. We are to fulfill their physical needs. Doing good does good for the doer. Happiness happens when we give.

We are to love our enemies. Matthew 5:43 says "You have heard it said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemies.' But I say to you, love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you." Verse 47 says "And if you are nice only to your friends, you are no better than any other people." This is a hard one! The secret is prayer and forgiveness. Ephesians 4:32 says, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." If we forgive our enemies and pray for them, it will bring comfort to us.

Love Yourself

The last part of the greatest command is to love others as we love ourselves. If we don't love ourselves, it is hard to love others. God wants us to enjoy this life. We are to delight in God and what he has done for us. Ephesians 2:10 says "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." To feel good about ourselves we must stay busy doing for others. There is something for all of us to do. If your health keeps you from actively serving others, be an encourager. Send cards and letters and pray for others.

There are those who hate themselves and have given up hope. They believe that they have lived so wickedly that they can't be forgiven. They have a heart full of guilt and there is no room for love. Listen to I John 1:9. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and He cleanses us from all unrighteousness." This is a promise from God's word. Believe it!

In short, if you would live a fulfilled life...

Love God and serve him faithfully.

Love others and serve them to the best of your ability.

Live your life in such a way that you can love yourself.

Forgive the past (your own and others).

And bring an attitude of gratitude to your life.

On March 26th we had corresponding lessons on this topic. Check our website for sermons titled "Two Choices: Fulfilled or Unfulfilled (John 19:17-30)" from the AM service and "The Peanut Butter Box (John 10:1-10)" from the PM service. Also, you can find our worship services on our Facebook page.