

The To Do List for Puzzle-Lovers

Colossians 1, 3-4; Coast School of Theology; Pastor Earl Miles; 9-23-18

Life is a Puzzle

Often, life is like a puzzle which we can't fully understand. *What is happening and why? How can two people do the same thing and not get the same results?*

The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. ² "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." – Ecclesiastes 1:1-2

Smoke of smoke. Enigma of enigmas. Puzzle of puzzles. (the greatest puzzle)

The Borders of the Puzzled Life

In living in the puzzle of life's circumstances, we must start with identifying the most basic responses that God calls us to make. These are heart responses.

Colossians 1:1-8 or 1:1-12; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 5:8; 1 Corinthians 13:13

- Rest in Jesus

Rest in Jesus (faith) for pardon and perfection. Put your trust in Jesus for forgiveness and the gift of His righteousness.

- Hope in God

Hope in God for help and happiness. Place your hope in God for the help you need and the happiness your heart longs for.

- Pursue Love

Pursue love by trusting and obeying God's Word. Purpose to do this in every situation and in every relationship.

The Pieces of the Puzzled Life

Beyond the basic responses to life's puzzle, we must give ourselves to serving as He calls us to serve, regardless of the circumstances. We must put our faith and hope and love into action.

By looking at how the Apostle Paul applies the implications of the gospel for the people of God, we can see that 5 areas stand out in different ways.

Colossians 3:1-4:6 or 1:13-4:6

- Serve My God (Colossians 3:1-4; Ephesians 3:14-19)

By looking to Him in the Word and prayer.

- Serve My Family (Colossians 3:18-21; Ephesians 5:22-6:4)

By playing the appropriate role.

- Serve My Church (Colossians 3:5-17; Ephesians 3:20-5:21)

By maintaining proper relationships and using my gifts.

- Serve My Workplace (Colossians 3:22-4:1; Ephesians 6:5-9)

By treating others properly and working in a way that honors the Lord.

- Serve My World (Colossians 4:2-6; Ephesians 6:10-20)

By meeting temporal and eternal needs with gracious speech and behavior.

Most Important Questions to Answer in the Puzzled Life

- Am I **resting in Jesus** for pardon and perfection?
- Am I **hoping in God** for help and happiness?
- Am I **pursuing love** by trusting and obeying God's Word?
- How do I serve **God** today?
- How do I serve my **family** today?
- How do I serve my **church** today?
- How do I serve my **workplace** today?
- How do I serve my **world** today?

The Focus of the Puzzled Life

The practical hub around which our lives are to revolve is the church. By looking at the abundance of content in the NT epistles on the practical implications of the gospel for church life, it is safe to assume that the practical priority of our lives should be a local community of believers. In other words, we can argue that the NT teaches that the key to feeding a supreme love for God and a proper love for my family and workplace and world is by devoting myself to loving God's people, the church! This kind of life is the 'fear of the LORD' that is the key to living in a world filled with uncertainties and enigmas of life that puzzle us but need not frustrate us or keep us from enjoying God and His good gifts and from being fruitful. (Colossians 1:18; Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 3:10; Ephesians 3:21; Ephesians 5:25; Ephesians 5:32; 1 Timothy 3:15; Revelation 1:11; Revelation 2:11)