The Game of Life

I. Slide#1 Announce:
   A. Slide#1b Wed night dinners -
   B. Slide#2 Ministry opportunities: We are looking for someone to drive a couple in their 80’s, who just moved to Murrieta (in Colony) to some dr. appointments, once or twice a month to Riv Kaiser.
      1. Let Linda Nielsen our church secretary know.
   C. Slide#3 Panel discussion on Video Games & HT.

II. Intro:
   A. Slide#4 Illustration: The Game of Life is played by a lucky turn of the wheel and a few choices you have to make along the way. The hope often along the way is to get past a Pay Day to the next. To make a few good decisions in spite of what the turn of the wheel or roll of the dice deals you. You decide whether to start off with a career or go to college. You get married. You buy a house. You have kids. If you are lucky you get a carload of them because you get paid along the way to have them! You do charitable work and make some investments. You get some good breaks all by turning a wheel. Then if you race through fast enough and collect the most money along the way you get to retire – either to Countryside Estates/the Poor house or to Millionaire Estates. This is the game of Life.
      1. Very often this is how the real game of life appears to be. It seems to start somewhere after high school graduation and you either pick a career or go to college.
      2. Slide#5 Let’s see what God has to say about the Game of Life.
   B. Prayer:
   C. Title: The Game of Life
   D. Outline: The Charge & The Choice.

III. Slide#6 THE CHARGE (1-10)
   A. (2) Return? - Funny that, they hadn’t even got into the land yet...let alone, be removed from the land...let alone, the need to be returned to the land.
      1. Israel enjoyed the blessings in the land for less than 1,000 years. They entered Canaan about 1400bc, and Babylon conquered Israel about 587bc. (813 yrs) BKC
      2. And you return sounds like Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren. Lk.22:31,32
      3. Don’t you love that He sees the end from the beginning? He knows what you need before you need it? He’s provided a way out before you got in trouble?
B. Here Moses lets them know, they won’t be able to fulfill the Law. This is grace introduced early.

1. The hands might not be able to present a victim for the altar, the feet might not be able to travel to the intended place of worship, but the heart could travel to God.

2. Yes, the poor crushed, broken, contrite heart could go directly to God, and God in the depth of His compassion & tender mercy, could meet the heart, bind it up, & fill it to overflowing with the rich comfort & consolation of His love, & the full joy of His salvation. C.H. Mackintosh

C. (4,5) No matter how far you’ve strayed, even if you visited the most repulsive places, even still...He will gather you...He will bring you. (He will gather you, fetch you, multiply you)

1. Jonah, how far have you been? - Prodigal, how far have you been?

IV. Slide#8 THE CHOICE (11-20)

A. (11) The Law was not incomprehensible (too mysterious/difficult) or inaccessible (far off/beyond your reach).

1. Though the Law had a heavenly origin...God clearly revealed it to Israel so there was no need for anyone to ascend into heaven to get it nor did anyone need to travel across an ocean to get it. Nor did Israel need a special interpreter of the Law before they could obey it.

2. The Law was already written down and Israel had been familiar with its demands in the wilderness. So Moses could say that the word is very near you.
   a) They could speak it (it is in your mouth) and they knew it (it is in your heart).

B. (12-15) The Gospel also was not incomprehensible (too mysterious/difficult) or inaccessible (far off/beyond your reach). Look what Paul said...


C. Slide#9 (15) What is God’s will for my life? We’ve all asked ourselves the question. But what if you can’t figure it? What if you don’t recognize it? As one said, God’s will seemed like a needle in a haystack. Hidden. Obscured by lookalikes. Outnumbered by counterfeits. DailyBread4/6/14

1. But usually our view of God’s will is wrong because our view of God is wrong.

2. God takes no pleasure in seeing us lost, wandering, searching. He wants us to know His will. He makes it clear, and He makes it simple. He doesn’t even make it multiple-choice.

3. He gives just 2 choices: life and good or death and evil (vs.15).
   a) In case the best choice isn’t obvious, He even says which one to choose...Choose life.
   b) To choose life is to choose God Himself and obey His Word.

4. God’s will for us is life. His Word is life. And Jesus is the Word.
5. God may not give a prescription for every decision, but He gave us a perfect example to follow...Jesus.

6. The right choice may not be easy, but when the Word is our guide and Worship is our goal, God will grant us the wisdom to make life-affirming choices.

D. Slide#10 Choose Life (19,20)

E. The primary word for life in the OT signifies active existence. The prominent idea is movement. Gen.7:21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man.

1. An expectant mother is very much aware of the presence of life as she feels the movement of the unborn child within her.

F. In the NT we see that there are predominately 2 words that are used.

1. The first is Bios which is about life as our present earthly existence.
2. The second is Zoe which speaks of a spiritual eternal life.
   a) It signifies a state of vitality. It is life intensive. It’s life as God has it & gave to the Son to have in Himself (Jn5:26). It’s life that we receive through His grace when we trust in Christ.
   b) Bios is life extensive...Zoe is life intensive.

G. Life, as it is described in Scripture, whether physical or spiritual, is more than an abstract energizing force. It is the actual exercising of God-given ability as He designed it as part of creation. In Genesis 2:7 we read: “Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

1. As God’s creation we have both of the physical and spiritual aspects of life. But we know from scripture that both these dimensions of life are found only in relation to God.
   a) Moses told them to choose life…by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days.
   b) Life is found in our relationship with God.
      (1) John said, In Him/Jesus was life, and the life was the Light of men. Jn1:4

H. People often don’t choose life because they don’t respect life.

1. Thus its consequences are: Abortion, Murder, Hate, Prejudice, Violence, Abuse, Suicide, Euthanasia.
2. All of these are fruits of rejecting life, but not the root. The root behind rejecting life is rejecting the God who gives it.

I. Slide#11 Why is it important to choose life?

Illustration: Have you ever done a piece of needlework, or woodworking, or ceramics for someone special to you? Or for yourself? Or what about an organization, a ministry, a campaign that you founded? You always have a very special place in your heart for that which you had a primary role in creating, don't you? Imagine how God feels when He creates each one of us, and then we are simply "thrown away?"

J. Life is valuable...no matter what condition it is in.
   1. One soul is worth more than everything in this world
   2. Every soul has a destiny in God (there are accidents in God)
   3. Jesus reached out to those who no one else deemed valuable
   4. God didn't abort us in our sin.
   5. Our value? The precious blood of Jesus.
   6. We are valuable to God because He made us and loves us.

K. Illustration: Pastor/author Max Lucado tells in his book, The Applause of Heaven, about a sweater that hangs in his closet. He says he seldom wears it -- it's too small, the sleeves are too short, the shoulders too tight, some of the buttons are missing, the thread is frazzled. Logically, he says, he should throw out that sweater since he has no use for it and will never wear it again. It simply takes up space in his closet. That's what logic says. But love, he reports, won't let him. Why not? What's unusual about that sweater?
   To start with, it has no label, no tag telling you "Wash in cold water." That's because it wasn't made in a factory, produced on an assembly line as the product of a nameless employee earning a living. Rather, it was the creation of a devoted mother expressing her love -- his mother. That sweater is unique, one of a kind, irreplaceable. Each strand was chosen with care, each thread selected with affection. And so, even though that sweater has lost all of its use, it has lost none of its value. It is valuable not because of its function, but because of its MAKER. So is each life.

L. Slide#12 Life is a choice: You are here today because God and your parents chose LIFE.
   1. Some of you will be tempted in ending your own life, as some of the bible greats.
   2. But Choose Life.

M. Eternal life is your choice: God made His choice by sending Jesus Christ to die for you.

N. Christians, the daily Victorious life is your choice also: That you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days.
   1. Some of you will be tempted to only view life by today...looking at the micro & not macro. Don't give up...Choose Life.