

LIVING THE DASH.

Grace, peace and mercy, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This series starts off by asking the question of what you would do if you only had one month to live. It also challenges us to take up this series and to make a commitment to it: in order that you may judge whether or not you are really living the life you ought to be. And that you are not just going through the motions of life and that this is all there is to life.

The first installment starts with the phrase: Living the Dash.

What on earth could that mean? Those who have read the book or some parts of it may know the answer to that question: but simply put: all of us gathered here today, have a birthday and eventually there will be our deaths; in the meant time instead of numbering all our years we

simply use a dash, as seen on tombstones. We all have a beginning and an end the line/stroke/dash in the middle is what we are looking at today.

With this series of 'One Month to Live', hopefully, during the course of this month, we will learn how to better live our lives, with more meaning, worth and value with those whom we worship, live and co-exist with.

Those who have near death experiences or have been brought back to life: now live their lives in a different way. What mattered before may be of no significance now. For myself personally, I had a life threatening experience about ten years ago when I had surgery for a heart double by-pass. That event changed my life. I never saw myself as being in the ministry in the role of a pastor. Perhaps, as a reader, usher or something; but not in the role I have now. And if you ever asked yourself what is an middle-aged Aboriginal man doing in the role of a pastor, then I just shared it with you.

I'll be using the Powerpoint presentation, to bring up the relevant points that are made in living the dash. We look at the first verse which comes from **John 10:10. *I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.***

John 10:10b (The Msg). This is the way Jesus lived his life on earth. He showed us to live the life God made for us. Not for us to live the way we want to live it. He used four principles in his time upon the earth.

And the first principle [1] is that **Jesus lived PASSIONATELY**. I don't know where you are in your life right now; you may be living on cloud nine or everything sucks. The bottom line is that God wants you to be who he made you to be. Whatever that be, it could be as a father, mother, sister, brother, uncle, etc, reflecting Christ in your lives. HE wants you to live the life HE has called you to do.

“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

1 John 5:11-12 (NIV). The apostle John is saying to all of us, that the choice is clear cut in what we do in life; you can make the choice of either life or death? You can be fully alive and not to just exist from day to day. To live your life passionately can only be done through the Son of God. And the best time to start living this kind of life is right now, and not one day or someday?

How many times do we say that someday I will really commit to the Lord? God says, that today is the day for salvation. Satan says that sounds good but why do things now when there is plenty of time later on, you don't have time to give to God right now, other things need taking care of right now.

In this particular text, *“To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? They are*

like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other: 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not cry.'"

Luke 7:31, 32 (NIV). Jesus is saying to these people that they didn't enjoy life. They were always waiting to live. Are we like living like that? They were going live someday, and when the pain and problems came their way, they didn't cry, or experience life, and they avoided taking risks at all costs. They simply didn't live.

They were waiting to live and they never got around to doing it. Have we spent our lives waiting to live? We always think that tomorrow will come but it never does. Another thing we do is to think of our yesterdays; and when we do, we get filled with guilt and regrets that we didn't do anything when we had the chance to

Principle [2]. 2. **Jesus Loved __COMPLETELY.** *"Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved His own who were in*

the world, He now showed them the full extent of His love." John 13:1 (NIV). If you knew you had a month to live, wouldn't you want to love completely, and say the things you wanted to say and love the way you should, with all those around you?

As we are aware, Jesus summed up the Bible with two verses from Matthew. *"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"* Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV). Its simply saying, love God and love others. When our lives are over, it won't matter how much is left in your bank account, the amount of awards you've won, how many goals you've achieved. What matters is; did you love the people in your life and did you love God with all your heart?

“Love never fails....” 1 Corinthians 13:8 (NIV). If you love completely you will never fail. Who do you need to tell today that you love them? All the flowers at their funeral won't mean a thing. God placed you on this earth to love, and you'll never live until you love.

Principle 3. **Jesus Learned __HUMBLY** . Even though Jesus was God, he taught us by his own example to learn humbly. *“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!”*

Philippians 2:5-8 (NIV). He humbled himself and became obedient to death on a cross. He could have remained in heaven in all his splendour, but he became a man, taking on the very nature of a servant, and became

obedient to death on a cross. What an example of humility.

“In everything you do, put God first, and He will direct you and crown your efforts with success.” Proverbs 3:6 (LB). The word for success in the Hebrew is to make wise decisions. Everything in life requires that we all make wise decisions, because in our lives we are going to face difficulties that require us to make wise decisions. And if we put God first he will help us make the wise decision we need to make.

Give God...

- *The First Day of Every Week*
- *The First Part of Every Day*
- *The First Portion of My Income*
- *The First Consideration of Every Decision*

Here are some things that we can live by if we are not already doing it. [1] Keep the Sabbath holy. [2] The first

thing to do is to seek him before we do any other thing as our day begins. [3] Keep his share of the money separate, if you struggle to tithe then give what is possible. [4] Before we seek do anything what so ever, seek his counsel and help before deliberately making any kind of decision.

Principle 4. **Jesus Left BOLDLY.** Jesus was resolute in his mission of why he was here. *“As the time approached for Him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.”* Luke 9:51 (NIV). He was resolute in the purpose of why he came. Something tells us there is more to life than the here and now. We were made to leave. We were made for eternity; and to leave a legacy.

“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’” Matthew 25:23 (NIV). A lot of

people try and tell you how to live your life, but there is only one opinion that matters; God’s. We all want to hear God telling us that we lived the way He wanted us to live, and that’s what matters in the end when we are talking to him face to face.

Let us pray: Heavenly Father, help us to live and grow as the people you want us to be. Help us to love, respect, have relationships where we have failed to have done so. Help us to speak and tell those whom we love dearly that we love and care about them. Help us be challenged to really live over the next month through this series. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

