

Lose to Live: Introducing Life

*For whoever wants to save his life will lose it,
but whoever loses his life because of me will find it.*

—Jesus

Jesus gave His disciples an important paradox: if we save our lives, we lose our lives; if we lose our lives, we find them. Jesus was clear: lose to live is an absolute. It is a spiritual, contractual, an absolute kingdom principle. There is no negotiation. And the lose to live idea is one of the most important ideas a Christian should understand. The prioritization of losing is a principle that has the potential to govern and shape our lives around the actual, personal plans of God. Losing is where we find the most profound meaning and worth of our lives and potential.

What is this life for? Why am I here? What is my purpose in life? What is the meaning of life? For the Christian, these questions are answered in the idea of striving to die to their life and the common ideas that go with it. To find an abundant, fulfilling life, the Christian *must die*. In other words, we must give up our natural tendency to live life to fulfill one's self.

We, as Christians, have the same common, deep desires to set our lives up around our security, comfort, and happiness. But the fulfilling life is found by giving up the goals of self and living for the love of God and others. We live in lives of sacrifice, lives that place others before ourselves. This is what the

Scriptures teach us to do: “Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself” (Philippians 2:3).

Dream Big

Ephesians 2:10 teaches, we “are [God’s] creative work, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we can do them.” God has a custom plan and purpose for every Christian; our original purposes are our “sweet spots.” You and I will never experience greater fulfillment than when we do what God designed and gifted us to do— personally. And while God may not intend for us to be the next Moses, Elijah, Deborah, or Daniel, although He may as well, God has good works already prepared for us to accomplish. God placed you in your country, at this time, with your gifts and talents, with your experiences, for His purposes. “God is calling us to a treacherous journey, yet it’s rewarding beyond our imagination.”⁶¹ The life potential, if we embrace the “lose to live” kingdom work, will be the most satisfying way we can live. For this is where our highest potential becomes tangible life experiences with God. But we only reach our potential when—and if—we embrace the theology of sacrifice and selflessness.

We may be afraid of God’s plans for our lives. We don’t fear God as long as He stays at a distance. I believe most Christians will live a life that never includes the question, “God, what shall I do with the life that you have given me? ... Let’s face it: we’d probably each rather maintain ultimate control of our lives.”⁶² There is within us a strong desire to stay in control of our situations. A person who does not ask these potentially life altering questions of God, may find him/her self living exclusively in their skills, talents, education, geography, network and experiences. That is what unbelievers lives look like: they say, “Let’s build lives around the hope of predictable outcomes.”

⁶¹ Marty Meyer, *Mission Accomplished* (Seattle: YWAM Publishers, 2018), 30.

⁶² Marty Meyer, *Mission Accomplished* (Seattle: YWAM Publishers, 2018), 31.

God Is Always Speaking

There are some who erroneously believe that God does not speak to us as individuals but only speaks to Christians through the Scriptures. They have developed a theology that believes, “God lives in us, but He never says a word to us!” They would teach that we are indwelt by an All Powerful God who is silent! But here I agree with Meyer:

“We may even create a theology that says, ‘God no longer speaks’ to get us off the hook for the rebellious disobedience residing hidden in our hearts. Hard to stomach? I know, I’ve been there. This reluctance to obey may point to a deeper issue. Do we actually trust God?”⁶³

Live as a Sacrifice

The entirety of our lives ought to be used in the way God sees fit. Jesus accomplished the highest form of sacrificial living when He died for us. What should and will our sacrifices be? They ought to be the same which Paul explained to the Church in Romans 12:1, 2:

“Therefore I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice—alive, holy, and pleasing to God—which is your reasonable service. Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God—what is good and well-pleasing and perfect.”

Our entire body and life should be presented to God for His use. Let these quotes sink into your mind and heart:

“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for

⁶³ Marty Meyer, *Mission Accomplished* (Seattle: YWAM Publishers, 2018), 31.

THE WAY OF DISCIPLESHIP

me to make for Him.”⁶⁴

The abundant life “is living life by a single God-exalting, soul-satisfying passion.”⁶⁵

“Our enemy is more aware than we are of the spiritual possibilities that depend upon obedience.”⁶⁶

Scripture Passages

Matthew 16:21-28

(Mark 8:34-38; John 12:20-29; Mark 1:16-20 (cf., Matt. 4:18-22; Luke 5:1-11; John 1:35-51); Mark 2:13-14 (cf., Luke 5:27-32); 1 Corinthians 1:26-29; Ephesians 2:10)

Questions

- 1) Are you ready to say, “I am willing to give up authority over my life? What do you want from my life Lord?”
- 2) What one word would you choose to describe the people of Mark 1:16-20 & 1 Corinthians 1:26-29?
- 3) With these Scriptures in mind, what seems to be an *essential principle* about people that change the world for God?

⁶⁴ C.T. Studd, Quote, accessed Jan. 2, 2020, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/715176-if-jesus-christ-be-god-and-died-for-me-then>.

⁶⁵ John Piper, *Don't Waste Your Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2003 ed.), 41.

⁶⁶ Amy Carmichael, “*Gold Cord: The Story of a Fellowship*” (CLC Publications, 2002), accessed Jan. 2, 2020, <https://www.azquotes.com/quote/1136495>.

4) What does that possibility mean for you?