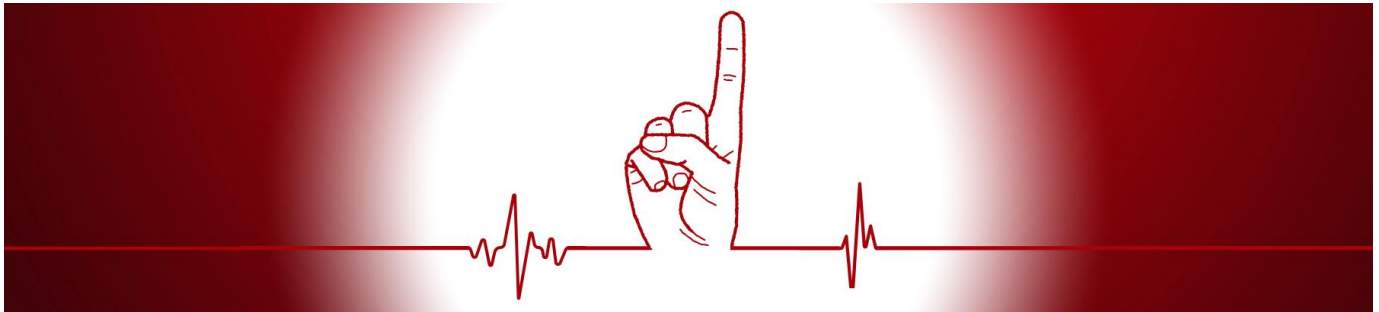


# ONE LIFE TO LIVE



## Table of Contents

- "You Only Live Once"
- The Afterlife
- One Life to Give

### *Scriptures Cited:*

*Ecclesiastes 2:10-14, Luke 16:19-23, John 5:25-29, Revelation 20:14, Revelation 21:4, 1 Corinthians 15:12-19, 1 Corinthians 15:31-33, Luke 9:23-24, Luke 14:25-33, Luke 17:32, Genesis 19:26, Luke 17:33, Matthew 13:44-50, Hebrews 11, Hebrews 12:1-2, Romans 12:1, Romans 8:13, Acts 2:38, Revelation 2:7*

## "YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE"

Once again, in this lesson we will look to God's word and study what He has to say to us; the goal always being to grow in our love towards God, and in our understanding of His will for us.

There is a popular phrase that I am sure we've all heard, which is - you only have "one life to live". It was even the name of a well-known soap opera (1968-2012) and is still a recurring theme in today's culture. In doing a little research on Google, I found that there are multiple songs, which either have the title or the theme of 'one life to live'. The younger generation has even adapted this phrase into the acronym "YOLO", which means 'You Only Live Once'. Nevertheless, it is the same general principle.

There is even a famous television 'preacher' who wrote a book with that same general theme, titled "Your Best Life Now". And when looking online for the meaning behind the phrase "you only have one life to live", it was interesting to see that this has become a philosophy of its own that many are now living by. It basically means to live life to the fullest.

You've probably heard someone say 'you only live once', and usually it's before doing something that they consider 'exciting' or perhaps even risky. Other times it will be used as justification to do something that they've always wanted to do. So that phrase, 'you only live once' kind of becomes the mantra or even a slogan for **why** people do some of the things that they do, or it gives them an excuse for the choices that they make.

Often times you will hear people saying things like "I'm going to live **my** life" or "I'm going to live my **best life now**" as the title of the book says. So, what I want to do is look at the importance of that phrase "You only live once" and see if we can understand what the Bible has to say about that philosophy.

We will start with the words of King Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes, which is considered one of the "books of wisdom". It seems that at some point in Solomon's life, he adopted this philosophy of "You only live once" and lived his life doing whatever he pleased. We can read this in Ecclesiastes chapter 2, beginning in verse 10.

### **Ecclesiastes 2:10**

*<sup>10</sup> And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.*

The wisdom of Solomon had gained him great wealth - and with wealth comes access to the things you desire. Solomon decided with all of that, to basically 'live it up'. He says 'whatever I wanted I did, not withholding anything from myself. I went after it and got it'. This excess is evident by the 700 wives and 300 concubines that he had. It is hard to imagine how that could be wise, but nevertheless that is what he did. As we continue to verse 11, it reads:

### **Ecclesiastes 2:11**

*<sup>11</sup> Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.*

So, if anyone ever had the ability to really "live their best life now" and have all the things that they wanted, it was Solomon. He had the opportunity to live that way, and he did - but the conclusion that he came to at the end of it all, was that **it was all in vain**.

An important principle to always keep in mind is that there are two ways you can learn: either the easy way, or the hard way. The hard way of learning is by going through it, which is the way that Solomon learned. He withheld nothing from his heart, and he found it to be vanity in the end. But the *easy* way is to learn from the mistakes of others - and that is what I think we should do in this case, gaining wisdom from what Solomon experienced.

Rather than living this life trying to get the most out of it, we can learn from Solomon (the "wisest man to live") who already did this and came to the understanding that living life that way is vain and vanity.

We will stay in Ecclesiastes, going to the end of the book, where Solomon gives the conclusion of the matter. In chapter 12, the last two verses of the book read:

### **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**

*<sup>13</sup> Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. <sup>14</sup> For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

That was the conclusion Solomon came to: the whole duty of man is to fear God and to keep His commandments. And I agree. So, when we look at this phrase "One life to live" and the philosophy behind it... even though it may sound good, the truth of the matter is that it is pointless to live life that way, according to the Bible.

Looking from the perspective of the scriptures, we will begin to see that this motto of 'You only have one life to live' is actually a lie. And although we hear many people repeating this phrase, in reality it is one of the most powerful deceptions that the devil has used to lead people astray. So, let's look and see a few things in the New Testament that will shed some more light on that phrase and idea of "One life to live".

## **THE AFTERLIFE**

Let's go to the book of Luke, where Jesus is giving what some people call the parable of "the Rich Man and Lazarus", even though it is not explicitly stated as a parable. In Luke chapter 16, we're going to start at verse 19.

### **Luke 16:19-23**

*<sup>19</sup> There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: <sup>20</sup> And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, <sup>21</sup> And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.*

*<sup>22</sup> And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; <sup>23</sup> And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

Hopefully you know the rest of the story, but what I wanted to focus on is in verse 23. If it is really true that we only have one life to live - how is it that the rich man, *after* he had died and was buried - lifted up his eyes? How can that be if you only have "one life to live"? He had already lived his life and yet, after his life was over he "lift up his eyes". This lets us know that there is something *after* this "one life" that many people are speaking of.

Now we will look at another place where Jesus tells us more about life and the possibility of "**life after life**". In the book of John in chapter 5, beginning with verse 25, we see *His* teaching... He says:

### **John 5:25-29**

*<sup>25</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.*

**Note:** Jesus here is speaking of the "spiritually dead" who after hearing His voice, shall live. As we continue we will see Jesus speak about the *physically dead*, who are in the graves and will be raised at the resurrection...

*<sup>26</sup> For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;*

*<sup>27</sup> And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*

*<sup>28</sup> Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,*

*<sup>29</sup> And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

We now have to ask ourselves: if it is true that we only have *one* life to live - how is it that Jesus is saying "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice" and "come forth"? How will some resurrect to life and some to damnation, if there is only one life to live? In the Book of Revelation we see this as well, where it speaks of a "second death" for some (Revelation 20:14) and "no more death" for others (Revelation 21:4).

So again, we see that this whole concept of 'you only live once' is not true.

Now let's see what the apostle Paul has to say about the resurrection. In 1 Corinthians 15 he writes about the gospel, which is obviously the death, burial and resurrection of Christ - but then he explains things a little bit further. Keep in mind that as we read, we are focusing on this second life, or this "life after life".

## 1 Corinthians 15:12-15

*<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: <sup>14</sup> And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.*

*<sup>15</sup> Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.*

Here we see Paul arguing against the lie that 'you only live once' and that there is no resurrection. If there is no resurrection at all, then that would mean Christ never resurrected - which God Himself testified that He did. Therefore, His resurrection is the proof that *all* the dead will be raised.

Continuing on to verse 16:

## 1 Corinthians 15:16-19

*<sup>16</sup> For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: <sup>17</sup> And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. <sup>19</sup> If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

There it is right there, in verse 19. It says "If in this life only we have hope..." which lets us know that it is **not** only in this life that we have our hope. There is *another* life, and that is where we actually have our hope. The reason we can have that hope is because Christ was raised from the dead. He was the first, and we also will be raised to a life after this life if we have put our faith in Him by obeying His gospel as the scripture teaches us.

So, just by looking at these few verses we can begin to understand that the Bible contradicts the philosophy of "you only have one life to live". It is clearly shown to be just a lie.

We are warned throughout scripture to 'Be not deceived' and 'Let no man deceive you.' This 'philosophy' of "one life to live" is one of the tactics the devil uses to deceive. He makes a lie sound good. He wraps it up in a nice slogan that gets repeated over and over. Though it makes logical sense, it's just a deception.

Believing in lies like these is very dangerous because it can affect our choices and actions in a negative way. It can also put our salvation in jeopardy because our faith and beliefs must be grounded in truth. Our salvation is dependent on what we believe in our hearts, so if you let lies come in and start to believe things that are not true, the consequences can be disastrous.

We will continue on by staying in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, but rather than reading it all let's skip down to verse 31. Paul has a little more to say to anyone who doubts that there will be a resurrection. Beginning at verse 31, he says:

### 1 Corinthians 15:31-33

*<sup>31</sup> I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. <sup>32</sup> If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.*

*<sup>33</sup> Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.*

What Paul is saying here is that if it were true that the dead will not rise, then we might as well just eat, drink, and be merry because 'tomorrow' we are just going to die and that will be it. He is actually telling us that to live in that way would be a mistake because the truth is that the dead **will** rise again.

He then follows that thought and lets you know, "**Be not deceived**". Don't just 'eat, drink because tomorrow we're going to die'. Evil communications like these **corrupt** good manners. The lie might sound good – but a 'good' sounding lie can corrupt your faith. With that, hopefully we have established that the philosophy of 'you only have one life to live' is a lie. And what I want to do now is take that, and show what the Bible teaches is the truth, which is: **you only have one life to give**.

## ONE LIFE TO GIVE

As we already learned, **we are all going to stand before God**, those who have done good and those who have done evil (John 5:29). So, what I mean by "one life to give" is that, if we're going to stand before Him and have our life to show, we only have **one** life to give to Him.

Let's go to Luke chapter 9 and see what Jesus has to say about this 'one life to give'. We will start at verse 23 where again, we see Jesus talking and teaching. And He said to them...

### Luke 9:23-24

*<sup>23</sup> And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. <sup>25</sup> For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?*

So here we see Jesus saying: 'if anyone is going to come after Me', if you are going to follow Jesus – He says 'take up your cross daily and follow me'. Note those last two words - "**follow me**". Those are the same words that Jesus said to His apostles when He first went out to gather them. It was just two words; a two-word recruiting message: Follow me. And **that is what they did**.

We see in this teaching what it means to follow Him. He says, if any man will come after me, let him **deny himself** and **take up his cross daily** and **follow me**. That is what it means – and that is what I mean by “you only have one life to give”. If you are going to follow Christ, He really does ask you to *give* Him your life. You have to deny yourself, deny the life that you would want to live, and say ‘I’m going to give that away, in order to live my life for Him.’ That is what we truly see being taught and what it means to be a true disciple of Christ.

We will continue on staying in the book of Luke. In chapter 14 verse 25, Jesus is once again teaching:

#### **Luke 14:25-26**

*<sup>25</sup> And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, <sup>26</sup> If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

We must understand what He means by ‘hate’ here. Jesus isn’t saying to hate your brother, hate your mother, hate your father in the literal sense of the word hate. He means that there should be no other relationship that compares to our love and dedication to Him. If anything was to hinder you from following Jesus, then you should treat that thing – almost as if you ‘hate’ it. That is how serious our dedication to Christ really needs to be. This is Jesus telling us about what it takes to be His disciple. And as we continue on in verse 27...

#### **Luke 14:27**

*<sup>27</sup> And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

Jesus is making it very plain and very clear that it is not a half-way thing. He is saying that if you are not all the way in, you **cannot** be His disciple. He then reiterates this in verse 28, by giving an example.

#### **Luke 14:28**

*<sup>28</sup> For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?*

In a [previous lesson](#) we looked at this concept of “counting the cost”. And here we see that if you are truly going to come to Jesus and follow Him – according to Christ, the cost is your life, the cost is *this* life.

If you trust Him enough, then you willingly give up *this* life, because He has promised you a better life to come. That’s really what He’s saying here. We don’t follow Christ for the purpose of having a ‘good life’ *now* (though it is a good life), but having good in *this* life is not the purpose of following Him.

What happens, if after choosing to follow Christ, life becomes hard? If we are persecuted and have family leave us, or friends leave us – if our goal was to have a good life, but it doesn't go that way, we could be tempted to leave Christ and go back to the life that we desired to have.

Continuing on to verse 29:

### **Luke 14:29-33**

*<sup>29</sup> Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, <sup>30</sup> Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.*

*<sup>31</sup> Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? <sup>32</sup> Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.*

*<sup>33</sup> So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*

That is a tough teaching, but Jesus makes it very clear how serious the decision is to truly follow Him. It means to forsake **all** and follow Him. No matter the cost, no matter how hard, no matter how good or bad.

It is not a halfway thing, it is an all-in thing. You have to be willing to say “whatever life I thought I was going to have, and whatever life I had hoped to live, I am willing to give that up because I am going to follow Jesus wherever He goes and wherever He leads me”.

We will look at one more place in the book of Luke where Jesus makes this point again. In chapter 17, verse 32 Jesus says:

### **Luke 17:32**

*<sup>32</sup> Remember Lot's wife.*

If you know the story of Lot, then you understand the seriousness of this statement. Lot's wife was told to not even look back at the wicked city that they were escaping from. But for whatever reason, she looked back and was turned into a “pillar of salt”. A way of salvation had been made for her, but because she looked back at the city that she was to leave, Lot's wife did not make it to safety (Genesis 19:26). By Jesus giving this teaching, it shows the importance of following His instructions given for salvation.



When it comes to leaving the “old life” for the new life of following Christ, we should “Remember Lot’s wife” and never look back. The example of Lot’s wife shows the seriousness of this. Jesus then continues in verse 33:

### **Luke 17:33**

<sup>33</sup> Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

So once again, you see that He is saying that those who would seek to save their life or to live in *this* life, will lose their life. But those who are willing to lose *this* life will gain it.

We will now go to Matthew where we see Jesus teaching this same principle about the willingness to forsake all for the sake of the “kingdom”. In chapter 13, starting at verse 44 we see Jesus giving parables about the kingdom of heaven:

### **Matthew 13:44**

<sup>44</sup> Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Here we have the same theme, just said in a different way. When a person truly understands what the kingdom is - this great treasure, Jesus says when they find it, they hide it, and then sell everything they have to obtain that great hidden treasure. You have to be willing to give up everything. In verse 45 we read:

### **Matthew 13:45-46**

<sup>45</sup> Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:  
<sup>46</sup> Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

And if we keep reading, Jesus gives one more parable about the kingdom.

### **Matthew 13:47-50**

<sup>47</sup> Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: <sup>48</sup> Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.  
<sup>49</sup> So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, <sup>50</sup> And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Once again, the theme that we can see Jesus teaching here is that if you understand the great treasure that is the Kingdom, you have to be willing to sell *this* life. You've got to be willing to let go of any-and-everything, as well as any-and-everybody. Like it said in Luke 14:26, whether it be mother, father... anyone. Is there something in your life that if Jesus were to say 'You have to give that up' that you would say "No Jesus, I'm going to hold on to that"...

Who or what is it that you would not give up for Jesus? Is there any person or any relationship that if Jesus said 'This relationship is not pleasing to Me', you would be willing to say to Jesus "No, I'm going to hold on to this person, I'm going to hold on to this relationship because...I've got to live **my** life, right? I've got to have some kind of happiness".

If it is something that is *not* pleasing to the Lord, He clearly says: if we are going to follow Him, we need to be willing to forsake all. We have seen in this lesson Jesus telling us to take up **our** cross and follow Him. Keep in mind that He is our example. To conclude this lesson we will turn to Hebrew chapter 12.

But to give a little context of what we will read in chapter 12, we should note that this is right after Hebrews 11, which is called the 'Hall of Faith'. Chapter 11 tells of many Old Testament people who by faith, obtained a good report. It shows many examples of the type of faith that we must have and how those people – because of their faith, 'looked for a better country'. They were looking for a better place, a heavenly place. We should be doing the same. Though we may have a good home here, by trusting and believing what Christ has said and done for us, a better home awaits us: the life after this life.

After giving all the examples of the Old Testament saints the conclusion in Hebrews chapter 12, is:

### Hebrews 12:1-2

*<sup>1</sup> Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*

*<sup>2</sup> Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

We can learn from Jesus' example, **how** to endure our own cross as we follow Him daily. It tells us here that the way that **He** endured the cross was because of the joy that was set before Him. He could see the joy. He could see what was on the other side of the suffering. And that is how we have to approach this when we take up our cross. As it says in Romans, we need to present ourselves as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1), and mortify the deeds of our flesh (Romans 8:13).

Doing this is not pleasant. To become a sacrifice is not pleasant. Giving up the things that you love in this life is not pleasant... but if we use the example that we have here of Jesus, of looking forward to what lies *ahead*, we can do it – we can pick up our cross, we can bear our cross daily **because of the joy that is waiting for us in the life after this life.**

So with all that being said, I hope that this lesson causes you to reflect on your commitment to Christ. We should always check ourselves to make sure that our walk with Christ lines up with what He says it should look like, according His Word. Remember, Jesus said "Follow Me".

Some may need to renew their walk with Christ and others may be at the starting point of giving their lives to Christ. The first step is to hear and believe the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, for the forgiveness of sins. By believing and obeying this gospel, we have eternal life, or 'life after life'.

The same exact way that the first Christians obeyed the gospel, is the same way that every Christian must obey the gospel. And that is to repent of your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of those sins, and to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38). And continuing to live faithfully.

With that in mind, whatever your spiritual need may be, feel free to contact us at [www.Hisway.life/contact](http://www.Hisway.life/contact) and we will help you in any way possible to grow in your walk with Christ. Remember, you only have **One Life to Give**.

### **Revelation 2:7**

*<sup>7</sup> To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*