



LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE!

FEBRUARY 11, 2024

WORSHIP

God is Here, House of the Lord, One God, Glorify You Alone, Alabaster Jar.

WELCOME

What's your idea of the "best version" of yourself? How about the best life that the "best version" of yourself can have?

WORD

ROMANS 12:1-8

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. ⁴ For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; ⁷ if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Have you ever thought about what it means to live the best life – a full life, the kind of life that God wants you to live? A life full of joy and peace, a meaningful life, and one where you are fully satisfied. Jesus wants us to live life to the full (**John 10:10**). While the thief wants to “**steal, kill, and destroy**”, Jesus came that we could have “**life, and have it abundantly**” –the Greek word used for abundant means having EQUI-DISTANCE, a life perfectly balanced. Everything is perfectly controlled as Christ is the center! It is the fullness of life! How do we live this kind of life? The Bible contains some counter-intuitive realities:

1. To have more, give not take (**Acts 20:35**).
2. To be first, be last (**Mark 9:34-35**).
3. To be leader, serve (**Matthew 20:26-28**).
4. To live, die to self (**Matthew 16:25**).
5. To have real freedom, submit to God (**John 8:36**).
6. To have the best life, surrender (**Romans 12:1-2**).

Remember these three points about living the BEST LIFE:

1. SURRENDER

Romans 12:1 begins with THEREFORE, bringing into mind Paul's appeal to think of the mercies of God as described in all the previous chapters of Romans – with all the things God did for us, as lost sinners (**Romans 1-3**), being given grace and justification (**Romans 4-6**), and empowered to live through sanctification (**Romans 6-8**), and understanding of God's ultimate sovereignty (**Romans 9-11**) – with all these things, how are we to respond? Paul gives the command to “**PRESENT**”, an act of offering akin to the traditional offering the best to God– with all the things He has done, given His all, is it asking too much from us to surrender our lives to Him? This was tough for the Greek mindset (the body is corrupt), but the Bible contradicts that and gives importance to the body. The body is neutral – it can be used for sin, and it can be used for God. It can hurt people, and it can serve people. We are to **SURRENDER** our bodies to the Lord! A “**living and holy sacrifice**” also emphasizes that we must LIVE for the Lord every day, die to ourselves, avoid the things that do not glorify God and choose to do the things that please and honor Him.

According to Jesus, **surrendering** means to “deny” the self, to “take up your cross”, and “follow” Jesus (**Matthew 16:24-26**). God wants our best, and the only way to give that to Him is when we die to ourselves. Paul calls it a “**spiritual service of worship**”. To worship God is not just once a week – God wants us to worship Him daily. When we cook, we cook for the Lord. When we work, we work for the Lord. A life of complete surrender will put sin farthest from our mind.

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2. SEPARATE

Romans 12:2 gives us a reminder as the grammar changes – **DO NOT BE CONFORMED** – now in the present tense, it speaks of something we do daily. We cannot allow ourselves to be conformed in the ways of this world! Without realizing it, the world is always trying to influence us through media, the people we meet, the environment we live and work in, forces us to fit into a mold to appear like everybody else. The Bible is clear – bad company corrupts good morals (**1 Corinthians 15:33**)! We need to be set apart from this world. John points to the **lust of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17)** as distortions that can bring about our destruction. God's commands are always for our good. Stop copying the world; the things of this world will pass away, so we really need to live out a set-apart kind of life!

Part of the command is to **BE TRANSFORMED** (metamorphosis), allowing an outside force to change us. The secret is not with us – it is God's Spirit, Word, and people who will impact our lives to be transformed into freedom (**2 Corinthians 3:16-18**). Belief comes before behavior – if the mind believes wrong values, we will never be changed. Satan has captured the minds of many Christians today. We will never know the lies of Satan until we know and embrace the TRUTH that sets us free (**John 8:32**)! **Joshua 1:8** reminds us to meditate on the Word day and night, because that yields the best life. Allow **SOUND THINKING** based on TRUTH to permeate our minds and lives daily. The best life is in the center of God's will!

3. SERVE

Romans 12:3 continues to speak about the mind – to serve God, we better think properly, neither overestimate nor underestimate ourselves. **Verses 4-5** then talks about the church then in **verses 6-8**, Paul writes of various gifts from the Lord to serve others. These gifts are also mentioned in other passages like **1 Corinthians 12:14-18**, **Ephesians 4:11-13**, and **1 Peter 4:10-11**. We all have different functions, and to live the best life, we must know that God designed us to serve. We are not just to take and receive. There are different avenues for us to serve. We ought to look for others that we can help. Focusing on others rather than ourselves will do us good. Happy Christians are those who are serving the Lord and thinking of others! As we have seen in the example of Joni Erickson Tada's life, we must learn to serve others even in times of our suffering. If we realize that the heart of God is that He wants what is best for us (**Romans 8:32**), we will really surrender our lives to Him. God wants us at our best. We go wherever God wants us to go and do whatever God wants us to do. He does not withhold any good thing from us (**Psalms 84:11-12**) – but we need to surrender to God. If we don't, we will keep on running our own life to waste. Live your best life in CHRIST!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

Based on the message, how would you define the BEST LIFE? What is its difference compared to a normal life?

2. Setting It Right.

What will you SURRENDER today so that you can enjoy God's purpose and blessing for your life?

3. Living It Out.

How will you SERVE others and point them to Jesus this week?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Begin each day by praying for ways that you can offer yourself to the Lord as a living sacrifice. Seek out people whom you can serve with the spiritual gifts that the Spirit of God has blessed you with. Tell others about Jesus, the only and true Source of the best life so that they too can experience the well-balanced, abundant life that comes through Christ alone!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- Recovery and restoration for places devastated by recent typhoons and hurricanes.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCFE Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Retreat Centre and Shelter

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

ROMANS 12:2

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