

LIVING IN THE EXTREME

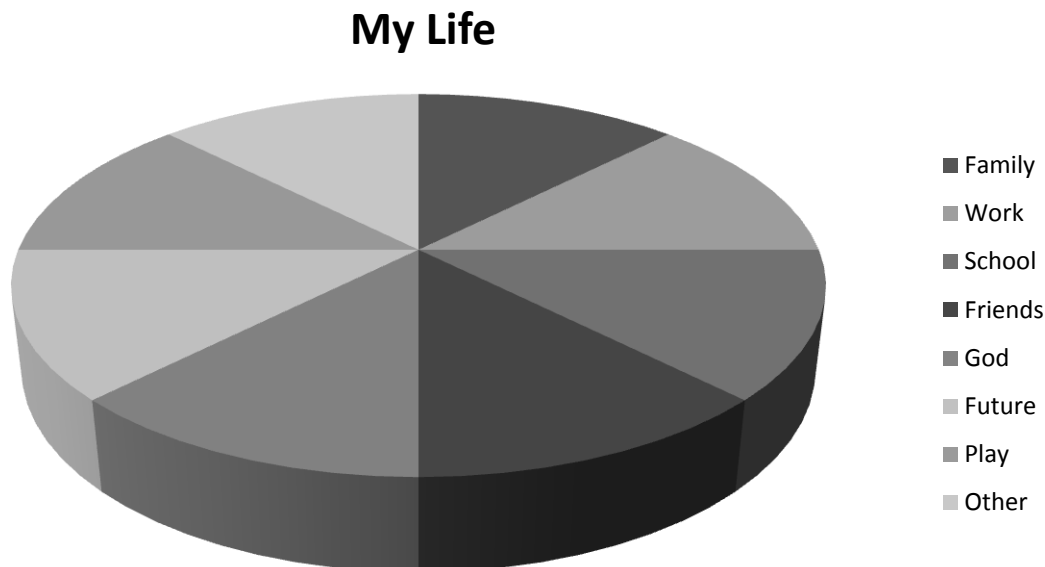
I. JESUS OBLITERATES MIDDLE GROUND

- God as Father or Satan as Father (John 8.31-59)
- Weeds to be burned or Wheat to be gathered (Matt. 13.30)
- Take up your cross or lose your life (Matt. 16.24-25)
- Crushed by the stone or built on the stone (Matt. 21. 33-44)
- Welcomed wedding guest or cast outside (Matt. 22.1-14)
- Brought in to the chamber or locked out (Matt. 25.1-13)

II. JESUS REQUIRES TOTAL REORIENTATION

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|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| -I am the bread of life | -I am the true vine |
| -I am the way, truth, life | -I am the Door of life |
| -I am the light of the world | -I am the Resurrection and the Life |

III. MARKET SHARE JESUS VS. HUB JESUS



We make God a part of our life, a compartment in a busy existence and we tend to feel positive about our spiritual life when God's market share grows and probably somewhat guilty when His market share diminishes. This doesn't work because it centers God on our lives rather than our lives on Him. Jesus has a different vision, a bigger vision for our lives, one that involves every aspect of our existence. What is the filter or the underlying 'why' behind what we do? **Romans 8.5-6, 13.** The Spirit's job is to kill our inborn filter (Matt. 16.24, Gal. 2.20).

IV. THE “AMERICAN DREAM:” GOOD OR BAD?

James Truslow Adams: “A dream in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are.”

“What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?” (Luke 9.25)

V. MOTIVATION TO THE EXTREME: REORIENT AROUND JESUS’ PROMISES

-Your father who sees in secret will reward you (Matt. 6.6)

-You will have everlasting treasures that can never be destroyed (Matt. 6.20)

-Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it (Matt. 16.25)

-Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. (Mark 10:29-30)

-You will inherit the Kingdom of God (Luke 12.32)

What does it take to really believe these promises? To get these promises, we have to expose ourselves to risk, place ourselves at the mercy of God, become weak and desperate for the power of God. How?

Stewardship means placing all I am and everything I have under the rule of King Jesus. He, not me, becomes the basis for every decision, the reason for every action, the driving force behind my existence.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

1. OUTSIDE OF “CHURCH ACTIVITIES,” HOW IS YOUR LIFE ORIENTED?

2. WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL OR FAMILY MISSION? WHO HAS GOD CREATED YOU TO BE IN THIS PARTICULAR TIME AND PLACE?

3. IN WHAT WAY(S) DO YOU NEED TO RISK IN ORDER TO TRUST GOD’S PROMISES?