

Valley View Chapel
January 1, 2012
There's an App for That
John 10:10

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." (NKJV)

Introduction

Let's start the New Year by going back to the ancient past – to the dark ages of 1992.
Back to when:

- Average annual household income: \$30,030.00
- Average cost of a new house: \$122,500.00
- Average monthly rent: \$519.00
- Cost of a gallon of gas: \$1.05
- Average cost of a new car: \$16,950.00
- Hurricane Andrew devastated south Florida on August 22nd
- Rioting broke out in Los Angeles following the acquittal of four white police officers accused of beating black motorist Rodney King.
- Bill Clinton was elected to his first term as President.

Popular Films

- *Aladdin*
- *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York*
- *Batman Returns*
- *Lethal Weapon 3*
- *A Few Good Men*
- *Sister Act*
- *Wayne's World*

Popular Television

- *Law & Order*
- *America's Funniest Home Videos*
- *Home Improvement*
- *Rugrats*
- *The Jerry Springer Show*
- *The Ren & Stimpy Show*
- *L.A. Law*
- *Matlock*
- *Married... with Children*
- *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

And how could I fail to mention the defining moment of 1992 that will live in history?
Miley Ray Cyrus was born on November 22nd!

Now suppose a reasonably educated person from 1992 was thrust into the world *today*, January 1, 2012.

What would they think if they heard someone ask Debbie Geddes what she'd like from Starbucks (first of all, they'd wonder "What's a Starbucks?") and Debbie would respond:
"I'd like a venti soy chai tea latte."

"Have you tweeted today?"

"Let's skype tomorrow night at 8."

"I forgot my Droid. How will I survive the next 60 seconds?"

"If you get an HD, you should probably think about getting a Blu-ray."

And last but certainly not least: *"There's an app for that!"*

An 'app' according to *Dictionary.com* (our friend from 1992 would have no idea what *Dictionary.com* is all about) is "an application, typically a small, specialized program downloaded onto mobile devices."

Those of us living in 2012 know that "apps" are our friends. Apps help us out and even make life easier. I'm a Droid user, and my favorite apps are "You Version Bible," "Places," Weather Channel," "Direc TV," and "ESPN Boston." "Gas Buddy" is pretty cool, too.

Apps are all about meeting needs, whether your need is to find a good restaurant, cheap gas, the nearest ATM, or you're one of those sick people whose primary need is to launch birds with a slingshot as you try to destroy every pig on the planet. As of December 7, 2011, Android users had downloaded 10 billion apps and Apple users had downloaded 18 billion apps. What does that prove? There are a lot of us needy people out there!

If it were possible, I could have all 580,000 Android apps at my finger tips and still not have what I need the most. I need an app alright. But it can't be bought at the Android market or the Apple store.

My greatest need is to experience *life* as it was meant to be lived, the life that God created me to live. And thankfully, there's an app for that! Look with me at the second half of John 10:10, "I have come that they may have *life*, and that they may have it more abundantly." (NKJV)

The meaning of “life”

It has been said that “Everyone dies but not everyone lives.” We all sense down deep inside that it is quite possible to be alive and not to experience *life*, not the quality of life we want anyway. Because we need a kind of “life” that we can’t get on our own, Jesus came into the world. He came to provide that “missing something” that people sense they need. They may not know what it *is*, but they sure know what it *isn’t*.

Lee Iacocca invented the Ford Mustang and served as CEO of both Ford and Chrysler until he retired in 1992. He is generally regarded as one of the most astute, respected and successful business leaders of the last 50 years. He’s now 87. As he looked back on a life and career that most people would envy, he said with a twinge of sadness: “Here I am in the twilight years of my life, still wondering what it’s all about. I can tell you this: fame and fortune [are] for the birds.”

There were two words for “life” in Greek. One was *bios* which refers to physical life. But Jesus didn’t use *bios*. He used *zoe*, a kind of life that was qualitatively different from just “being alive” in a physical sense. It’s the “zoe” kind of life that Lee Iacocca, Tom Brady and countless millions are searching for.

It was what the Apostle John meant when he said concerning Jesus: “In him was *life*, and that life was the light of men.” John 1:4 (NIV)

It was what Jesus meant when he said in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal *life*.” (NIV)

Zoe life was equated by Jesus with “resurrection life” in John 11:25-26a, “I am the resurrection and the *life*. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” (NIV)

Jesus proclaimed himself to be the unique source of this special dimension of life in John 14:6, “I am the way and the truth and the *life*.” (NIV)

The kind of life Jesus provides is not only fundamentally *different* from physical existence, it is given in *abundance*.

Sadly, the word “abundant” has been misinterpreted and misused by many in the church today. In his commentary on the Gospel of John, Charles Swindoll addressed this abuse of the word: “People in the West (especially the false prophets of the “word of faith” movement) interpret ‘abundantly’ to mean prosperity, lots of money and possessions, creature comforts, a fat wallet, a prestigious job, the nicest house in town, and the sleekest car in the driveway....The abundance Jesus offers is spiritual abundance....”

If “abundant” meant what the “health and wealth” boys say it means, Lee Iacocca would have never said that “fame and fortune are for the birds.” Tom Brady would have never confessed on national television: “I reached my goal, my dream....it’s got to be more than this!”

The “abundant life” offered by Christ is *more* than anything the material world can offer. While an app meets a need, the mere existence of an app doesn’t mean that it will do you any good. For the app to meet your need, you have to what? Download it. When you “download” the Lord Jesus Christ into your life, he will meet your 3 most basic needs. And when these needs are met in and through Christ, you will experience “the abundant life.”

The need for unconditional love

Psychologists call this our “security” need. We were made with a need to be loved not for *who we are* but *in spite of who we are*. It is only when we are loved unconditionally that we can be totally open and transparent. It is only in an environment of unconditional love that I will let you see my flaws, failures, and foul-ups. We have this need for unconditional love, but people who have not met Jesus Christ personally have never experienced it themselves so they’re incapable of showing it to others. That’s because none of us can love other people *unconditionally all the time*.

Jesus said to his disciples: “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13 (NIV)

It’s crucial to know just *when* Jesus said this and to whom he said it. He said it the night he was arrested. And he said it to the man who would deny him three times. He said it to the men who would forsake him at the one time in his life when he needed his friends to stick with him! Knowing their failure, Jesus still died for those who abandoned him.. *That’s unconditional love!*

When you “download” Jesus into your life, he gives you unconditional love forever.

The need for a clear conscience

We all long for forgiveness. A guilty conscience is a terrible thing to live with. After David sinned with Bathsheba and ordered her husband’s death, he lived with the guilt for about a year.

In Psalm 32, he described the torment of unforgiveness: “When I kept it all inside, my bones turned to powder, my words became daylong groans. 4 The pressure never let up; all the juices of my life dried up.” Psalm 32:3-4 (Msg)

In the same psalm, David described what happened when he confessed his sin and received God’s forgiveness: “Then I let it all out; I said, ‘I’ll make a clean breast of my

failures to God.' Suddenly the pressure was gone — my guilt dissolved, my sin disappeared." Psalm 32:5 (Msg)

The Apostle Paul knew the power of forgiveness. Prior to his conversion, he hated Christ and Christians. He persecuted the followers of Jesus, separated families and was even instrumental in their deaths. If anyone should have been plagued to his grave with a guilty conscience, it was this fanatical enemy of Christianity.

Yet he could state with a straight face to the Corinthian believers: "We can say with confidence and a clear conscience that we have lived with a God-given holiness and sincerity in all our dealings." 2 Corinthians 1:12 (NLT)

How could Paul possibly have a clear conscience after all he had done? Because one day on the Damascus Road " he downloaded the "Jesus app," and the result was forgiveness and a clear conscience.

Why isn't David Berkowitz, the "Son of Sam" serial killer tortured today by a guilty conscience? Here's his answer in his own words: "[Son of Sam is] dead. He don't exist anymore. That's the old man who as far as I'm concerned is dead buried and gone, thanks to Jesus Christ."

Karl Menninger, the famous psychiatrist who founded the world renowned Menninger Clinic in Topeka, KS, once said that if he could convince his patients that they were forgiven, 80% of them could be discharged from his hospital tomorrow.

I have done and continue to do things that awaken in me a guilty conscience. There's an app for that! It's found in I John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he forgives them and cleanses us from everything we've done wrong. " (GWT)

It doesn't matter the amount of your net worth, the number of degrees after your name, the size of your office, the number of people on your staff, or the square footage of your house. If you don't have a clear conscience, you don't have the "abundant life" promised by Jesus Christ. There are a lot of rich, successful, guilty and miserable people in the world. Yet the poorest, most obscure follower of Christ on planet earth would never want to trade places.

The need for a definite purpose

The 20th-century French novelist and existentialist philosopher Albert Camus said: "I am seeking... something to fill the void I am experiencing.... Certainly the public and the readers of my novels, while they see the void, are not finding the answers in what they are reading.... I am searching for something that the world is not giving me...."

The 19th century Scottish writer and historian Thomas Carlyle observed, "A man without purpose is like a ship without a rudder...."

The questions – “Why am I here? Why was I born? What am I supposed to be doing with my life? –demand an answer. To be given the gift of years – be they many or few – and not to know the reason for our existence is sad beyond description.

To have the following written about us after we’re gone would be an unspeakable tragedy:

“Into this world to eat and sleep
And to know no reason why he was born
Save to consume the corn,
Devour cattle, flock, and fish
And leave behind an empty dish.”

Is that all there is to life?

There’s an app for a purposeless life. Paul described it in I Corinthians 10:31, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (NIV)

God gave us breath so that we could give him glory; so that we could praise and worship him intelligently; so that we could boast to everyone of his love, compassion, and power.. God is our creator. He knows what’s best for us. Our maker knows that those whom he has made are never happier and more satisfied than when they are praising him.

If your primary purpose is anything other than bringing glory to God, you’re missing out on the abundant life.

Conclusion

Malcolm Muggeridge was at the top of the British literary heap. His dreams had all come true, yet he was miserable. While in his 60’s, he came to a personal and vibrant faith in Jesus Christ. Near the end of his life, Muggeridge shared his testimony: “I may, I suppose, regard myself as a relatively successful man. People occasionally stare at me in the streets. That’s fame. I can fairly easily earn enough to qualify for the highest slopes of the internal revenue. That’s success. Furnished with money and a little fame, even the elderly, if they care to, may partake of trendy diversions. That’s pleasure. It might happen once in awhile that something I said or wrote was sufficiently heeded for me to persuade myself that it represented a serious impact on our time. That’s fulfillment. “

“Yet I say to you, and I beg you to believe me. Multiply these tiny triumphs by a million. Add them all together. And they are nothing, less than nothing – a positive impediment, when measured against one draught of that living water Christ offers to the spiritually thirsty.”

As Boaz said to Ruth, we must not search for what we need in another's field. Jesus alone is life – full, meaningful, and abundant.