

Biblical Counseling Center publishes eCounselor's Weekly guide, to encourage counselors and all believers in discipleship and daily growth.

### What is LIFE?

by Dr Ron Allchin

#### Most believers return from a mission trip to a third world country forever changed



I recently spent two weeks in Ethiopia. I was so impacted and humbled to realize that "life" to Ethiopians is strikingly different than how most of us think and live. Here are just some of my observations about many of the believers there.

- They were not being annoyed when the electric went off for periods of time multiple times each day.
  - While driving they thought it normal when a herd of sheep or goats block the highway delaying their commute.
  - They did not worry about what someone thought about their wardrobe and sometimes would wear the same clothes for 3 to 4 days.
  - They seemed thankful for an average daily income is 30 Ethiopian Birr a day (\$2.20 in US Dollars.)
  - Shoeshine boys got 1 birr (\$.07) compared to \$5 at any US airport.
  - A used pair of running shoes brought joy as if a new pair had been given.
  - Students couldn't afford the 140 birr (\$10) for a reader for my course (so we supplemented their cost).
- They lived in houses with no running water, and only neighborhood shared restrooms and showers.
  - They thought of three meals a day as a luxury.

Here were people who seemed content with what they had. I wondered how the impact of Western thought about life and "stuff" would impact them. I found myself praying that they might never get confused about the real values of life while thinking of passages that put the real meaning to life into a Biblical perspective.

#### The rich fool thought *stuff* was life, but later found that it wasn't (Lk 12:15-21)

Jesus instructed him and reminded him that "One's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses." God called this rich man a "fool." He reminded him that being rich toward God was where life is truly found. Gathering treasures resulted in his spiritual poverty rather than eternal blessing.

#### The rich young ruler thought *stuff* was life, but he was also wrong (Lk 18:21-23)

This rich young ruler was just another rich fool. He was trusting in his stuff for happiness. When he was told to get rid of it and sell it, his happiness turned to sorrow "for he was very rich." His stuff prevented him from finding the real meaning of life. Jesus pointed him to the real meaning when He said, "Sell your stuff and come, follow me." Jesus offered a relationship with him but the foolish young ruler chose his "stuff."

#### Real life consists of laying up treasure in heaven (Mt 6:19-21)

Investing in heaven means knowing where life is really found. It is not found in things that "rust and corrupt," nor in an abundance of things so that robbers steal your stuff. Life is really found in investing in those things that are eternal. Things like people, and God's church and ministries where people are being impacted for the kingdom. That is where we find life. Remember, people are the only thing you can take to heaven with you. Invest wisely!

**Paul said in Php 1:21, "For to me to \_\_\_\_\_ is Christ."**

**What word would you put in that blank?**

**What is "life" to you? to your family?**

**What type of treasure are you gathering and where are you investing?**

**When a missional opportunity to serve is presented, GO! You too may come back a changed person, living life more for eternal values.**

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