

"It's A Wonderful Life"

"All you can take with you is that which you gave away"

Frank Capra, who directed "It's a Wonderful Life", was asked years ago about the central message of his classic film. After thinking a few moments, Capra responded, "I believe the real message of "It's a Wonderful Life" is this: that under the sun, nothing is insignificant to God."

James Stewart

The character I played was George Bailey, an ordinary kind of fella who thinks he's never accomplished anything in life. His dreams of becoming a famous architect, of traveling the world and living adventurously, have not been fulfilled.

Instead he feels trapped in a humdrum job in a small town. And when faced with a crisis in which he feels he has failed everyone, he breaks under the strain and flees to the bridge.

That's when his guardian angel, Clarence, comes down on Christmas Eve to show him what his community would be like without him. The angel takes him back through his life to show how our ordinary everyday efforts are really big achievements. Clarence reveals how George Bailey's loyalty to his job at the building-and-loan office has saved families and homes, how his little kindnesses have changed the lives of others, and how the ripples of his love will spread through the world, helping make it a better place.

. . . Today, after some 50 years, I've heard the film called "an American cultural phenomenon." Well, maybe so, but it seems to me there is nothing phenomenal about the movie itself. It's simply about an ordinary man who discovers that living each ordinary day honorably, with faith in God and a selfless concern for others, can make for a *truly* wonderful life.

It's A Wonderful Life....when we

***George Bailey (has a life long attitude of putting others ahead of himself)**

- **Put others ahead of ourselves**

Matthew 15:13

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Matthew 16: 24-26

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Proverbs 11:25

25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself

Proverbs 22:9

9 He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

- **Recognize That Greed and Selfishness Lead To Unhappiness**

***Mr. Potters Greed leads to unhappiness. (He is like the `rich man of Luke 12:16-21)**

Luke 12:16-21

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Proverbs 15:27

27 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

- **Focus on Eternal Treasures, be merciful, and treat people fairly.**

"All you can take with you is that which you gave away"

Matthew 6: 19-21

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Matthew 5:7

7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Colossians 3:12

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

Luke 6:31

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

- **Live a life of integrity**

Proverbs 11:3

3The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

Integrity = adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.

How did George's life impact the people around him?

"If it hadn't been for me, everyone would be better off." (George Bailey)

"Each man's life touches so many other lives." (Clarence to George after his mother doesn't recognize him)

What if George had never existed?

- Brother would be dead, which means he never saved the people on the troop transport ship.
- Wife would have ended up an old maid
- Town would be Pottersville instead, not Bedford Falls and would be dominated by the evil Mr. Potter
- His kids don't exist
- Mother is alone
- Violet not helped
- Uncle is a drunk
- Old Man Gower was not stopped from accidentally poisoning someone.

Thought: How has our life impacted others? How has others lives impacted us?

Where would we be without Jesus?

- Lost
- Without Hope
- Without Eternal Life in Heaven
- Without Peace
- Without the Holy Spirit

Because of Jesus It's A Wonderful Life, we have.....

- **Salvation**

II Timothy 2:10

2 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Acts 4:12

4 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

- **Peace**

Romans 5:1

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

- **Eternal Life**

Titus 1:2

2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

John 14:19

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also

- **The Holy Spirit**

John 16:7

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

It's A Wonderful Life in the Salvation, Peace, and Hope, of Jesus Christ. A Life in the power of the Holy Spirit. Which guides us in putting others ahead of ourselves, being merciful, and living a life of integrity. Focusing on the eternal treasures in Heaven.