

The Good Life

There have been many people who have attempted to define the good life. Some of these theories have seemed to prevail in culture.

Hedonism is the ethical theory that pleasure (in the sense of the satisfaction of desires) is the highest good and proper aim of human life.

Epicureanism encourages that we seek happiness and avoid pain.

Asceticism is the belief that through self-denial, rejecting materialism, poverty, seclusion, the closer you get to having nothing and being nothing, the better off you will be. Asceticism is the opposite of hedonism.

Fatalism espouses the belief that everything is predetermined and inevitable and man is powerless to change anything, so resignation and acceptance is the best approach to life.

God's word offers a different definition of the good life. It reveals the truth and defines reality accordingly.

1 Peter 3:10-12 AMP

***10** For let him who wants to enjoy life and see good days [good—whether apparent or not] keep his tongue free from evil and his lips from guile (treachery, deceit). **11** Let him turn away from wickedness and shun it, and let him do right.¹ Let him search for peace (harmony; undisturbedness from fears, agitating passions, and moral conflicts) and seek it eagerly. [Do not merely desire peaceful relations with God, with your fellowmen, and with yourself, but pursue, go after them!] **12** For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous (those who are upright and in right standing with God), and His ears are attentive to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who practice evil [to oppose them, to frustrate, and defeat them].*

The Good Life is a Transformed Life

Many people believe that they need to add something in order to have the good life. They want to add things like church, or money or relationships, etc.

¹ This turning from wickedness to righteousness is also known as repentance.

The only way to truly live the good life is to transform the old nature and bring about the new nature. You must be born again (John 3).

2 Corinthians 5:17 AMP

Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!

Some would say that having a healthy body was the good life, but what good is it to have a healthy body and a sick soul?

Romans 12:1-2 AMP

1 *I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.*

2 *Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].*

There is a before and after for the transformed life. Conversion is a metamorphosis - a change in nature.

The Good Life is a Spirit-Filled Life

Galatians 5:19-25 AMP

19 *Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious): they are immorality, impurity, indecency, **20** Idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies), **21** Envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. **22** But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the*

*work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, **23** Gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law that can bring a charge. **24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus (the Messiah) have crucified the flesh (the godless human nature) with its passions and appetites and desires. **25** If we live by the [Holy] Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. [If by the Holy Spirit we have our life in God, let us go forward walking in line, our conduct controlled by the Spirit.]*

We can't live the good life through good intentions or intellect. We can only live the good life through the Spirit of God.

Jesus made it clear to the disciples that they needed to wait until they have received the empowerment of the Holy Spirit before they could go forth and accomplish His will (cf. Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:18-20).

The Holy Spirit takes what you know of the Scripture and enables you to apply it so you can live differently.