Introduction: The Christian is a “***new creation***” for whom “***all things have become new’*** 2 Corinthians 5.17. They are raised from the water of baptism to live in “***newness of life***”, Romans 6.4. In a time when character seems to matter less and less to some people, the Bible addresses character in the Christian’s life.

**I) The Quest for Quality Living**

**A) The search for the “good life” is a universal desire.**

**Ecclesiastes 1:3 What profit has a man from all his labor In which he toils under the sun?**

1. Profit- something of enduring value. Something desired in one’s life.

2. “An honorable death is preferable to a degraded life” (Tacitus)

**B) Humanism, the prevailing philosophy of our time, asserts that “…the chief end of human life is to work for the happiness of man upon this earth and within the confines of the Nature that is his home.” (Grab all the gusto you can get)**

1. Considering nothing more than “Nature”, man has always been driven to cry “**Vanity of vanities, all is vanity” Ecclesiastes 1.2**.

2. Humanism, de-humanizes man by denying him the fulfillment of his basic mature.

**Genesis 1:27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.**

**C) Christianity, emphasizes the need for God’s wisdom to show man the “good life”.**

**Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.**

1. Without God’s wisdom we are mere children making child-like decisions and mistakes.

2. How many times do we wish we knew then what we know now?

**D) God’s revealed intention for man involves not only his eternal happiness, but also his earthly happiness.**

1. God wills for man to have the benefit of a quality life.

**Ecclesiastes 11:9 Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment. 10 Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity.**

2. God’s law are the for the preservation and enhancement for man’s life.

**Leviticus 18:5 'You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.**

3. Christ’s death enabled man to be “redeemed” from aimless conduct.

**1 Peter 1:18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,**

“Futile ways” (RSV), “worthless manner of life” (TEV), “empty folly”(NEB)

4. The N.T. Epistles speaks of God’s grace.

**Romans 1:7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

a. Grace – God’s unmerited favor, gracious care.

b. Peace – welfare, health

**E) The Christian has discovered a paradox: the “ultimate” in this life is enjoyed only when one ceases to make this life his or her ultimate concern.**

1. Life is found in the losing of it.

**Matthew 16:25 "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**

**II) The Christian Way of Life: Quality Gained Through Character**

**A) Character, the key in Christian conduct**

1. Character is what you are when no one is watching. True qualities, values, etc.

2. A quality life is impossible without a quality character.

3. The Christian way of life is a triumph of Christ-like character over circumstances.

**1 Peter 1:15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."**

**B) Christian conduct, a positive good.**

**James 1:27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.**

**James 4:17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.**

1. Being a Christian involves doing what is good and not just abstaining from sin.

2. The Christian gives up sin in order to gain.

**Philippians 3:7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.**

3. The Christian deliberately adopts values, principles, and priorities, and fits his life to the ideals, rather than finding an ideal to fit his life.

**C) Christian conduct, an excellent lifestyle.**

**Philippians 3:8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ**

1. The Christian must not just learn but live.

2. The Christian must show his lifestyle, Matthew 5.13-16.

3. The Christian must credit the quality of his life to God.

 **Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them**.

Conclusion: “If there is anything that will make man great, surely it is placing himself unreservedly at the disposal of God and seeking not only to do nothing but God’s will, but to do all God’s will. (B.B. Warfield)

**Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. 14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.**