

Let's talk about: **How to Love your Life.**

How many know we live in a culture obsessed with the "good life"..... Do you agree... that most advertising and social media constantly points us toward a better car, a better job, a different set of circumstances.... Promising if we get these things ... *then* we will love our life.

Ladies and Gentlemen, **if we wait for our circumstances to become perfect before we love our life, we will never love our life.**

I want to share this with you.....**Peace is not the absence of trouble; it is the presence of God.**

I often said to myself, "if Janet would just change," I'll be loving life..... or I said.....once this situation is resolved, I'll be loving life."

True peace comes when we stop waiting for our spouse to change, or for life to get easier or this situation to resolve.....and start relying on God in the midst of it.

To love your life, stop living only for yourself.

According to **Matthew 10:39** Jesus taught that **to love your life, you must lose it.**

Getting over yourself is the ultimate liberation. It is laying down your reputation, your image, and your ego at the foot of the cross.

The day you get over yourself..... is the day when you start loving your life....

When you get over yourself, you are no longer fragile, because your worth is not tied to people's opinions. You are no longer afraid, because your future is in God's hands.

When I started getting over myself I started asking, "How can I serve?" rather than "How do I look?"

One of these objects focuses on *self*, and the other focuses on *service*.

One shows you who you are, while the other shows you whose, you are.....when you know you are a son...you don't mind looking like a slave...

The trap is we look in the mirror to see if we look good enough, if we are worthy enough, or if we have impressed others enough. The mirror keeps us reaching.....

And the danger is: a mirror in my hand makes me the center of the universe. It creates a "selfie" mentality where I am constantly checking my reflection—my reputation, my comfort, my popularity.

I told someone last night..... I have wasted so much time..... not on drugs, alcohol, or messing around on my wife..... but I could not tell them how I wasted it..... I just stopped talking.... I couldn't explain it....

This morning the Lord gave me the language to explain it.... I wasted a lot of time by holding a mirror in my hand instead of a towel.

I was too busy looking at my own "smudges" to notice you.

Jesus didn't look in a mirror to see if he looked like a King. He grabbed a towel to serve like a slave.

Think about this.....Jesus washed the feet of his friends, even knowing that some would betray him, deny him and the very feet he washed would run from him.

A towel in your hand means you have died to yourself. It means you are not concerned with your reputation, your comfort, or who is the greatest.

- A mirror says: "Look at me."
- A towel says: "Let me lift you up."

So how have I started to love my life?

I am putting down the mirror... I'm not obsessing over my life, my struggles, and my image....I'm not reaching

I am holding a towel, ready to serve, ready to love, and ready to lift others up.

In Luke 22....Jesus is going into the upper room and the disciples are all arguing about who's going to be the greatest in the kingdom.

Jesus asked them a question.... **27 For who is greater, the one at the table or the one serving... it's the one at the table..... But I am the one who serves....**

Notice what Jesus does...**He puts serving over status.**

Look at Philippians chapter 2:3-4 **MSG Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.**

Here's the key phrase. **Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.**

Jesus is basically saying if you're going to really serve people, you have to forget yourself.

Most people are full of themselves. You know people like that...How many of you are sitting beside somebody just like that?

We all have to fight that because we all are basically selfish. We're born selfish.

If you don't think you're selfish, just let me ask you a simple question. When somebody takes a group picture of you and you see that picture for the first time, who is the first person? Huh?

Who do you look for? You go right to yourself, don't you? I mean, you pass those other seven people.. you go, "Oh, there." And let me tell you what you do... if you look good, you go, "Great picture.

If you don't look good....you say... Do it again. Take another picture. Everything is based upon whether you look good.

This is who we are. One of the reasons living an intentional life is so important is that if we are not intentional, we will be selfish.

Jesus is sayingstart thinking.... **Service over status.**

Most of us know the story of the Good Samaritan, the story is found in Luke 10:25..... We learn in this story that a man was robbed. He was on the side of the road. He was half dead. The good Samaritan went over and took care of his wounds, put him on his donkey, took him to a place to recover and paid for it.

And what needs to be recognized is that the good Samaritan was willing to be inconvenienced.

Now, here's the key. To love your life, serve people. But let me tell you the first thing's going to happen to you.

The first thing that's going to happen is we're going to be inconvenienced because when you serve people, they don't do it on your time schedule.

The priest and the Levite, what did they do? They saw the guy that was robbed, half dead, and they went to the other side of the road...

And you know why they didn't stop? **They didn't want to be inconvenienced. They were going somewhere. They're going down to Jericho.**

Let me remind you these were good religious people.

Here's what I'm sure they did. I'm sure they said...we will pray for you. Don't you think so? Now....they are not going to stop and take care of him, but as they're walking away, they are saying, Oh Lord, help him. Heal him. Send somebody to serve him.

Isn't it amazing? Christians can make prayer the biggest copout. **Sometimes we need to shut up and serve.**

Just hush up and serve. You are never going to love your life with a mirror in your hand....because you will always be comparing yourself to others....

Comparing is a mirror in your hand.... Compassion is a towel in your hand.

Bro. Grisby preached Wednesday night We should take off the Bib....and find a towel....

Did you know there are only two times that a basin of water is ever mentioned in the Bible.

Remember when the people brought Jesus before Pilate.

Remember what Pilate did? He said okay, I think he's innocent. I don't see anything wrong with him but if you want to crucify him then bring me a basin of water. In this basin of water he washed his hands and excused himself of the responsibility.

Now catch this... **Pilate took a basin of water and put himself first. Jesus took a basin of water and put others first.**

That's the difference between how a Christ follower thinks and how a person who lives for themselves thinks.

Pastor, I just don't feel close to God. I just haven't connected with God for a while. Pastor, I don't just don't love my life.

"What do you think I should do?" My response now is....put down your mirror....take off your bib and pick up a towel.

- Shift from Self-Focus to Service: When we focus too much on ourselves, we become unhappy. When we use our time, energy, and resources to serve God and others, we start loving our life.

Let's Pray....