

Topical

A Quiet Life

Luke 10:38-42, 1st Thessalonians 4:9-12

What is your ideal life?

When you think of a perfect life, what do you think of?

Is it vacationing on yachts with a staff of people to meet your every need?

A gourmet meal prepared for you 3x a day? (I have that!)

Winning the lottery and never working again?

Maybe it's being famous? Big time musician, athlete or perhaps movie star? Number one album or movie. Walk the red carpet. Have millions of people around the world sing your song? Be a big time YouTuber with 10 million subscribers?

I've heard that the #1 job American kids want is to be a YouTube and the #1 Job Chinese kids want is to be an astronaut...tell me which nation has a strong future

Would you want to go to the moon? Mars? Another galaxy?

Be a model? A fitness star? Athlete? Elite soldier?

Maybe it's more work oriented: get a lot of education, get a great job, make a lot of money and gain recognition?

Maybe it's about inventing something amazing, winning a Nobel prize?

A guy like Elon Musk invents Paypal, doesn't stop there, Tesla, Space X, Boring Co, etc.

Why do you not have these things? Did you pursue them and it not work out?

I wanted to be an F-16 pilot until I learned you needed 20/20 vision or better. So I gave up on that dream.

Maybe you did try and you got pretty far, but you're not a household name.

Maybe you did but you felt you had to keep settling for less for whatever reason.

But as a Christian, what should the aim of our lives be? Are any of these things intrinsically bad? Well, maybe some, but maybe not. Do you have dreams for your life in Christ? To travel the world to spread the gospel? To be a big worship leader? To <insert your dream here>?

This isn't a message of "how do get your dreams in Christ fulfilled" ... although in fact it may turn out that way for you.

I've seen more of my dreams and desires of my heart realized in Jesus in the past few years than I ever thought possible. Things I thought were totally impossible become not only possible but where God himself was leading me (and us as a family).

But you know, **they didn't happen by me seeking them.** In fact, when I sought them directly in the past or even before being a believer...they got further away, relationships were ruined, opportunities squashed. I couldn't accomplish them in my own strength. The more I focused on them the further they got away and the less dream like my life became and the more nightmarish, small and trapping it felt.

Psa 37:4-5 NKJV - Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring [it] to pass.

One of they keys, it seems to really living, is simply finding your delight in the LORD first and above all and maybe just only in Him.

I think, perhaps if we're honest, we seek out all those things listed before, that might be good, or might not be, as some sort of way to delight ourselves and instead of delight we eventually find death of one thing or another.

1Ti 6:6-10 NKJV - Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into [this] world, [and it is] certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and [into] many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all [kinds of] evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Abraham, David, Joseph, Solomon, Job and others in the Bible were very rich, some of the richest on Earth. So I'm not saying being rich is wrong nor do I think the Bible says it is...but it does give us a real perspective on it. And our society is geared towards making everyone think that being rich is the pinnacle, the best and that everyone can have it. But the reality is, there will ever only be a few rich.

Bezos \$ analogy

The key to being rich is finding that real riches is knowing and loving the most-rich being in all existence. The one who owns the cattle on a thousand hills. And that being spiritually "rich" so

to speak is the only wealth you and I need. For if we have him, all our needs will be met, will they not?

I don't want to get into a tangent here...

Luke 10:38-42

Jesus goes into the town of Bethany where his close friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus live.

So anytime you have friends over, are having a party or have someone special over, you're going to want to make everything perfect, right?

Parties in NY, family holidays, even church etc. Can be related to the gift of hospitality

Mary and Martha do two completely different things when Jesus comes over their house.

Mary sat at his feet

- make to sit down besides
- to set beside, place near

And **heard his word**

to be endowed with the faculty of hearing, not deaf
 to hear
 to attend to, consider what is or has been said
 to understand, perceive the sense of what is said
 to hear something
 to perceive by the ear what is announced in one's presence
 to get by hearing learn
 a thing comes to one's ears, to find out, learn
 to give ear to a teaching or a teacher
 to comprehend, to understand

Word (logos)

of speech
 a word, uttered by a living voice, embodies a conception or idea
 what someone has said
 a word
 the sayings of God
 decree, mandate or order
 of the moral precepts given by God
 Old Testament prophecy given by the prophets
 what is declared, a thought, declaration, aphorism, a weighty saying, a dictum, a maxim

discourse

the act of speaking, speech

the faculty of speech, skill and practice in speaking

a kind or style of speaking

a continuous speaking discourse - instruction

doctrine, teaching

anything reported in speech; a narration, narrative

matter under discussion, thing spoken of, affair, a matter in dispute, case, suit at law

the thing spoken of or talked about; event, deed

its use as respect to the MIND alone

reason, the mental faculty of thinking, meditating, reasoning, calculating

account, i.e. regard, consideration

account, i.e. reckoning, score

account, i.e. answer or explanation in reference to judgment

relation, i.e. with whom as judge we stand in relation

reason would

reason, cause, ground

In John, denotes the essential Word of God, Jesus Christ, the personal wisdom and power in union with God, his minister in creation and government of the universe, the cause of all the world's life both physical and ethical, which for the procurement of man's salvation put on human nature in the person of Jesus the Messiah, the second person in the Godhead, and shone forth conspicuously from His words and deeds.

That when the Son of God came over her house, Mary just wanted to spend time with him. Just wanted to hear what he would say. You know he was going to talk about the things of God. You know he was going to teach a scripture in a way that you maybe hadn't heard before. He was going to say things that you aren't going to hear any where else or get any way else but by sitting close to him and listening.

The four gospels...talking to my kids the other night and God drops this nugget in my heart about the four different Gospels being different in parts and same in parts, speaking to each child on their level and with what's going on with them and my relationship with them yet telling them each some of the same things about what I'm doing but in slightly different ways.

Jhn 13:23 NKJV - Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

I picture him reclining back, leaning on Jesus like my kids might on me. The disciple John, whom Jesus loved...John knew Jesus loved him and that was reflected in how John's life looked like he loved Jesus.

But Martha was distracted with much serving

draw around, to draw away, distract

to be driven about mentally, to be distracted
to be over-occupied, too busy, about a thing

She was so busy preparing things, doing things, in her mind perhaps even for the Lord, that she wasn't hearing anything he was saying.

She wasn't getting to know him better. She wasn't getting to hear what He was speaking about the scripture, what truth and depths of insights and wisdom and even just hearing his voice, knowing how he said things or laughed or smiled or looked like or anything intimate you know about your friends from spending time with them.

She, on some level, i believe was doing all that serving for herself. She felt it was the right thing to do. She felt on some level she had to do it - it's the right thing to do when someone comes over to do all these things for them.

*Coming home and Mia wanting to help with my heavy bag
Ash sometimes baking for us or me in the kitchen and I just want her to come sit with me for a few minutes (maybe I should get up and help her bake, IDK...yeah not a good idea haha)*

But you know, don't you think Jesus would just want to spend time with Martha, too? That's why he went over there after all. He can turn rocks into bread if he wanted to, so he's not there primarily for her cooking.

I'm not even going to get into the dynamic between the sisters here or what Martha expects Jesus to do.

That Mary chose the good ... even the best "thing" to do. Spend time with Jesus above all else...even customary...even maybe needful things like getting dinner ready for the guests.

That spending time with the Lord is the good. Is the best. Is the most needful thing. It's the thing He was there in their house and lives for. A real friend doesn't hang out with you to get something from you, have you tell your sister to get up and help you, a real friend just wants to hang out, do what you want to do, listen to you, talk to you, or just sit next to you and do nothing at times.

A real friend, the best friend, doesn't use you for your things, your money, your power (the wealthy have a hard time finding true friends...)
Although when you have a real friend and are a real friend to someone who is wealthy, powerful, has things...I'll bet they let you use those things. Want to bless you with gifts you may not be able to have on your own.

Mia teaching Jacob how to ride her big girl bike.

And with the Lord, he owns the cattle on a thousand hills, knows what we need before we do, cares about every hair on our head, every dream and desire of our hearts..so why do we not let him be the desire of our hearts? Even selfishly? You do realize that if you do, he IS going to do all those things for you, do you not? You might still be living paycheck to paycheck, but you will be rich. You will have everything you want in life..and more than that, you will really know God.

Isn't that the most important thing, the most valuable thing in life, to really know God? Why do we not want to know him? Why do we even get so busy about some idea of ours or some tradition or some thing imposed on us, some obligation to serve him that distracts us?

Why are we too busy to just sit with him?

I'm a type A, always have a plan...I see Mia is like me in that regard...first we'll, then we'll...plans will only work out for so long and at some point become chains

What could we possibly have to do in life that is more important than time with Jesus? Staying up late with my wife when dating, or with the kids sometimes, but really, with the Lord sometimes, especially early on? It was more important to me to spend time with these people doing those things than getting an extra hour or two of sleep.

Once in a while, fine, all the time, maybe not so good and find an earlier time to do it...but the point I'm making is...when you're in love, does doing anything else matter? Does any other obligation matter?

Again, I'm not saying be irresponsible, in fact, we should be the most responsible people...but the question is, what is the best thing? Is it more responsible to sit and receive the things of God or to prepare a meal for the people of God (when no one was necessarily asking ... maybe the disciples were grumbling about how hungry they were, I don't know...seems likely right?)

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Brotherly love...**you yourselves are taught by God to love one another**... sounds very much like they are sitting at Jesus' feet, like Mary was

Urged to increase more and more

You can never have enough brotherly love. You and I have not nor will not ever reach a point where we've loved each other enough.

Sometimes we feel like it...especially if it seems like a lot in a worldly sense...even a churchly sense...but Paul says WE URGE YOU...beseech, alongside, instruct, urge, to increase more and more.

Keep going. Keep seeking to love God and love others more. It's not going to come naturally. It's going to take forcing yourself to sit down that others might be lifted up. It's going to force us to find more and more ways, more and more choices each day where we can fit love in instead of looking out for ourselves.

That you also aspire to lead a quiet life

That on top of brotherly love...the foundation of it...we're also to aspire to what...lead a quiet life.

What does the world aspire to? Usually not a quiet life. A loud life. Making noise. Doing big, mighty, great things. Things that get attention for themselves (even if it's wrapped in philanthropy).

What does even the church aspire to? What does the church, even if not in word, but in practice, tend to teach us to aspire to?

Big ministry. Being famous in Christian circles. Having many followers.

Numbers have become the most important factor...even if we don't admit it...usually what's one of the first things we ask, how big is your church? Not, what is the Lord doing? Or if we ask that, the answer shortly turns to X number of people came...

which hey, is a great thing in some sense, but why is it our focus?

But if we're to aspire to it? What is it?

OKJV says..."study to be quiet"

For some of us, we really do need to study to be quiet! We're loudmouths, we get up in other people's faces, other people's business, when we ought not.

We seek the flashy, the monumental...when we really need to learn to seek the quiet.

The humble. The genuine. The honest.

Take this in light of Mary and Martha...Mary probably wasn't making much sound other than smiling, maybe laughing, listening, doing that "mm-hmm" thing we do when we listen and receive...

While Martha...well, she might have been running around, opening and closing cabinets, doors, banging pots and pans, running the mixer, shouting from the kitchen, MARY! LORD, WHY ISN'T MARY IN HERE HELPING ME? PLEASE TEL HER TO HELP ME!

Could that be some of our prayers right now? Shouting, upset, perturbed with someone and maybe even the Lord because that someone isn't helping us? That we don't have some provision we think we need to get done what we think needs to get done?

The reality is, what do we really need to do with our lives? And if we don't have the means to do it and we're seeking the Lord for it...did we just sit at his feet first and even take his lunch order? **Is He even hungry?**

to keep quiet

to rest, cease from labour

to lead a quiet life, said of those who are not running hither and thither, but stay at home and mind their business

to be silent, i.e. to say nothing, hold one's peace

That we need to aspire...it should be our goal. Our aim. The thing we want to live up to. Instead of aspiring to be a famous musician, aspire to be someone who plays guitar when no one else hears but the Lord. And not under the false pretense of doing that will make you famous one day.

Because don't we do that...God says if I pray in secret he'll reward me openly so boy oh boy I can't wait to be rewarded openly...

I think we should aspire to forget those parts of the verses...in a way...and just focus on wanting, desiring and going to pray in secret and to find our open reward in there...with Him, before Him, seeing Him, smelling him, being changed by Him.

The quiet life can mean a lot of things. It can actually be a quiet life. One that doesn't make much sound, goes about it's business, lives peaceably, never leaves it's small town, or home life...a "stay at home" mom I think in some way is pejorative...oh, you're only a stay at home mom...well is it better to be a stay at home mom or a never at home mom?

Again, I'm not saying it's bad for both parents to work if they must...but I wonder, for most of us, is it really a must? Do you really have to work two jobs?

Or perhaps it's because we're too preoccupied trying to aspire to greater things in life which are really the lesser that we're missing out on the greater things in life that the world makes out to be lesser.

That can apply to dad's too...are we too busy, work too late to provide a great life for our kids that we're never home to give them the best life? A life with their dad and mom?

Again, maybe I'm harping too hard out of certain pains from childhood, but one thing I'm learning is that God really is our Father. He really does care about us and love us and he is really interested in spending time with us...and that's the #1 thing on his list for us is to spend time with him.

And sometimes that will be serving. Serving is good. Being busy about our father's business is what we need to be.

But being busy about his business starts with sitting at his feet. It continues with aspiring to continue that quiet life in all things.

It could mean working with your own hands, running your own business...so that you lack nothing! Owning your own business is a good way to be financially independent...and as a believer...it's not just for us...it's so we can also then help others, provide for others.

How many times have I been blessed by believers who have had more money than I and have opened up their home, rented me one of their properties, let me borrow an extra car they had or fed me or paid a bill for me I couldn't pay...even if they weren't rich...

One thing I see as being a great example...is a believer who owns their own business. That's a quiet life. It's a quiet, strong example to the world and to the church...it puts them in the the world to serve the world and uses the world's finances to fund the church's mission.

Missionaries can't go, or at least would have an easier time of it, if we don't pay for them to.

There is something quiet about working with your own hands. Being dependent on the skills God has given us to work.

TBH, I work with my own skill and hands to some degree...albeit on a computer...but you know, it's not nearly as satisfying at the end of the day then it is to actually work with my hands...actually fix a car, actually build something or create something. TBH, I like my job, but perhaps I'm in it only because it's the fastest way to make a dollar with my time and not because it's the most fulfilling...and maybe that's wise...or maybe I should start my own business. I'm being open here, I consider starting my own business, but I don't because in a way I want the church to be my own business so-to-speak...becuase I don't want opening my own business to compete with my time needed to potentially serve the church. If there's a way to do both and not interfere with my ministry and only support it, then for sure I will.

Paul was a tentmaker. The disciples left their nets and tax collecting and whatever else they did to follow Jesus. They paid their way as they spread the gospel to not burden anyone or give the impression they did ministry under false pretense for money.

But what can you or I do?

These two areas of scripture go hand in hand...to keep seeking to be at Jesus' feet and keep seeking a quieter and quieter life.

And in reality, the quietest life for you and I might be one that is a world famous preacher or worship leader or missionary who travels all around the world doing multiple ministries, speaking engagements, on TV, etc...and that even though it seems like a loud life, is really the quietest life for them because at the center of it all is sitting at Jesus' feet.

I think those lives and ministries fail because either they never were founded on sitting before Jesus daily and as a direction and foundation of their entire lives...or at some point, they got up from sitting and got too busy, got too distracted serving and it derailed it all...

I think the main takeaway is...where are our desires pointed? And where are we receiving them from?

Are our desires received and conceived anywhere but from sitting at Jesus' feet?

As we seek him, spend time with him, learn from him, love him, he'll begin to birth and reveal those desires in us...and they'll always be for a quieter, more peaceful life.

Donn in NY.

Me getting saved...Montana...a wife, kids, anywhere but NYC, working from home, etc.

Real ministry, real service, is best done by sitting at Jesus' feet. He's the one who does all the work. Who can get up in everyone's business and reach where we can never reach...Maybe Martha forgot Jesus fed thousands of people on several occasions with a small kids meal.

As we close...are you spending that quiet time with him?

Does your life feel chaotic, even if you don't have anything going on at the moment?

Is there a still small voice, and are you taking the time to hear it?

Or are we busy about something we think is our father's business, but it's really just our own desire and need to feel busy?

The more we sit, the less busy we desire to be. And the more busy and the more effective we can be when we do get to work. For His Kingdom. Not ours.