

# "IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE" BIBLE STUDY

## *Week One: Our Aspirations*

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### **BEFORE FILM CLIP**

Explain the idea of using story to teach.

In this look for how George's plans got changed.

Stop at 35:05

### **AFTER FILM CLIP**

Our aspirations v. God's – George's failure to go out on his own

How God often corrects our Path via struggles in life – his father dying and then his brother getting married – and via circumstances – being thrust into Mary's life as well as the board voting for George take over for his father

David wanted to build the temple – 2 Samuel 7:3, 7

Paul wanted to go to Rome but God called them to Macedonia instead. The result was meeting Lydia who ended up being a great supporter of his ministry.

### **APPLY IT TO LIFE**

How do you feel when your plans get changed?

What can we do we God changes our plans?

1. Be ready for God to change your plans
2. Seek his will by getting right with God, consulting his word and his people, pray, and then make a wise choice
3. If God changes your plans, be ready for something great to happen (David's son was a huge success and Paul's ministry found a great benefactor and blessing)
4. Make God's kingdom your highest goal (Hebrews 11:16)

## ***Week Two: Valuing People***

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### **BEFORE FILM CLIP**

Explain the idea of using story to teach.

Look for the way the two primary characters, George Bailey and Mr. Potter treat people.

Setup – George’s father who started the Building and Loan has just died and now George is hoping to go off to college with the dream of becoming an engineer and getting out of Bedford Falls for Good.

### **AFTER FILM CLIP**

Start 29:45

Stop at 59:30

Why did Potter want to shut down the B&L while George didn’t , to point of giving up his dream?

What are some other events that proved George valued people?

1. Gave up college so brother could go into business.
2. Even when frustrated, when Sam had idea of plastics factory George thought about people in town by suggesting Sam build the factory in Bedford Falls.
3. Gave up wedding money to help people during bank run.
4. Scene in next section where he helps Violet by giving her money.

Gen. 1:26-27 – Created in the image of God.

What does that mean? Of all of God’s creation we are made with a unique thing ... a soul.

Creative ability and our ability to learn and advance. Compassion.

Gen. 9:6 – Human life should be valued to the point of removing those who do not value it.

John 15:12-17 – Love one another because of the image of God in us.

Jesus like George Bailey valued people. You can see that because of the way he treated people.

Whenever anyone bowed before him, Jesus picked them up.

Whenever anyone humbled himself before Jesus, Jesus honored them.

### **APPLY IT TO LIFE**

John 15:13 – self sacrifice

1. Value people by putting them ahead of you as Jesus did.
2. Love people by being forgiving and giving.
  - a. “All you take with you is that which you give away.” Sign on wall of George’s office.

- b. Being giving means being willing to give people a pass when they make a mistake.
  - c. George wasn't perfect because he didn't do that for his daughter's teacher.
  - d. The man who wanted to close his account and George said it was a loan even when he was being selfish.
3. When you treat people as objects, then you lose because you do not have anyone to really love and that is how we really get joy in life.

## ***Week Three: Where Do You Turn When Your Are In Trouble?***

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### **BEFORE FILM CLIP**

Explain the idea of using story to teach.

When George was in trouble where did he turn?

### **AFTER FILM CLIP**

Start 1:00:00

Stop 1:39:00

Why was Mr. Potter's offer so tempting to George? (He was offering him his original dream.)

Why didn't he take it?

What was the source of his problem? (Uncle's mistake: sometimes our struggles are due to our own mistakes but sometimes they are due to others and no one's)

Where did George turn for help? (himself, Sam Wainwright, Mr. Potter, drink, Prayer, Suicide)

Ezra 8:22 – Gracious to those who seek him but angry to those who abandon him

Matthew 6:33 – Seek first kingdom and God will supply all else

### **APPLY IT TO LIFE**

How do we seek God in trouble?

1. Prayer and his word of course.
2. Turn to trusted Christian brothers and sisters who can be God's source of help.
3. Work as if there is no prayer and pray as if there is no work.
4. Have to learn to wait on the Lord (Isaiah 40:31)
  - a. Don't quit doing what is right even if you don't feel like it
  - b. Worship and serve God during this time to protect your heart from temptation
  - c. Don't be proud; let others know of your need so they can be praying and watching with you

## ***Week Four: Making An Impact On Others Lives***

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### **BEFORE FILM CLIP**

Explain the idea of using story to teach.

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

Why didn't he know it?

### **AFTER FILM CLIP**

Start 1:35:15

Stop at End

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

Why didn't he know it?

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

What was different after George was given the chance to see that he had never existed?

(brother dead which means he never saved the people on the troop transport ship, wife ended up an old maid, town totally dominated by the evil of Mr. Potter, kids don't exist and mother is alone and old while Uncle is a drunk, Violet not helped, Old Man Gower was not stopped from poisoning people, Ernie the cab driver's marriage)

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

2 people curse the day they were born ...

Job 3:3

Jeremiah 20:14

Source of disappointments? (our failure to find our spot in life, not submissive to God's present will, temptation to forgo God's plan)

### **APPLY IT TO LIFE**

What to do?

1. Appreciate your life if you are right with God
  - a. look for blessings, may take the help of objective people you trust
  - b. imagine what life would be like for the people you impact if you were not here
2. Find out where you stepped off God's path and return if that is source of your pain
3. Look for ways to be of service to others in the midst of your pain because that might be God's plan for you
4. Take time to let people who have an impact on you know it in a tangible way. You never know when your encouragement might be the difference between keeping them on the bridge or putting them in the water.