

OLTL: The Blessed Life!

Luke 6:17-21

January 15, 2012

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This past Friday was a Black Friday for many SOAP opera fans...particularly those fans of OLTL.

This past Friday, after almost 44 years, the SOAP opera One Life To Live went off the air. How many of you OLTL fans are in mourning? I had one lady come in the office this week and I mentioned this fact and she went shared how she had watched it as a little girl with her mom.

One Life To Live...OLTL debuted July 15, 1968. The original proposed name for the show was, "Between Heaven and Hell." To avoid controversy the name of the show was changed to, "One Life To Live."

It was the first daytime drama to primarily feature racially and socioeconomically diverse characters and to consistently emphasize social issues.

What was the main town or suburb that One Life To Live characters lived in? Llanview...a suburb of Philadelphia, PA.

Who was the wealthy family? The Lords.

Who was the not so wealthy Jewish family? The Siegels.

The middle class families were? The Rileys and Woleks.

The African American family was who? The Gray family.

Who was the character that has won 6 Daytime Emmy Awards? Victoria "Vikki" Lord played by actress, Erika Slezak. Did you know that over the course of the 40 years she has been a central figure of the show that she has died and gone to heaven and come back three different times?

The show, One Life To Live, however, has seen it's last show. In its place will be a show called, "Revolution." It will be a show that will focus on health and lifestyle of people.

The central character is Jesus. He has died only once and rose from the dead and is next to God the Father. The OLTL He calls us to live is one He has lived out before us. The award He has been given is that of King of King and Lord of Lords...the one who conquered sin and death and has given His followers the opportunity to have life eternal...the OLTL.

Today our OLTL value we are going to take a look at is “The Blessed Life.” The “Blessed Life” in the world’s view is often based upon things, money and self-worth. You have a blessed life if you own one or two vehicles, a house, 2.5 kids, food on the table and a full pantry and refrigerator, a secure job and happy marriage and a family dog.

This definition of the world’s view of a “blessed life” is not the same value Jesus presented in His OLTL value of a blessed life. Throughout the bible a “blessed person” is one whose source of joy or blessing is found in their relationship to God through Jesus, not what is found in their storage unit.

This is not OLTL in some future world of glory we call heaven. It is a blessing that exists here and now. OLTL now! A blessed life now! The blessed life doesn’t begin when we go to heaven...it begins here and now when we totally give ourselves to Jesus and the OLTL He calls us to live.

Our true blessing is found not in things or others. It all consummates in the presence of God in our lives through our personal relationship with His Son, Jesus. The OLTL that we find as a blessed life is found here and now.

This blessed life is a life of joy that is untouchable. It is independent of chances and changes in life. The world’s blessings can break down, be stolen, lost or worst yet die.

Jesus promised that no one can take this blessed life from us. (John 16:22) This blessed life is one that seeks us in the pain, struggle and grief in life. The sorrow may last for the night but the joy of God’s presence will be with us each new day. (Psalm 30:5)

It is a blessing, a joy that shines through the tears, the cries of pain and the darkness of death. The OLTL: The blessed life is one that causes us to shout for joy here and now!

Jesus described some revolutionary standards about this blessed life that certainly don't line up with the world's standard of a blessed life or life of joy.

He told His followers that in this OLTL you are blessed if you have lost it all; are ravenously hungry and your tears flow freely! Does that really sound like a life you would want to sign up for?

LOST IT ALL

Jesus said you are blessed if you are "poor" or as the Message bible reads, "lost it all." I personally do not believe Jesus is saying that a person who has no food, shelter, family, or health is living a blessed life. Jesus fed the hungry, healed the sick and told us to do the same. Throughout the scriptures the "blessed" person is depicted as someone who has realized that all they have and who they are in their OLTL is because of God's presence in their life.

It is a spiritual poverty...a humility. It is a person who has lost himself totally to God. He has surrendered all of who he is and has to Jesus. A person who has lost it all is one who realizes their total need for Jesus in all of their life. Their OLTL is a life lived for Jesus.

This is revolutionary according to our worldly standards of the OLTL. We live for ourselves. I deserve it. You owe me! This is the danger of material wealth. It can cause a person to incase themselves in a hard shell of self-sufficiency and no longer live their life for God but for themselves. They are no longer sensitive for the OLTL for Jesus. They set their values in such a way that they are blessed.

The OLTL-The Blessed Life according to Jesus is one that is able to view a relationship with things as meaning nothing and a relationship with God as everything. In fact, those whose OLTL is in Jesus, they receive the kingdom of God.

It is a kingdom of here and now and not something we only receive when we die and go to be with God in heaven. It is a kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. This OLTL – A blessed life is the one true life of joy!

RAVENOUSLY HUNGRY

This is all about your passion for life and the living of your life. There is a country song that talks about live the life you love so you can love the life you live. What is there in your OLTL that you are passionate about? What life are you living? Do you love it?

This OLTL we are called to live is not a “take it or leave it” attitude about life. It is a passionate hunger for what? It is a passionate desire for the righteousness of God. The OLTL is one that is lived out with passion for God’s will to be done in the living of our lives.

It is a total hunger or passion. It is not a dessert only without the meats and veggies. It is the “clean plate club” living for God. We don’t just pick and choose what we like about God’s values and standards for living. It is a total commitment to God. It is the Messianic Meal of doing the Father’s will as Jesus did. Even with the cross before him, His passion to do His Father’s will carried Him on to the cross.

Ravenously hungry to do the will of God as best as we can with who we are, and where we are right now in our relationship with Him. You start out as a child on milk and soft foods. You grow and are able to eat solids. The same is true in our OLTL. We start where we are in our understanding of God’s will and grow more and more in who He desires us to be as we live out our OLTL of a blessed life.

TEARS FLOW FREELY

This is not a call for weak crybabies. It is a call of deep heart felt compassion for the weak in life. It is a heart that reaches out with compassion and care for the needs of the weak and suffering.

I saw a bumper sticker that read, "Too blessed to be depressed!" I'm not sure how good the theology is but I do know that when we reach deep in our heart and discover the presence of God's love and then reach out to the needs of others with His love...there is a great sense of joy that wells up in our spirit. What do you desire in your heart...give that to others.

How compassionate is your heart? Do you cry tears of joy and hurt? A dangerous prayer to pray is to ask God to break your heart with things that break God's heart. The OLTL is a life that will bring hurt and joy! Sorrow is a part of our OLTL in Jesus. So often we learn more about ourselves and our God in sorrow and struggle than we do in good times. Jesus will be with us when our OLTL leads us through a valley of sorrow and even death.

In our tears we find messengers of hope and joy because of the blessed life we are living in Jesus, our resurrected Savior. Heartache is a good symptom of the OLTL-The blessed life we live in Jesus.

OLTL, The One Life To Live! The ONLY Life To Live is one of humility, passion and compassion. OLTL-The Blessed Life is a life, the kingdom of God life, for you and me to experience here and now. There is to be a hunger for helping others with passion and experience the tears of sorrow and joy. Live the OLTL of the Blessed Life in Jesus.