

## The Statesman Addresses the Goal of Quality of Life

Our Creator has defined the quality of life He has designed for each member of His creation to be: “a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (1 Timothy 2:2). The context of this promise makes clear that the decisions of governing officials are critical factors in achieving this. This quality of life is God’s goal for Government decision-making. This reality causes us to pause and reflect. Have we reached this quality of life? How will we know when we have reached quality of life for our people? Will we know this has been achieved when our approval ratings approach 100%? Will this be achieved when no one is attempting to remove us from office?

Clearly, we have a responsibility from our Creator to provide the best possible quality of life for our people. As we do so, we recognize brokenness within our world. We see violence that we have difficulty explaining. Henry David Thoreau commented on this issue a century and a half ago when he said “Most people live lives of quiet desperation”. What does this mean and why should this matter that “Most people live lives of quiet desperation”?

In meeting the needs of our nations, we must recognize that it is a broken world. And it is in this broken world that Government administers nations. Can we be comfortable overlooking this reality? What happens when we allow those within our population to live in quiet desperation? This becomes a fundamental issue that must be recognized and addressed seemingly before other issues can effectively be addressed. If not addressed, we have individuals who act irrationally, even causing harm to self, to family members or to others in society.

Furthermore, as a practical matter, desperation clouds judgment. Realistically, we cannot trust such members of society to correctly diagnose what they really need. This becomes a critical issue for popular government. The rationale for popular governance is a wise people selecting the best leadership through the electoral process. Hence, if we leave our people in a state of quiet desperation, we cannot expect such people to select the best leadership. Furthermore, the reality is that they will even place into Government people who also live in a state of quiet desperation. It is unreasonable that we should be able to depend upon such leaders to guide us and that we should expect to achieve optimal well-being as a result.

Lives lived in quiet desperation is not God’s plan for our people and it is not His plan for us. King David testified to the quality of life available to us based on his own experience:

*You make known to us the path of life. In Your presence is fullness of joy. In Your right hand are pleasures forever (Psalm 16:11).*

The life described by David is the opposite of one lived in quiet desperation. The life described by David as the antidote to the life lived in quiet desperation is the life that is lived in God’s presence, in dependence upon Him, filled with His joy. This has always been God’s intent for us. And I am confident that this quality of life is available to us today to help avoid living “lives of quiet desperation”. God’s intent was always for His creation to experience a quality of life in contrast to the life lived in quiet desperation. Listen to the promise God first made with ancient Israel, which He chose as the model through which He desired for all other nations to experience His blessings:

*If you listen to and are careful to keep these ordinances, the LORD your God will keep His covenant loyalty with you, as He swore to your fathers. He will love you, bless you, and multiply you. He will bless your descendants, and the produce of your land—your grain, new wine, and oil—the young of your herds, and the newborn of your flocks, in the land He swore to your fathers that He would give you. You will be blessed above all peoples (Deuteronomy 7:12-14).*

Does this sound like a nation whose people are living “lives of quiet desperation”? To be clear, these blessings were first promised to a single nation – ancient Israel – that was to be a model to all the other nations, expecting that all the other nations would wish to experience the same blessings. This was made clear when God promised to ancient Israel:

*I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing....in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3).*

His clear intent was that all people should experience this blessing. What is our responsibility within this promise? Remember the first words in God’s promise:

*If you listen to and are careful to keep these ordinances, the LORD your God will keep His covenant loyalty with you, as He swore to your fathers.*

The requirement is our obedience to God. Humanity has largely rejected this offer and it can be concluded that no nation has ever fulfilled our Creator’s requirement of obedience to God. This was a legitimate offer from God. However, it was not achieved practically because it required obedience to God. With the coming of Jesus, we have a new avenue for experiencing this blessing. It is based upon God’s offer of grace – forgiveness for our disobedience resulting from our sinful nature. It is through Jesus’ sacrificial death on our behalf that God accepts as the basis for forgiving us from the deeds of our disobedient nature. As God tells us:

*For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).*

What is required is that we avail ourselves of this offer from God and Jesus to us:

*Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Romans 10:13).*

At the individual level, we have the opportunity to experience God’s personal blessing through the offer of forgiveness, leading to receiving and experiencing the quality of life described by Jesus:

*I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (John 10:10).*

*If anyone is thirsty, he should come to Me and drink. The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water’ (John 7:37-38).*

--- a life overcoming one of “quiet desperation”. How does this work practically? The first step is to accept God’s promise that the antidote to desperation is confidence in God based on Jesus’ sacrificial act opening the way to an intimate relationship with Him. Based upon this, we have this promise based upon our complete confidence in Him:

*Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).*

It is this peace of mind from God that counteracts the quiet desperation. Let us take this a step further. We are admonished:

*Give thanks no matter what happens. God wants you to thank Him because you believe in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18).*

The power in thanking God is that this expresses confidence in God and His promises even in the midst of challenges. God's forgiven children continually maintain confidence that He has His hand of protection and blessing upon our lives. The resulting life is described:

*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me (Galatians 2:20).*

I submit to you that this is the life intended by our loving Creator, not one lived in quiet desperation.

**THOUGHTS FOR THE STATESMAN.** How would it affect the administration of my nation if every individual would experience that same blessing through Jesus? As an initial step, let us imagine our citizens enjoying this life of forgiveness and overflowing blessing from God, including spiritual, emotional and material.

Are my people individually and collectively living lives in victory over quiet desperation? Do the people I administer need to embrace the quality of life intended by our Creator and accept God's conditions for it? Are there steps I must personally take to experience a life victorious over a life of quiet desperation?