

The Good and Beautiful Life - Introduction

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Summary

The Good and Beautiful Life may be a new book title, but it's not a new concept. Rather, it is a message at the center of Jesus' ministry and embraced by the Church through the centuries. Yet, it has seemingly been forgotten, beginning in the 20th century. The author Wilbourne recently wrote of his growing realization of the chasm between the Grace he embraced and his unchanging life in Christ -

“And yet, after a while, having heard this song of grace over and over, and after singing it myself again and again, when I looked at my own life I began to feel a growing distress. . . . The distance in my own life between the grace I proclaimed and the life I was living—that gap was not shrinking. Grace covered me, but why wasn't it changing me?”

Smith's book addresses an important aspect of this issue. At our last meeting we began with the introduction and a discussion about our overall place in the world, before and in Christ our Lord.

Key points

Discussion Notes

This month I'm sharing my notes from our meeting where we examined the 'heart', His Spirit, and how we understand Him. While it's

not an expansion on our discussion, I hope the notes can stand enough on their own to encourage our thoughts and consideration.

1. Consider

the correlation of the polluted World and Self, and the wet fish problem.

▪ Consider

the command to Holiness and obedience to Scripture, which is contrary to our understanding and inclination.

▪ The

Goal is learning and adopting virtue, a life of God's understanding and practice, while still in the unredeemable problem suffered upon the world.

▪ Jesus

tells us the seat of a person and his actions is the 'heart'. The problem is not only that our heart is warped, but aside from the protests of our God-given conscience (which we can sear), we have no other basis whatsoever to doubt if we are right or wrong before God. This is the fish that cannot be unaware that it is wet - it knows no better until shown (and convinced) (and accepts) otherwise.

▪ It

matters if we are right before God for at least two reasons - our alignment with our Creator's intent for us, and His judgment of our worthiness on the Last Day.

▪ Show

me a sinner who is content in his state, and see a man who fails to realize his plight now and on the Last Day.

▪ God's

Goal is to call us back Home out of this delusion of wrong content, learning

and enjoying living in the Kingdom, now.

Jesus came to help, not condemn - He tells us the truth of God and us. The Old Testament is a demonstration of His and our characters; the New Testament reveals the New Covenant and explains how to live in God's realities.

- Aside

from the conscience and His Word, His Spirit in us as followers of Christ is the truest exposure to God we have.

1. **Luke 24.27, 31-32** - 27 And beginning

with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the

Scriptures concerning himself...31 Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. 32 They asked each other,

"Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

- **Gal 5.22** - Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

- Consider

the difference between two postures of heart:

1. **Prov 12.18** - There is one whose

rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

1. Wherever we see the

smoke of actions, words, thoughts that are contrary to the Character of God, the Fruits of His Spirit, we can know there is a fire of misalignment, sin.

1. This book goes on to

help us see, understand, and seek repentant healing from blights of sin.

1. His Word, His Spirit,

our understanding, our repentance, our conformity - all under His forgiveness

and as His workmanship. These are the

makings of the Beautiful Life in the now, a foretaste in in our Saved lives

today, and of the fullness we hope to have when we stand before Him free of sin

in us and sin in the Creation we occupy.

1. **John 14.21** - He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.