**Making A Life and Not Just A Living**

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| **Slide** | **Sermon** |
| 1 | Title Slide “Making A Life and Not Just A Living” Luke 18:18-30  “Never mistake knowledge for wisdom. One helps you make a living; the other helps you make a life” – Sandra Carey |
| 2 | Introduction: My brother, Dale, is the fisherman of the family. He followed in the line of my dad in this way. Like many other fishermen, he was given a Billy Bob fish that looks like amounted fish you hang on the wall. Except with this fish, you can push a button and it starts flipping its tail fin and turns its head toward you and sings to a calypso beat: “Don’t worry, be happy.”  This fish was the rage for a while! It captured a basic hope for lots of people.  The hope of putting our worries behind and being happy. |
| 3 | In fact, most folks when asked what we want most for our children and grandchildren is that they will be happy!  And by happy we mean that our lives will be prosperous enough where we will not have to worry about having enough food, enough clothing, a warm safe home and will be healthy.  In other words, we link happiness with:   * A secure job and retirement * Health and healthy children * Prominent career * Strong bodies * Good marriage * Nice home * Enough to eat out several times a week. |
| 4 | And we hope the end result of having a life like this we’ll be ready to enter eternal life when this life is over. |
|  | The difficulty in our pursuit of happiness or possessions is that often it’s the very thing that makes us miss the good life! REPEAT |
| 5 | Andy Langford and Mark Ralls in their book “Beginnings” site the play by Tennessee Williams. “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof” In a scene a father and his son are in the basement filled with his father’s possessions. The son asks his father, ‘Big Daddy, why’d you buy all this junk?” his dad sadly answers, “because I wanted to live. Because I wanted my life to amount to something.”    Echoing this sense that possessions are not the source of a good life, another author wrote.  “We have, as average Americans, doubled real incomes, and doubled what money buys. We have expresso coffee, the World-wide web, SUVs. A car for every driver in the family (if not more), caller ID, HD TVs and yet, we have less happiness, more depressions, more fragile relationships, less communal commitment, less vocational security, more crime, more demoralized children.” (David Myers, “The Armenia Paradox”)  It's hard to believe. It’s hard to understand. But happiness doesn’t come from making a good living with the possessions we want. |
| 6 | “Have you ever reached a point in your life when you say to yourself; ‘This is the best I’m ever gonna look, the best I’m ever gonna feel, the best I’m ever gonna do, and it ain’t that good!”  In making a living many folks rush right by and never discover how to make a life. – a life of meaning and fulfillment. |
| 7 | Read the text – Luke 18:18-30  Here we find Big Answers to Big Questions. |
| 8  9  10 | Notes of Scripture  Aside: “Good Teacher” – attempt to flatter; to win Christ’s attention and approval  Rich Ruler  **What must I do to inherit eternal life?**  Jesus answer by referring to keeping the commandments – The Law – refers to 5 of 10 –  - Don’t commit adultery  - Don’t murder  - Don’t steal  - Don’t bear false witness  - Honor father and mother  Jesus turns this around on him and puts the attention on God – only God is good.  Rich ruler Response:  I have kept these since my youth!  Other Responses:  1) Jesus: Hard for wealthy to enter the Kingdom of God!  Ex) easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God.  2) Hearers Includes Disciples:  Then **who can be saved?**  Jesus: What is impossible for humans is possible for God!  3) Peter: We’ve left homes for you! Jesus: Folks who have left house, family for the sake of the Kingdom, will get back in this age very much more and in the age to come – eternal life.  Jesus: Still one thing lacking – 1)Sell all that you own and distribute to the poor and you’ll have treasures in heaven, 2)Come and follow me.  Rich Ruler Response: Very sad! Why? He was very rich, He had what many desired   * Position * A future * Security   But this way not enough.  He wanted a life that would lead to eternal life  He wanted a life that would have meaning and purpose; one that would please God |
| 11 | Jesus made it clear:   * Helping the Poor * Following the footsteps of Jesus   Lead to life: making a living is a by-product of creating a life  (repeat) |
| 12 | Point of discussion for Rich Ruler   * Did he really want eternal life – a real meaningful life? * Or would his possessions be more important?   That’s been a crucial choice down through the ages.  We don’t know if the Rich ruler changed his mind or not.  But what we do know is that happiness will NOT ultimately be found in the “good life”   * In the life of the Rich and Famous * In the life of ‘car in every garage and a chicken in every pot’ * The life of a college degree, a 4-bedroom house and 4 baths, 2 cars and 2 income household.   Making a living is important but don’t ever be confused that it will give you real life! It will NOT. |
| 13 | So, what gives real life?  2 things  1) View of possessions/stuff – God permits us to acquire them so that we can help others and build God’s Kingdom.  2) Most importantly – Follow the ways of Jesus  How do we follow Jesus?  He sums it up nicely in 2 steps. Love God and Love neighbor |
| 14 | How do we love God?  A. Making God first and foremost in life.  1. Fundamental change  Ex: those who thought the earth was center of universe, but Copernicus – sun is center of universe.  Loving God means God is the most important person/thing in our lives.  John 17:25 – Seek to save your life (put it and family in center) and you’ll lose it. But seek to lose life – for God – and He will save it.  2. Love as God directs – 10 commandments/Sermon on the Mount  Love God – only one God – no gods like money, sex, career, party living – don’t misuse God’s name – no profanity.  Day of Rest and Worship – focusing on God, church, Bible study, Sunday School, relax and renew  We find it hard to pull back or if we do pull back, we make it just recreation day.  Loving God is more that rules, its living for the Kingdom – self is always 2nd to God and this goes dead against our culture. |
| 15 | B. Love Neighbor – others – servant  Jesus washes feet of followers  Commandment – Love one another  Rule of Thumb – whatever you want for yourself; or get for yourself; or do for yourself, then that is what guides your relationship with others. |
|  | Ex: Millard Fuller – age 24 – lawyer and businessman – millionaire. 1966 – call of Christ –   * Sell possessions and search for way to put love into action. * He learned of Kenora Farms – South Georgia – where he was exposed the poor and their living. * They need capital not charity – co-workers not caseworkers. * Formed Habitat – Today, millions of poor people live in over 29 million safe, secure and sanitary homes throughout the world.   Loving neighbors – is putting the talent and resources God’s given you to help others! |
| 16 | It’s really simple yet very difficult –  The rich ruler was trapped by the living he made and realized had no life!  Too Many quote- “Money is the root of all evil. But statement is – “Love of money is root of all evil.” I Timothy 6:10 - For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, and it their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. |
| 17 | Life – real life of meaning and fulfillment not to say the way to eternal life has to do with our relationship with God and others. And we all struggle with this! Yes, really we do! |
| 18 | Joke – Good news and Bad news –  Good news - We have enough money to pay for our current and 2021 budget. Since I came to Center I occasionally hear comments like, "I thought we had long range plans to build a family life center,." Or 'We need mor space, larger fellowship hall, more storage space" And the response is that we have to grow more so we can get more money.  And that is true to a certain extent.  the Good News is that we do have enough money to all these things  Bad news – the money is still in our pockets.  The rich ruler had ample resources to do so much for the poor and the kingdom of God, if he would put it to good and put God and others truly at the center of his life.  Center can reach the high aspirations of the above goals if we would follow Jesus’ call to the rich ruler. I advocate tithing and beyond. It will help you free yourself from the shackles of this world and open up tremendous ministry here. And I am thinking not only in this life but in the life of Center's future, if you make Center a beneficiary of our wills.  It is our choice. Will we be like the rich ruler sadly returning to our life as usual or will we take that giant leap of faith, giving back to God what God desires and following Christ? What will you do? |
| 19 | (Prayer to end sermon) |