

October 10th, Setting Your Mind
Part 2 in the series ‘The Gift of Life’

What were some things from last Sunday’s message that resonated with you?

Was there anything you wrestled with?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:23–27 (NIV)

Whatever anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about. **22** Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham’s descendants? So am I. **23** Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. **24** Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. **25** Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, **26** I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. **27** I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. **28** Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. **29** Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? **30** If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness.

Why is Paul listing off some of the hardships he has endured for the sake of the Gospel?

Why was Paul willing to go through all this hardship?

What do you think Paul would say about seeing life as a gift?

How might have Paul’s understanding that life is truly a gift compel him to say “Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” (Acts 21:13)?

In Philippians 4:4 Paul writes, “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” What reasons did Paul have to rejoice when he was going through such great hardship for the sake of the Gospel?

As followers of Jesus, we have good news to share! How does looking at:

- a) our own lives in light of the Gospel of Jesus
 - b) the lives of those around us in light of the gospel of Jesus
- ...affect our mindset when it comes to seeing life as a gift?

In Philippians 4:6 Paul writes, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” How does shifting our focus from ourselves and our anxieties and fears to God help us gain a more accurate perception of reality?

Here are three examples of mindsets that we can have, regardless of circumstance:

- Life is a competition and I have to make sure I don't lose, or fall behind.
- Life is punishment that I am reaping for mistakes I have already made - and second chances or new beginnings are exceedingly rare, if they exist at all.
- Life is meaningless. There is no purpose or real significance to life.

In light of the Gospel of Jesus, how are each of these examples distorted, false takes on reality?

What are some mindsets that will likely result in us seeing life as the gift that it truly is?

A:

- I have an opportunity to plant seeds (figurative or literally) that could result in an eternal harvest
- There are things I can learn and discover that can improve the quality of my life and the lives of others
- There are things I can do right now that could improve the world in some small way, as well as my life and the lives of others
- I have the opportunity to give and receive genuine love (which is widely considered the greatest thing in life, perhaps the only truly valuable thing in life.)
- There is much in God's creation that I can experience and enjoy right now, in my present circumstances.
- I have been given an opportunity to do something meaningful and significant in with my life

Read John 6:27-29, 35

27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” **28** Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” **29** Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

...**35** Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

Why won't we be able to ever truly see life as the gift that it is if we hold onto a material mindset?

What do you think Jesus means when he says, “Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”?

