Live Give Grow Go (2) ”Even Better Than the Real Thing”

**John 1:1-5**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2**He was in the beginning with God. **3**All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. **4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.** **5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.**

Real Life is Communicated; Translated to us by this metaphor of Light

* Light = illumination – allowing us to see and distinguish between the real and the distorted…
* “But the darkness did not comprehend it…” -- we struggle to see it; to understand it…

Understanding the Ancient, Universal Pattern

**Genesis 1 & 2** – The Creator/ Designer/ Author of Life…Paradise… **“It was good…very good”**

**Genesis 3 – “Has God indeed said you shall not eat from any tree of the garden?”**

* You’re missing it
* You’ll never be fulfilled; satisfied; happy…you must take life into your own hands…

**A Great Shift Occurred that Day**.

* Man began to search for life instead of trusting God to give it fully and freely…
* And since that day, the pattern has replayed itself over and over in every culture; in every generation; and in every single individual life…

**What resulted was “Sin”**

* Not an event; not an action
* A state of mind; a state of being; A Belief System
* “Sin is trying to get your needs met apart from God”
  + And from this belief system, Life becomes utterly hidden; distorted; perverted; warped; misrepresented…

**Allow Me to Illustrate:**

Sexual Immorality

Impurity

Lustful Pleasures

Idolatry

Sorcery

Hostility

Quarreling

Jealousy

Outbursts of Anger

Selfish Ambition

Dissension

Division

Envy

Drunkenness

Wild Parties…

Love

Joy

Peace

Patience

Kindness

Goodness

Faithfulness

Gentleness

Self-Control

**Compare These Lists (Galatians 6:19-23)**

What do you see?

Are they opposites?

Do they have anything in common?

**They both are seeking to attain the same thing…Life.**

(U2) ***Even Better Than the Real Thing (1991 Achtung Baby)***

* A rock song about the addiction and the obsession our culture/society have in the pursuit of the substitutes for real life

***We live in this lie…***

* Choose Sex over Love
* Choose Pornography over Intimacy
* Choose Money over Peace
* Choose Facebook over Friendship
* Choose Lifestyle over Living
* Choose Reality TV over Relationship & Family
* Choose Video Games over Actual Play
* Choose Virtual Reality over Experience
* Choose Reputation over Character
* Choose Religion over Transformed Lives

**2 Cor. 4:3-6**

**3**And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, **4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**. **5**For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake. **6 For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.**

Two Practical Strategies

(1) Identifying & Exposing The Lies We Believe

**James 1:13-17**

**13**Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. **14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived**, my beloved brethren. **17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights**, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

* **ALL Sin** is an attempt to get our needs met apart from God
* **ALL Sin** is the result of a deception
* **ALL Sin** can be traced back to a lie or lie(s) we believe
  + **And we must allow the Holy Spirit to help us trace it back**
  + **Strongholds – in 2 Cor. 10:3-5**

(2) Choosing Everyday by Faith to Believe What God Says About Real Life

**John 5:24**“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me**, has eternal life,** and does not come into judgment, but **has passed out of death into life.**

* **But it doesn’t feel like it; it doesn’t seem that way**
  + **I struggle with many of the same base desires….WHY?**
  + **My Expectations, Dreams, Ideals Are Decimated…**
  + **I struggle with Depression or Anger or Resentment…**
* Real Life sometimes doesn’t come with the dramatic highs and emotional underpinnings
* Our addictions to our substitutes
  + habits of getting our own needs met…
  + the longing, the desire, or the pursuit more exciting than the thing itself…
* **Makes real life seem dull or unfulfilling**
  + But that’s only because we’ve been deceived so long
  + We’ve never really, fully tasted the truth of God’s Life
* **And so it becomes a matter of faith**
* In Counseling:
  + In one hand, this is what I feel….In the other hand this is what God says…
    - Choosing by faith everyday to believe what God says is true – IS TRUE

So,

**1. We Have To Know What He Says About Life**

**2. And Trust What He Says About Life**