“Learning To Enjoy Life More”
John 10:10 (NKJV)

Please turn with me in your Bibles to the Gospel of John, chapter ten. And let's read verse 10.

John 10:10 (NKJV) The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

PRAYER

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INTRODUCTION

Remember how fun and enjoyable life was when you were a little kid?

We were filled with boundless energy, and excitement, and enthusiasm. We laughed.....we played.....and we giggled.

We made snow angels.......and sandcastles......and secret hideouts. When we didn’t have anything to play with we would create something like a club house made out of cardboard boxes or a big tent made of blankets and sheets hanging over the dining room chairs.

And when we didn’t have anybody to play with, we would create imaginary friends.
But then somewhere between adolescence and adulthood many of us some how forgot how to enjoy life.

- **PLAY** was replaced with **WORK**.
- **LAUGHTER** was replaced with **SERIOUSNESS**.
- **EXCITEMENT** was replaced with **EXHAUSTION**.
- **CARE-FREE LIVING** was replaced with **RESPONSIBILITIES**.
- And **SIMPLICITY** was replaced with **STRESS**.

In this 10th verse of John 10 Jesus reminds us of a very profound truth and that is just as certainly as He desires that you and I have a **full, abundant, enjoyable life**, Satan will do everything in his power to make sure we don't! Satan is a thief! He wants to steal all our joy and happiness. He wants to load us down with defeat, and discouragement, and depression, and rob us of the abundant life the Lord has in store for us.

But let me remind you, “**Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.**” This means the LORD has not left you and me helpless or defenseless against Satan, but by His mighty power we can enjoy that full and abundant life the Lord has in store for us.

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For the remainder of the message, I want to share with you three very practical principles from God’s word that will help all of us **LEARN TO ENJOY LIFE MORE**.
**BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE #1: “Life Is More Enjoyable When We Take Time For LEISURE” (REST)**

Please turn with me to **GENESIS 2:1,2 (NKJV)**

1. Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.

2. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

1. Following the sixth day of creation GOD ceased His labor.....He took time off.....He stopped working........He rested!

2. Was God too exhausted to do any more work? Absolutely not! He is omnipotent! He is all-powerful. He never gets tired or exhausted.

   God could have created more stars, and more planets, and more galaxies if He wanted to. But He chose to REST! He chose to cease from all His labors.

3. Now it is interesting that the seventh day .....the day GOD rested was the only day of the Creation Week that God blessed and sanctified. Now what does that mean? It means GOD made a period of “rest” or “leisure” a priority.

4. GOD is teaching us, by His own example, that rest is important. There’s an old addage that goes like this....... 

   If our body, soul, and spirit
   Are to function at their best,
   Time is needed for renewal—
   Time for leisure, time for rest.
5. The word of GOD speaks often and speaks highly about the importance of rest. Here are just a few scriptures:

* In **MARK 6:31 (NKJV)** Jesus said to His disciples, “Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and **REST** a while.” For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.”

* In **MATTHEW 11:28 (NKJV)** Jesus offers us this wonderful invitation: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you **REST**.” In verse 29 Jesus goes on to say, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find **REST** for your souls.

* **EXODUS 33:14 (NKJV)** And He said, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you **REST**.”

* **PSALM 55:6 (NKJV)** So I said, “Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at **REST**.

* **PSALM 127:2 (NKJV)** It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved **SLEEP**.

6. Do you remember that wonderful account in **I KINGS 19**, where the prophet Elijah was running for his life to escape those Queen Jezebel had sent to hunt him down? He was so exhausted, and so depressed that he begged the Lord to take his life.

   And then he fell asleep under a broom tree. And God watched over him and protected him while he slept. And on two separate occasions, the Lord sent an angel to wake him up and give him some food, and then the angel let him go back to sleep. You see, the LORD understood that Elijah didn't really want to die, he just needed some rest.
7. Nothing will take the enjoyment out of life more than physical exhaustion. When we don't get enough rest, we are easily discouraged. When we don't get enough rest, we get depressed. When we don't get enough rest our burdens seem heavier and our problems seem bigger. And when we don't get enough rest we are very vulnerable to an attack from Satan.

8. The late Vance Havner used to say, “Come apart and rest a while, or you may just plain come apart.”

ILLUSTRATION

When you listen to a beautiful song, you typically focus on the melody or the lyrics. But do you know one of the things that makes a song so beautiful are the “rests.” RESTS are momentary pauses of silence where no notes are played and no words are sung. Without those RESTS a song would become a bunch of endless notes all jumbled together. Those momentary rests gives flow and beauty to the melody.

9. The same thing is true when it comes to living our lives. When we don't take time to REST our lives become one continuous, monotonous note......work, work, work, work, work. But when we take time to REST as our heavenly Father has taught us by His own example, and commanded us in His scriptures, it gives flow and beauty to our life's melody. Work......REST......Work......REST....Work......REST.....Work......REST....Work......REST....Work......REST.

10. So that is our first Biblical Principle: LIFE IS MORE ENJOYABLE WHEN I TAKE TIME FOR LEISURE (or rest)

Now here's Biblical Principle Number Two..................
BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE #2: “Life Is More Enjoyable When We Take Time To LAUGH”

PROVERBS 17:22 (NKJV)  A merry heart does good, like medicine,  
But a broken spirit dries the bones.

JOB 8:21 (NKJV) says, “He will yet fill your mouth with laughing,  
and your lips with rejoicing.”

ILLUSTRATION

In SEPTEMBER of 1862, President Abraham Lincoln called a special session of his political advisers to discuss a matter of critical national importance.

When the political advisers walked into the conference room, they were shocked to see President Lincoln laughing over an article he had just read written by Artemus Ward.

Lincoln thought the article was so humorous, he read it aloud to all his advisers before beginning the meeting. When he was done reading, Lincoln threw his head back in hysterical laughter, but not a one of his advisers laughed or even cracked a smile.

One man scolded the President. He said, “Mr. President, with all due respect, our nation is at war. How could you possibly laugh at a time such as this?”

President Lincoln suddenly became very serious. He said, “Men, with the fearful strain that is upon me night and day, if I did not laugh I would die, and you need this medicine as much as I.” Mr. Lincoln then turned and presented to the men his first draft of The Emancipation Proclamation.

1. Ecclesiastes 3:4 (NKJV) says there is “A time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance.”

What Solomon is telling us in this verse is that we need seasons of laughter to balance the seasons of sorrow and tears.
2. Sometimes the cares of life can become so great that we stop laughing. Its hard to laugh when your marriage is in trouble, or when one of your children is struggling, or when things aren't going well at work, or when there's sickness or disease in the family.

3. Every day we are bombarded with bad news about terrorist attacks......and tragedies......and crime...... and the state of our nation. And these things can steal our joy and shut down our laughter if we allow them to.

And when we stop laughing, our hearts become weighed down with excessive sadness and hopelessness.

4. That scripture in Proverbs 17:22 teaches us that laughter is like taking good medicine! A good, healthy dose of laughter each day is good for what ails us.

5. The American Medical Association is in agreement with the scriptures on this matter.

Studies have shown that LAUGHTER.......

*Boost the immune system
*Lowers stress
*Decreases pain
*Relaxes your muscles
*Prevents heart disease
*Adds joy and zest to life
*Eases anxiety and fear
*Improves your mood
*Strengthens your relationships
*Improves team work with other people
*Makes you more attractive to others
*Defuses conflict
*And helps improve your over all quality of life.
ILLUSTRATION

When comedian BOB HOPE was nearing his one hundredth birthday, he said, “Everyone tells you that diet and exercise are the secret to long life, but that’s not true. LAUGHTER IS. LAUGHTER is therapy! LAUGHTER is like taking an instant vacation.”

(PAUSE)

ILLUSTRATION

One day this man was walking past a tall, wooden fence that surrounded the local old folks home out on the edge of town, when he heard a bunch of the old folks chanting THIRTEEN.....THIRTEEN.....THIRTEEN.....THIRTEEN.....THIRTEEN on the other side of the wooden fence.

Well his curiosity got the best of him. He found a knot hole and looked to see what was going on, on the other side of the fence. Pretty soon someone poked him in the eye, and as he stepped away from the fence to rub his tear filled eye, he heard the old folks chanting FOURTEEN.....FOURTEEN.....FOURTEEN.

7. Has life “poked you in the eye?” Have you stopped laughing? Has the laughter gone out of your marriage? Do your kids seldom see you laugh any more?

8. Remember this wonderful Biblical Principle: LIFE IS MORE ENJOYABLE WHEN YOU TAKE TIME TO LAUGH!

Now here’s our third Biblical Principle, and that is......
BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE #3: “Life Is More Enjoyable When We Take Time To LOVE”

1. There are many scriptures that stress the importance of LOVE.

   -JOHN 13:34,35 (NKJV) A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

   -I JOHN 4:7,8 (NKJV) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

   -MARK 12:30,31 (NKJV) And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

The apostle Paul sums up this whole issue of love this way in I Corinthians 13.......”Without love, I am nothing!”

2. When you and I were kids, we received a series of vaccinations to inoculate us from certain diseases, such as polio, small pox, and diphtheria.

   If you ever served in the military or you have traveled abroad, no doubt you had to receive vaccinations for such diseases as cholera, malaria, and dysentery.

   But there is a wide-spread disease going around these days for which there is no vaccination. It is a disease that afflicts each and everyone of us to one degree or another. I’m talking about the disease of “hurry-itis.”
3. Many of us are rushing through life at “breakneck speed.” Our schedules are so chocked full of places to go......and things to do......and appointments to keep that we don't have time for those we love the most.

4. And isn't it ironic, that in this day and age when we have all kinds of gadgets and social media to help us be more “connected” with people, we have actually become more disconnected than ever before?

If you don't think so, take a look around the living room next time you have a family gathering. Chances are most of your family will be talking or texting on their cell phones, or checking the newest posts on FACE BOOK, totally disconnected with what's going on around them.

5. There comes a time when we must re-evaluate our priorities and re-arrange our schedules, and say “NO” to the demands and expectations of those who are pulling us away from those who are the nearest and dearest to us.

6. **Life is more enjoyable when we take time to love!**

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CONCLUSION

As a third-century man was anticipating death, he penned these last words to a friend: “It’s a bad world, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any pleasure of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. They are masters of their souls. They have overcome the world. These people are the Christians--and I am one of them.”
The LORD does not intend for you and me to simply ENDURE LIFE, He wants us to ENJOY LIFE TO THE FULLEST.

Perhaps tonight it is time for you to climb out of your “pit” of a dull, boring existence and LEARN TO START ENJOYING LIFE MORE.

Take time for LEISURE!
Take time to LAUGH!
Take time to LOVE!