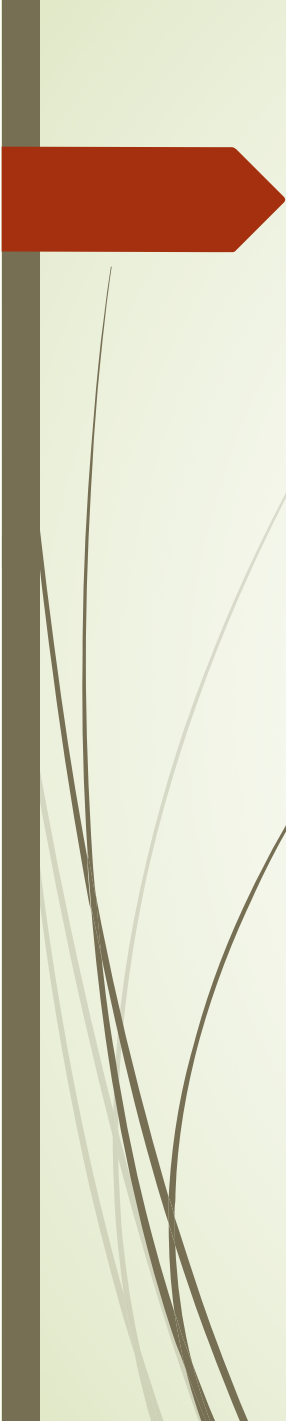


LIVING MY BEST LIFE
Joshua 22:1-9

Woodland Park Church of Christ
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Then Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, ² and said to them: “You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. ³ You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. ⁴ And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as He promised them; **now therefore, return and go to your tents and to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan.** ⁵ **But take careful heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to keep His commandments, to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.**” ⁶ So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

7 Now to half the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the *other* half of it Joshua gave a possession among their brethren on this side of the Jordan, westward. And indeed, when Joshua sent them away to their tents, he blessed them,⁸ and spoke to them, saying, **“Return with much riches to your tents, with very much livestock, with silver, with gold, with bronze, with iron, and with very much clothing. Divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.”**⁹ So the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel at Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go to the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, which they had obtained according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses. **Joshua 22:1-9 [NKJV]**



LIVING MY BEST LIFE . . .

- Relaxing to the max or having the most fun.
- The mindset: “Everything at this moment (despite conventional standards) is just the way I want it to be.”
- Generally associated with a life of ease, pleasure, and excess.
See Proverbs 21:17
- Very few rules and restraints, especially those from days gone by – “Be with whom I want when I want to!”



A more profitable and beneficial notion of *Living My Best Life* . . .

Living a life that is filled with joy and contentment and allows me to reach my full potential and to become all and what God intended me to be. It means being intentional about the way I choose to live. It involves rising to the occasion to be the best version of myself.

Scriptural Context

Recall that Israel defeated Sihon and Og and had taken lands of Jazer and Gilead east of the Jordan during Moses' lifetime.

Numbers 21:21-35

- Reuben, Gad, and one-half of the tribe of Manasseh took a liking to this land and entreated Moses for it. **Numbers 32:1-5**
- Moses pushed back and conditioned the two and one half tribes' possession of the land on their assisting their brothers to subdue the lands west of the Jordan. **Numbers 32:6-22**
- Following Moses' death, Joshua reminded Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh of their pledge/oath. **Joshua 1:12-15**

- Lands on the west side of Jordan have been divided; now, Reuben, Gad, and the one half tribe of Manasseh would be returning east of the Jordan with **GREAT POSSESSIONS**.
- Moses had already counseled and forewarned the children of Israel about the trappings of material means (money, property, land, etc.).

“Now this *is* the commandment, *and these are* the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe *them* in the land which you are crossing over to possess, ² that you may fear the LORD your God, to **keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life**, and that **your days may be prolonged**. ³ Therefore hear, O Israel, and **be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly** as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’ **Deut. 6:1-3**


- It was imperative that Israel understood that their best life was not really tied up in the material things they possessed.

And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for ***one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.***” **Luke 12:15 (prelude to the parable of The Rich Fool – Luke 12:16-21)**

- If they did not (we do not) enjoy God’s favor, it would really amount to nothing!

For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?


Matthew 16:26



Surely enough, when they became comfortable and lived it up in Canaan, they began to experience difficulty and faced numerous bouts with the enemy, until they would finally be besieged, overrun, and taken away captive by the Assyrians in the North and Babylon in the South. **II Kings 17:1-20; II Kings 25:1-21**


These tragedies happened despite God's unfailing love and patient longsuffering

He would send prophet after prophet to warn Israel, but to no avail.

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- *The Prophet Jeremiah's experience speaks to the notions of many today concerning "living my best life" . . .*
 - Recall that many want to do away with convention and "outdated" norms in living their best life.

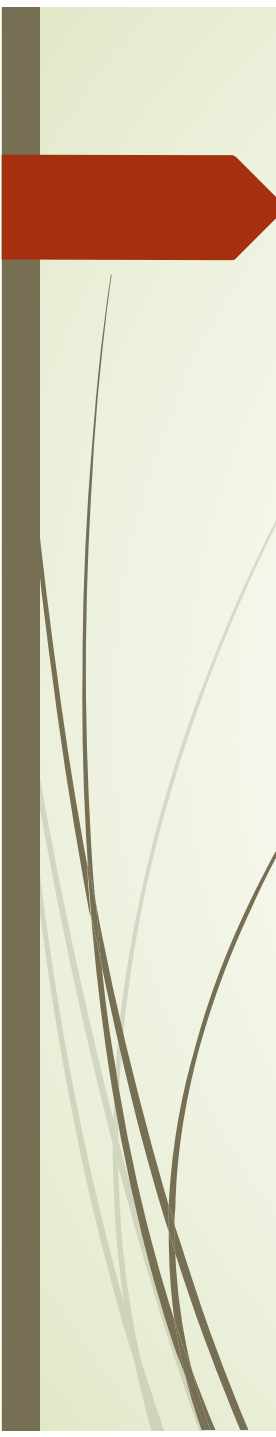
Thus says the LORD: "Stand in the ways and see, and ***ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it;*** then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk *in it.*'"

Jeremiah 6:16



➤ We would do well to remind our children (and ourselves) of the paths and ways that have always sustained us, carried us, and brought us through (i.e., the ingredients to Living our Best Life)–

- Reverence for God
- Hard work
- Discipline
- Commitment
- Pride and satisfaction in a job well done
- Respect for elders and authority
- Strong family values



“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. **Deuteronomy 6:6-9**

I. THE ACQUISITION OF MATERIAL WEALTH IS NOT NECESSARILY PROOF OF DIVINE FAVOR.

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. **Matthew 5:44-45**

Material substance can be used to facilitate God's work; and when we act as good stewards over His blessings God is pleased.

II. THE BEST LIFE IS A SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE


But the *fruit of the Spirit* is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. **Galatians 5:22-23**

- The brother/sister imbued with the fruit of the Spirit --
 - keeps God's law, even in the face of great temptation;
 - lives a healthier and more stress-free life;
 - endures life's problems and stresses better (**see Philippians 4:7**);
 - is more likely to continue when the way grows tough (**see Proverbs 24:16**);
 - tends to overcome challenges.



THE BEST LIFE IS IN THE LORD, PERIOD!!!

Then Peter began to say to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.” ²⁹ So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, ³⁰ who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—**and in the age to come, eternal life. Mark 10:28-30**



For “He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹ Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.¹² **For the eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, and His ears *are open* to their prayers;** but the face of the LORD *is* against those who do evil.” **I Peter 3:10-12**



Lord's Invitation Extended to All

➤ Be added to the Lord's body

Hear the gospel (**Acts 15:7**)

Believe (**Acts 15:7**)

Repent (**Acts 2:38**)

Confess (**Acts 8:37**)

Be baptized (**Acts 2:38, 8:38**)



Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- **Be reconciled unto the Lord** (1 John 1:8-9); or
- **Desire prayer** (James 5:16).