

A LIFE WELL LIVED: LIVING FOR THE LORD'S "WELL DONE"

PART FOUR: Journey Class, February 28, 2021,
by Dave Wolfe

1

LAST WEEK

- Living in Christian Community
- Seeking Spiritual Wisdom
- Leading through Service

2

THIS WEEK

- Celebrating Milestones
- Finishing Well
- Putting This All Together

3

CELEBRATING MILESTONES

- Milestones are blessings from God and examples of His faithfulness
- They represent major events for an individual, a family, a group of friends, a team of employees, a church, or any other group
- They provide a great opportunity to give thanks to God and to those who participated

4

EXAMPLES OF MILESTONES

- Weddings and anniversaries
- Births
- A new city, job or house
- Completion of a major project or stage of spiritual or personal growth
- Retirement
- And many, many other significant events

5

CELEBRATE MILESTONES

- Joshua 4:4-9:
 - Israel had entered the Promised Land after forty years in the wilderness
 - They had crossed the Jordan River on dry land
 - At God's direction, they took twelve rocks from the riverbed (one for each tribe) and made a permanent memorial to God's faithfulness

6

CELEBRATE MILESTONES

- These were Joshua's instructions to the twelve men appointed for this purpose:
 - "In the future, when your children ask you, 'what do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are a memorial to the people of Israel forever."

7

ROMAN MILESTONES

- Roman roads included stone markers every 4800 feet or so to measure distances within the Roman road network
- Later civilizations continued this practice often measuring from a specified central point ("All roads lead to Rome")
- Our interstate mile markers are a modern variation
- They help you calculate how far you've come and how far you've got to go

8



9



10

SPC MILESTONES

- A map of spiritual growth through life
- Specific milestones include family dedication, coming to faith, baptism, discovering our calling and gifts, marriage and eventually moving to our spiritual legacy

11

CELEBRATE MILESTONES

- I was slow to recognize the importance of milestones
- I focused more on the next event than the last one
- Then our first grandchild was born and everything changed
- Now we seek out every opportunity to celebrate each other and life itself

12

CELEBRATE OUR MILESTONES

- Define and identify milestones
- Prepare in advance for the event
- Celebrate publicly if possible (even if on a delayed or limited basis)
- Keep a special focus on the milestones of others
- Focus on thanks for God's blessings and faithfulness and the hard work of participants

13

REMEMBER

- Milestones provide bonding and shared memories for all celebrants
- Each milestone becomes part of your legacy to pass on to others
- Each milestone also represents a new beginning
- Milestones continue even during a pandemic

14

FINISHING WELL

- Not just an end-of-life issue
- It has relevance for all of us
- This topic can apply to the end of any major life experience for you or your loved ones
 - Analogy to sports teams: season-long goal is to finish well (with months of second guessing by fans if that doesn't happen)

15

OTHER END POINTS OF LIFE

- Retirement
- End of a major project
- End of a major work assignment
- End of a designated term of service
- Finishing a school term
- Moving from your residence or city
- End of any other significant period of life

16

END POINTS I HAVE EXPERIENCED

- Graduations
- Friends moving away
- Friends dying
- My retirement
- End of serious illnesses
- End of church terms of service

17

END POINTS PROVIDE NEW BEGINNINGS

- Earthly life ends, eternal life begins
- Work ends, retirement begins
- Projects end, new opportunities begin
- Education ends, a new job begins
- Leaving current residence, move to a new home
- Military discharge, re-entering civilian life
- Each beginning launches a new season of life

18

FINISHING ANY SEASON OF LIFE WELL

- Acts 20:24--
 - "...If only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me-- the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."
- 1 Corinthians 9:24--
 - "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize."

19

FINISHING SEASONS OF LIFE WELL-continued

- Luke 14:28-30--
 - "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'"
- Be prepared, plan well, and finish well

20

FINISHING SEASONS OF LIFE WELL- continued

- The Parable of the Talents--Matt. 25:14-30
- 2 Timothy 4:7--
 - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
- Hebrews 12:1--
 - "...Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

21

EXAMPLES OF NOT FINISHING WELL

- Judas Iscariot in betraying Jesus and killing himself (Matt. 26:14-16; 27:1-10)
- King Solomon in loving many foreign women who led him to not follow the Lord and to worship idols (1 Kings 11:1-7, 11-13)
- The nation of Israel in the wilderness for forty years and later in the events leading to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities

22

MANY BIBLICAL FIGURES DID FINISH WELL

Examples include many who left a final goodbye to those left behind:

- Jesus (John 13-17)
- Paul to the Ephesian Elders (Acts 20:17-38)
- Paul to Timothy (2 Tim.)

These are known as " Final Discourses"

Bob Wenz, Navigating Your Perfect Storm

23

THOSE FINISHING WELL-continued

- Old Testament figures with final discourses include:
 - Jacob (Gen.48-49)
 - Moses (Deut. 31-33)
 - Joshua (Josh. 23-4)
 - Samuel (1Sam.12)
 - David to Solomon (1Chron. 28-29, 1 Kings 2)

24

FINAL DISCOURSE THEMES

- Announce impending departure
- Exhortation to remain faithful
- Words of comfort and promise
- Prayers and blessings for listeners
- Possible appointment of successor

25

JESUS FINISHED PERFECTLY

- He was true to His ministry at all times
 - In His temptation to start His ministry
 - Each day in His life, message and miracles
 - In His relationship to the Father
 - In His final discourse
 - In His suffering, death and resurrection
 - "It is finished"--John 19:30 (The three most important words in the Bible?)

26

HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS TO HIS DISCIPLES

- He washes their feet
- He predicts His betrayal, Peter's denials and His death
- He comforts them
- He clarifies that He is the only way to the Father
- He promises the Holy Spirit and describes the Spirit's work
- He instructs how they should live and describes challenges they will face
- He confirms His work is complete and prays for them/us

27

PRACTICAL STEPS TO FINISH WELL

- Recognize end points
- Plan ahead and start early
- Never stop learning
- Never stop serving
- Seek God's will
- Leave a spiritual legacy
 - Mentoring
 - Sharing your life experiences

28

PRACTICAL STEPS-continued

- Don't leave things left unsaid or undone
- Hand off effectively to your successor
- Be available for questions
- Pray throughout the process
- Remain humble
- Be thankful
- Embrace what comes next!!

29

THE ESSENCE OF A WELL-LIVED LIFE

- Seek meaning from The Creator, not from His creation
- Focus on God and trust Him in all things
- Seek to know what we can of God's perfect plan
- Understand that we live in a fallen world and that life can be confusing and challenging
- Embrace all of life and learn from every experience
- Appreciate each day God gives us
- Prayer and Bible study are essential

30

A LIFE WELL LIVED-continued

- Follow the perfect model for life: Jesus
 - We will make mistakes
 - It is a lifelong pursuit
- Don't waste a day
 - To recalibrate our lives as needed
 - To seize opportunities to grow
 - The Holy Spirit will guide us

31

A LIFE WELL LIVED-continued

- Love our neighbors
 - Define neighbors all-inclusively
 - Challenges but also great opportunities and blessings await
- Seek to live in true Christian community
- Seek God's spiritual wisdom
 - God gives it freely
 - The Gospel is at the core

32

A LIFE WELL LIVED-continued

- Become a servant leader
 - It is an essential part of being an ambassador of Christ
 - God uses reluctant and imperfect leaders
 - Opportunities to serve are everywhere
- Celebrate milestones
 - Examples of God's blessings and faithfulness
 - Especially the milestones of others
 - Don't wait to start

33

A LIFE WELL LIVED-continued

- Finish well
 - On every project or phase of life
 - Start early (don't wait until late in life to begin this)
 - Leave no loving word unsaid and no such act undone
 - Don't waste a minute of life
 - Never stop learning
 - Remember: Every day is a gift from God

34

A FINAL WORD

Col. 1:9-12

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you, and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way:"

35

COLOSSIANS 1:9-12-continued

bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light."

36

MAY WE ALL ENJOY A LIFE THAT IS
WELL-LIVED

AS WE SEEK TO LIVE FOR THE LORD'S "WELL
DONE"