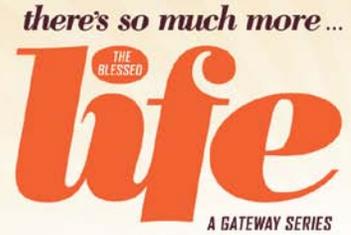


The Happy Life



Focus Living “the blessed life” means living “the happy life.” When we live with an attitude of generosity, we reflect the character of God and are filled with joy.

Open What’s the most overwhelming expression of generosity you’ve ever witnessed?

Read Acts 20:35 tells us to remember the words of Jesus: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” The word *blessed* means *happy*. The blessed life means the happy life. It’s not about stuff or about giving to get. The blessed life is living with an attitude of generosity, just as God does, and being filled with joy.

The subject of the Bible is God, and the verb, or action, of the Bible is “give.” We’re saved because God gave His Son, Jesus gave His life for us, and we gave our lives to Him. We live to give—our lives *and* our “treasure.” According to Matthew 6:19–21, our heart will follow our treasure. Our heart will follow that which we invest our time and money into. We’re warned not to “store up” treasures on earth, but in heaven through generous giving.

Zacchaeus willingly and cheerfully gave after his encounter with Jesus in Luke 19:1–10. The attitude of giving is cheerfulness. We can give cheerfully and freely when we receive freely. If we struggle in the area of giving, we’re actually struggling in the area of receiving. Legalism and works-based thinking make us believe we’ve earned what we have, so we try to protect it. When we understand that even when we have worked hard, it’s God who has blessed us with the increase, we can give freely.

Giving is completely about our heart and attitude. We don’t give because of the law; we give because of love. As we walk freely in God’s grace, we become cheerful givers.

Talk

1. Why does living a generous life lead to a joy-filled (happy) life?
2. Why is it important to understand that the happy life is not about *stuff* or giving to get?
3. Matthew 6:19–21 tells us that our heart will follow our treasure. Describe a time when you became more interested in something after you had given to or invested in it. Why did you develop “a heart” for it?
4. How is our attitude about giving, directly linked to our attitude about receiving?
5. Read the following verses. According to these verses and any others that come to mind, what has God freely given us?
John 3:16–17 1 John 4:13
Ephesians 1:3–8 1 John 3:1
6. “We are most like God when we live with an attitude of generosity.” ~ Pastor Robert Morris. What do you think that means?

Live

1. Matthew 10:8 says, “Freely you have received, freely give.” In what area of life is it most difficult for you to give freely? Why?
2. We don’t give based on law, but out of love. So far, would you say that your giving has been motivated by a sense of duty or out of love? In general, do you feel resentful or joyful when you give? What would you like your attitude to be? Why?

Pray

Thank God for His generosity toward you. Ask Him to birth a generous spirit within you, or to increase the joy as you continue to trust Him in this area. Ask Him to show you any areas in which you are struggling to trust Him for provision, and to help you give “freely.” Thank Him that He wants you to live a blessed, happy, joy-filled life.