**BIBLE TALK Radio Broadcast**

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**Is “Having Fun” What Life is All About?**

Thank you and good morning! Welcome to our program.

We live in a society that has an obsession for “fun.” We even try to find a fun way to learn. There’s nothing wrong with finding fun ways to learn things, but there are some things, if we are going to learn them will take concentration and hard work. Everything can’t be fun. But some people seem to think if it is not fun, it’s not worth doing. Some seem to have the idea that God put us here to have fun. They say, “God wants us to have fun.” And so, for example, if worship is not fun then they find ways to make worship fun – band concerts, dramatic performances, a dynamic preacher who tells funny stories. Their reasoning is, “since God wants us to have fun then surely He is not displeased with making our worship fun.” There was a bumper sticker that said, “If it’s not fun, why do it?” This is the view that many in our society have about life.

Now, I’m not against fun. God is not against us engaging in legitimate fun. God has provided for fun in life. But “fun” is not what life is all about. And that is what I want to talk about today. The title of the lesson is “Is ‘having fun’ what life is all about?”

There are some philosophies that are built around the idea of “having fun,” which, I suggest, are very dangerous.

One is, “If it is fun, do it.” It is similar to the philosophy “if it feels good, do it.” Obviously, we can see the dangers living by this philosophy. “Since traveling at 120 miles per hour down the interstate is fun, let’s try it.” “Since skipping school to go drink with your friends is fun, let’s do it.” Those who live by this philosophy will neglect their jobs, their family, their own health just to have fun. It will result in poverty, broken homes, and destroyed health. Proverbs 23:20-21 says, *“Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat; For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.”* The winebibber and the glutton is just having some fun. But there are dire consequences to such a lifestyle.

It has been stated, “How can it be wrong when it feels so right.” But the fact is, right and wrong are not determined by whether it is fun or not, or by how we feel about it. Proverbs 14:12 says, *“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”* It may feel right because it’s fun, but in reality it leads to death. Many things people associate with fun are downright sinful. The apostle Peter says in 1 Peter 4:3-4, *“For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we* *walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.* *In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of* *dissipation, speaking evil of you.”* The picture of fun in our day is a picture of lust, and lewdness combined with drinking parties – going to the bars and Casinos to have some fun. But we need to realize that participating in this kind of fun is sinful and will send us to hell. In Ephesians 5:3-7, Paul makes reference to sins such as fornication, covetousness, foolish talking, dirty jokes, and then he says, *“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them.”*

The fact is sin is fun. When we are tempted to commit sin we are drawn away by our own desires and enticed, it says in James 1:14-15. Sin is desirable. Just because it is fun does not mean it is right. The philosophy that says, “If it is fun, do it” will get you into trouble.

Another philosophy says, “If it’s not fun, why do it?” Those who live by this philosophy may refrain from sinful practices even though they are fun. They know that “fun” is not a reason to engage in sinful practices. But at the same time they will refuse to do things that are right and good just because they are not fun. One may not visit and encourage a sick brother who is in the hospital because it is not fun. Or one may not share the gospel with his neighbor because it is not fun. Or he may not attend church services on Wednesday night because it’s not fun. It is hard for them to conceive of doing anything if it’s not fun. This philosophy grows out of an affluent society that has raised a spoiled generation, a generation that has been handed so much on a silver platter, and a generation that is almost made up of takers instead of givers. Life to them is about having fun.

This philosophy makes people idle and lazy, and many things that need to get done just don’t get done. “Why do it if it is not fun?”

Consider with me some dangers of this philosophy.

First of all, it gives a distorted view of the purpose of life.

God did not put us on this earth to have fun. God put us on this earth to serve and glorify Him, and prepare ourselves to live with Him for all eternity. Ecclesiastes 12:13 says, *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.”* The book of Ecclesiastes is about one who was seeking fulfillment in life – seeking the good life. And one of the areas in which the writer seeks for the good life is in having fun, pleasure. He said in chapter 2:10 *“Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, For my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor.”* But after seeking the good life in pleasure, what does he conclude? He said in verse 11 *“Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done And on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.”* And then in chapter 12 and verse 13, *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:* *Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.”*

Paul said in Phil. 3:13-14, *“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those* *things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward* *the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* Notice, Paul says, *“but one thing I do.”* Paul’s life was not centered around having fun. He did not schedule his life around doing fun things. His primary goal was *“the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* That should be our primary goal.

And secondly, this “why do it if it is not fun” philosophy will also produce undisciplined people.

When we do things that are not fun, but for some other noble purpose, that is an exercise in self-discipline. That is good for us. Pleasing God and winning the prize of the upward call of God requires discipline. Paul says it’s like running a race to win a prize.He says in 1 Cor. 9:24-27, *“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such**a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all**things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”*  Those who are marathon runners have to have self-discipline to do the training necessary to win the prize. Preparing for a race is not always fun. It requires hard work. It requires a great deal of discipline. So it is if we are to win the imperishable crown. But if our purpose in life is to have fun, we are then robbed of the self-discipline necessary to please God and to obtain that imperishable crown.

Thirdly, the “why do it if it’s not fun” philosophy also gives us a distorted view of our jobs. The Lord expects us to work for our food, clothing and shelter. 1 Timothy 5:8 says, *“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”* 2 Thessalonians 3:10 says, *“If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.”* Have you ever known of one who jumps from job to job to job trying to find a job that is fun? And some are unemployed, not because they can’t find a job, but because they can’t find one they will enjoy. Jobs are not offered so we can have fun. Now, there are those who enjoy their job, and there’s nothing wrong with that, but that is not what jobs are all about. There are times I may have to take a job that is not fun in order to fulfill a nobler purpose, and that is to provide for myself and my family the necessities of life.

Fourthly, this “why do it if it’s not fun” philosophy leaves us unprepared for the difficulties and trials that will come to us in life. There are parents who shield their children from anything that is unpleasant. Their children go through their teens never knowing what real hard work is because their parents have not required it of them. There are children who enter their twenties and they have never been to a funeral. They never have been in a funeral home. They have been shielded from the troubles of life. These children grow up and they don’t know how to handle the bumps and bruises that come to everyone’s lives. It is called “spoiling your children.” Trials and tribulations are not fun, we don’t enjoy them, but they are for our good. Paul said in Rom. 5:3-4, *“And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces* *perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.”* If we are a spoiled people, thinking everything is to be fun, then we will be totallyunequipped to handle the trials and tribulations that come our way. When tribulations come we get angry and may even turn on God in anger. We becomeangry with everybody and with life. We need to come to understand that life is not all about having fun, but that trials and hardships are necessary for our growth.

Well, it’s not fun to do a lot of things we need to do in life. It’s not fun to go to someone I have sinned against and say, “I’m sorry, please forgive me.” It’s not fun to accept ridicule and other persecutions that come our way because we are Christians. It’s not fun to stand for what is right when our friends are standing against us. These are not fun. Someone may ask, “Why would we do any of these things?” Because it is the right thing to do. It is what pleases God. It is what will glorify Him and give us a home in heaven.

Now, Is it right to have fun? Yes, legitimate fun. But is it right to live for fun? NO! Having fun is not what life’s all about. We need to be willing to lay aside “having fun” to do those things that are of greater importance, doing God’s will, and to prepare ourselves to obtain the imperishable crown .

Also we want to invite you to check out our website. On this website you are able to hear sermons on a variety of Bible topics, and you also are able to hear previous Bible Talk radio broadcasts. The web address is sjchurchofchrist.com, that’s sjchurchofchrist.com.

Someone may ask, “Why would we do any of these things?”

Consider these reasons:

1. To be like our Lord

Do you think it was fun for Jesus to allow people to slap Him and spit on Him and mock Him? Do you think it was fun when the Romans scourged Him? Was it fun when they nailed his hands to the cross? If it was not fun, why would Jesus do it? He did it because of His love for you and me – so that we can be saved from our sins (Titus 2:14). Paul says to us in Eph. 5:2, *“And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us...”*

2. We do these things that are not fun To obey God.

We do these things because God told us to do them. We love God and want to do His will. 1 John 5:3 says, *“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”* But we also need to understand that God is our Maker, He has authority over us, and He will judge us. Hebrews 12:28-29 says, *“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”* “Our God is a consuming fire.” This is the reason we serve Him withreverence and godly fear.When God speaks we listen. When He commands we do it, not because it is always fun, but because it is the right thing to do.

And also we do these things that are not fun To Go to Heaven. Paul said in 2 Cor. 5:1 *“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven.”*