**More - Week 1 - More Life - Show Up Sunday**

**Teaching Team Notes**

**Introduction: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness**

In July 1776 these words began to re-shape our nation… Fantastic intro!

“We hold these truths to be self‐evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and Happiness.” (Intentionally leave out “the pursuit of”)

These powerful words are, of course, a quote from the beginning of the Declaration of Independence. The document that began laying the foundation for our great nation…

“Life, Liberty and Happiness” … It is a simple yet powerful distillation of the American dream isn’t it?

Now, anyone here notice that there are some important and interesting words left out of this sentence? Anyone notice? What’s missing? (answers)

Yes! Here is how the actual text reads:

“We hold these truths to be self‐evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and **the pursuit of** Happiness.”

Isn’t it interesting that the first two items (Life and Liberty) are stated plainly and without condition. BUT when it comes to “Happiness” it says “**the pursuit of** Happiness.” Why is that?

It’s like the first two (Life and Liberty) are a given, but good luck trying to get happiness!

And as Americans we do “pursue happiness!” And sometimes in very strange ways, don’t we?

For example, Have you ever thought about the strange ways we celebrate our nation's independence??

First we test the outer limits of our digestive systems by eating more food in one sitting than we should eat in a month. (Gross picture Joey Chestnut winning Nathan’s Hotdog eating competition) Congratulations Joey Chestnut – who set a new world record by eating 74 hot dogs in 10 minutes this past July 4th! Pursuit of happiness?!?

Then we wait in line for hours in 1000 degree heat to see how close we can get to an explosion OR we just illegally blow up stuff up in the freedom of our own our backyard (Funny Redneck Fireworks Picture) …

I’m so thankful for our freedom to “pursue happiness.” I’m just not sure this is what our founding fathers had in mind :)

Jokes aside, we really do live in an amazing country, BUT, with all of our pursuing happiness, I think we we have to ask ourselves, “How are we doing?” … “How happy are we?”

As we were preparing for this talk we did a little digging to find out how we are doing as a nation in our pursuit of happiness and we came across a fascinating comprehensive study comparing our happiness to the happiness of people living in different countries of the world/.

Any guesses on where America ranked in regards to happiness compared to other countries?

The U.S. came in at an underwhelming 25th place in the world. 25th!?! Just to put that into perspective, we finished two places behind Rwanda... Now Rwanda is a beautiful country filled with wonderful people but keep in mind that just 20 years ago almost 20% of the population was either killed or wounded in a horrific genocide that lasted 100 days. This study says they are happier than we are!

But to me the most interesting part of that study was this; let me just read it to you ”…the higher the respondents rated happiness as a distinct personal ambition, the less happy they were in their lives generally and the more likely they were to experience symptoms of dissatisfaction and even depression.” (Pause) Do you get what that is saying? *Let’s do the math. (show this graphic) “We think seeking happiness (equals) happeniness” but what this says” “Seeking happiness (does not equal) happiness.”*

Wow! I need to have a conversation with Thomas Jefferson! Think about this -- could it be that the “pursuit of happiness” is actually making me unhappy? Could it be that the “pursuit of happiness” is the totally wrong pursuit?

And I have to believe that most of us in this room would raise our hand if asked, “How many of you in your own “pursuit of happiness” have found yourself wondering, “Isn’t there more?”

Could it be that Jesus was right when he said, “Who tries to save his life will lose it…” (use message version, don’t put it on screen)

**More Series**

The truth is there is MORE to life than what the American dream can offer, and it’s not found in “the pursuit of happiness.”

The “MORE” we are all after isn’t found in titles or bank accounts or fleeting pleasures. The “MORE” we desperately long for is found in a certain kind of life I will share with you today.

So today we are starting a new series we are calling “MORE”. And over the next 5 weeks we’ll focus on Jesus’ teachings and discover how we can satisfy that longing for MORE.

Our hope is that you will discover how following him can lead to a life of “MORE” that will actually satisfy and fill you with...

* More Life!
* More Joy!
* More Love!
* More Impact! switch these two
* and More Hope!

Jesus came to show us a different way, a better way to live. One of Jesus best friends made this simple observation about him: *“In him was life…”*  John 1:4 (NIV) And Jesus didn’t hide it, he even said, *“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. -John 10:10 (NIV)* Jesus didn’t tell us ~~you~~ to pursue happiness. He did one better. I believe in this verse he is saying to you and to me, “I know you are looking for MORE out of life. Let me show you how you can have life...No, even better, let me show you how you can life to the full!

**3 Kinds of “Life**

**#1: “Bios” Life**

Need better transition. Figure out what should be on screen. Now, in the original language of the New Testament there are 3 words for “life.” One is the word **bios**. **Bios** is the root word for biology. It means a “physical life.” It can also refer to a chronological life. The average **bios** life includes…

* …250,000 hours of sleeping,
* 76,000 meals eaten,
* and 200,000 trips to the bathroom!

All of that is a part of a **bios** life. And a **bios** life can feel like “you are going through life, but there’s no life going through you.”

That is the first word for life, **bios** life.

**#2: “Psuche” Life**

And there is a second word for life in the New Testament and it is the word, **psuche**. Get humor by saying, I know it looks like “the sucky life” **psuche** is the root word for psychology. It is a reference to the “mental demension of life.” **psuche** is all about our mind, emotions and will. **Psuche** life could include…

* …your intellect and education.
* …your inner determination and will power.
* …the inner abilty to let your mind control your actions rather than your feelings.

Whatever it takes to help you think about yourself, think about others and think about life in a way that’s productive – that is the **psuche** life

If the **bios** life is here (body); the **psuche** life is here (head).

**#3: “Zoe” Life**

But then a there’s third and final word for “life” and it’s the word **zoe**. **Zoe** includes a **bios** (body) kind of life, but goes way beyond that. **Zoe** also includes the **psuche** life (head) but is not limited to just that. So, while **bios**, is about the physical demension; and **psuche** is about mental/emotional demension; **Zoe** is completely different because it is about about the qualitative demenision of every part of life – We call this the spiritual dimension.

When Jesus says, *“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full…” (John 10;10)* guess which of the three words he uses for “life?” Right, **zoe**! Jesus is talking about a quality of life with God that changes your past; changes your present, and changes your future. It’s when you find your way back to God, that you begin to experience the **zoe** kind of life. I love the way The Message translate what Jesus said: *“I came so they can have real and eternal life,* ***more*** *and better life than they ever dreamed of.” – John 10:10 (The Message)*

See, a **zoe** life ultimately refers to eternal life; the kind of life that you and I were made for that will never end. But please don’t misunderstand; **zoe** life is not just something you experience in Heaven in the afterlife. The **zoe** life is also about the kind of life God has for us right now; right this minute and every second our heart is beating!

**Bios -> Psuche -> Zoe**

It has been my experience that people tend to think they are going to find the “more” they are looking for in each of these kinds of life: **bios, psuche & zoe**

Put these explanations up in the previous section. For many of us we start out thinking life is going be found in the **bios** life. We think that somehow through satifying or pleasing this (body) we will find life. It might come through exercise ~~physical fitness~~ or it might come through partying; it might come though accumulating wealth or it might come through pornography – but either way we think that the bios life is going to be the satisfying life. But it always leaves us feeling, thinkng and then saying, “There has got to be more to life!”

And because it doesn’t satisfy, we start to pursue the **psuche** life. We think (head) to ourselves “there has to be more.” So we pursue learning, higher education or some kind of self-help. We try to mentally better ourselves in hopes that we will find what’s missing. For some this pursuit leads us to couseling or therapy. For others because of an addiction developed through the **bios life** we go through recovery and 12-step groups. All good things, but it still leaves us thinking (head), “There has got to be more to life!”

After months or sometimes years and years of pursuing the **bios** life and the **psuche** life we realize life is not found in satisfying the body; and life is also not found in satisfying the mind. Life is only found when we allow the God who gave us life to come back into our life – it is then that we experience life and life to the full – **zoe** life. The life we have been looking for!

See, when you are born you were given a physical or **bios** life. At birth you were also given ~~a soul or~~ **psuche** life. But it’s only when we say “yes” to God’s Spirit through Jesus living inside us that we also experience the divine or **zoe** life. It is living the **bios, psuche** and **zoe** lifethat brings us back to God's original intention for us to have eternal life.

C.S. Lewis was one of the great intellectuals of the last 100 years. He found his way back to God in this pursuit of more explained it like this: “The Spiritual life which is in God from all eternity, and which made the whole natural universe is Zoe. Bios has, to be sure, a certain shadowy or symbolic resemblance to Zoe: but only the sort of resemblance there is between a photo and a place, or statue and a man. A man who changed from having Bios to having Zoe would have gone through as big a change as a statue which changed from being a carved stone to being a real man. And that is precisely what Christianity is about. This world is a great sculptor's shop. We are the statues and there is a rumor going around that some of us are some day going to come to life.”

Wording needs to be more clear so the 3Cs emerge better. The difference is this: in the **bios** and **psuche** life your focus is on you. It’s on yourself. Your body. Your mind. But in **zoe** life there is a dramatic shift in focus. Rather than focusing your life on yourself, you focus on…

* ..on God and what **God** wants; not what we want. And that shift is led supernaturally by God’s Spirit now living inside us. And being led by God’s Spirit allow us the opportunity to always chose what will bring more life!
* Consequently we begin to also focus first on **others** before ourselves. This counter-intuitive approach brings us more life!
* Inspired and led by the Spirit of God this focus on others expands to people outside here to around the **world.** We begin to see ourselves as a part of God’s mission to restore the world back to the way he meant it to be.

(3C diagram) So we can remember this way of living, we call it being a 3C Christ-follower. Someone who Celebrates, Connects, and Contributes.

**Flatland - Finding Life in Jesus**

There was an amazing little book published in 1884 called “Flatland - A Romance of Many Dimensions by A. Square.” (Show original cover from Wiki Page) that I think provides a great illustration for us…

In the book the author, Edwin A. Abbott, creates a world that only consists of two dimensional space, which means everything is flat...as if all that existed was like a drawing on a paper. The narrator of this story is a square, cleverly named “A. Square.”

Add illustrations.

So all mr. A Square has ever known is a two dimensional, he has never experienced or heard of anything else. Everything and everyone he knows is flat…

Then one night he has a dream that changes everything...He dreams of a world called “Lineland” that is one dimensional world. A world without shapes but only “Lines.” A Square pitties the people of lineland and he tries his best to explain to them that there is more to life than the one dimension they are familiar with...But no matter what he tries the people of lineland don’t understand because there was no way for them to experience or comprehend a different dimension of space.

Then soon after A Square’s dream about “Lineland” he gets a little taste of his own medicine. He is visited by a three dimensional sphere, again creatively named “A Sphere”. At first A Square is unable to see the sphere as anything other than a circle...but then something incredible happens...The Sphere gives the square a glimpse of his three dimensional world “Spaceland”...Suddenly, this two dimensional “person” becomes aware that there is more to life than he ever dreamed possible...there is an entire dimension of life he never knew existed...one with depth, texture and fullness.

I think many of us are a lot like that Square...We are living in a two dimensional world searching for a third dimension without the words or experience to understand...

We are aware that that life is more than just the one “Bios” dimension, we sense our life is more than just the bouncing line of a heart beat. We are aware of our Psuche life...The two dimensional shape our our thoughts and emotions.

But I am afraid that is where some of us get stuck...We get stuck in a flat land...sensing there is more but unsure how to find it…

This is why Jesus came...Jesus is like that Sphere. He came so that we would have life to the full...A three dimensional life filled with depth, texture and fullness that can only be revealed to us through him...Jesus is the embodiment of the full life, the 3 Dimensional Life, a 3 C Life...The Zoe Life.

Just like the Square could not possibly understand the third dimension on his own, we are unable to experience the fullness of life apart from Jesus.

Jesus wants to give you that life...he wants to give you “MORE”...Just like he did for my friend Gail.

**Video Story: Gail Frezados** (Story of Gail finding “life.” Walk through how she’s chased bios, psuche...try to leave people thinking, ‘I don’t want to wait until I’m 60 to have a 3D life.”) LPOT story instead?

**Challenge**

During the next four weeks, we’re going to unpack what it means to live this zoe life...a life of more joy, more love, more hope, more impact. Encourage people to come back every week!

For today, we want to leave you with 2 challenges...one practical, one supernatural.

First, the Practical Challenge:

One of the most practical next steps you can take towards the Zoe life is to go online and take our 3C Spiritual Growth Plan. it will only take a few minutes and it will help you set some personal goals for next steps in living out the Zoe life using the 3Cs. Need a little more here on this…

Now, the Supernatural Challenge:

While setting goals and being intentional is critical for our life with God, this Zoe/3C life is beyond what our best efforts could produce. It is not about becoming a nicer person don’t need this aside (although that will probably be a by-product) it is about being transformed into a new person...The best version of you.

This transformation is so significant that it requires God’s (supernatural) intervention. Remember, Jesus came SO THAT we could have life to the full...a life full of His very own Spirit. In other words, if he had not come it would not be possible. This is GOOD NEWS! Why? Well, because it means that this full Zoe/3C life is a gift that Jesus came to give to us...It is NOT something to be earned or attained by being “good enough.” This full life is a gift that is freely given to everyone and anyone who would ask.

Make this more practical. Start every day with this prayer, “\_\_\_\_” Conclusion. So the question is are you willing to ask God for more of his Spirit? Are you willing to ask Jesus to fill you with his spirit to begin to live in another dimension where fullness can be found...another dimension of life without fear and without end...another dimension of life that alone can satisfy your longing for “MORE”?

**Conclusion: Prayer**

If so, I want to invite you to pray with me as we close. So go ahead and open your empty hands and close your eyes and pray with me as we ask God for more.

(Say slowly and repeat) “Jesus, I want more of what you came to give. I want more of your Spirit and more of your life.”

**Communion**

God never intended for any of us to go through life feeling, thinking and saying, “There has got to be more to life!” He wants you to have life and have life to the full. The same friend of Jesus who described Jesus as “…in him was life” also said this: *“For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” John 6:33* The bread of God from heaven is Jesus and he gives what? (life). Yes, life to the world. And guess which word he used for “life?” That’s right, **zoe** life!

As we take communion, the bread will be passed and we invite you take the bread and join us in receiving **zoe** life. Following that the cup will also be passed and we invite you to take the cup and join us in receiving **zoe** life.