

## Life Assessment

**Robert Harp, D.Min.***Experience: Executive Director of the Office  
of Innovation/Biola LaunchPad and Adjunct  
Professor, Nonprofits/Social Enterprises,  
Biola University*

## Life Assessment



Some have described the time period between birth and death as the “dash.” The first date represents “beginning,” “hope,” and “promise.” The second date represents “end,” “evaluation,” and “reflection.”

So, let’s talk about the dash. Is the dash about you? Your education, work, resume, accomplishments, legacy? Or is it something bigger than that? The answer, of course, depends on how you view the world.

This course is written from the perspective of a biblical worldview—meaning that life is understood in the context of biblical teaching. God created the world and humankind for a purpose (Genesis 1–3). It ought to be our life pursuit to glorify and honor God with this precious gift of life He has given us. This can only be accomplished by being born again (John 3) and becoming a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

If this has not been your experience, before you begin this course, make it a point to take these courses (pictured) and other courses in this series.

These courses will enhance your biblical worldview and sharpen your vision.

## 1. Life’s Purpose: Bringing glory to God

The Bible teaches that life is clearly something bigger than you. Our lives can be testimonies of the great things God can do through us when we are yielded to Him. My life goal, and I hope yours, is to bring honor and glory to His name.

I am the painting; He is the artist. I am the clay; He is the Potter. He simply asks that we yield our lives to Him. If you have not already

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**Basics Series**

Spiritual Life Basics  
Bible Basics  
Bible Study Basics  
Theology Basics  
World Religion Basics  
Worldview Basics

done so, I would challenge you to ask Him to do a work in your life that glorifies Him. As stated in the Westminster Catechism:

*“What is the chief end of man? Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.”*

How do we bring glory to God? Is it by our service and ministry in the local church or something in addition to this? This course is about integrating our faith with our work. Vocation is not just a mission field to reach others with the gospel (though certainly it is hoped that we have opportunity to do so). Rather, faith at work is doing our best with the gifts God has given us and to bring glory to Him by and through our work.

Colossians 3:23 teaches:

*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”*

Our Christian life is not a Sunday-only experience—the bifurcated life must go. The people in our workplace need to see what a life looks like when it is transformed by Jesus Christ. Life in the workplace is full-time Christian service! As we think about making Jesus the focus of your life every day. Consider these verses:

*“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).*

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart” (Hebrews 12:1-3).*

*“Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer” (2 Timothy 2:3-4).*

*“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that*

Colossians 3:23

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.*

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2 Timothy 2:3-4

*Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer.*

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*day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7-8).*

## 2. Being Mindful of Time: Grasping the brevity of life so we can gain a heart of wisdom

The Bible teaches us to number our days so that we may gain a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12). Where are you on life’s timeline?

I was reminded of the brevity of life when I perused a Journal 10+, a gift our daughter received when she graduated from high school. This compact daily journal is organized to record 10 years of daily events and remembrances, along with a system to remember birthdays and anniversaries, set goals, and more. The benefit is looking ahead to the next decade of our lives and recognizing the significant life changes that will occur. This knowledge about the passing of time can serve a purpose, motivating us to approach our lives and work more intentionally. The purposeful pursuit of journaling causes us to gain a heart of wisdom and live a life more pleasing to God. Just think, seven or eight of these journals could represent an entire life span!

Biblical teaching reinforces that life is brief. Consider these passages:

*“All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever” (1 Peter 1:24-25).*

*“The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field” (Psalm 103:15).*

*“Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes” (James 4:13-14).*

At age 39, I had a wake-up call that made me really focus in on the precious gift of life. It was discovered that I had malignant melanoma skin cancer, thankfully caught in an early stage. Yet, the realization that something like that was on my body—and could take me out—made me reflect: “Am I truly aligned with bringing glory to God? Am I truly focused on pleasing Him and

1 Peter 1:24-25

*All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.*

## 1 Corinthians 15:58

*Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.*

serving Him? Am I ready to meet the Lord?” I recalled many times in church when we’d sing songs about heaven—but now heaven didn’t seem so far off.

I think we always assume life is a given, instead of a gift. From that cancer experience, I selected 1 Corinthians 15:58 as my life verse:

*“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”*

So take time to reflect on time; number your days. Let’s together resolve to make each day count for Christ. And if looking back causes regret, you still must move forward. Perhaps God will lead you to change the things you can, but do not live in regret.

There are no perfect scores in living life. Many songs have been written about this aspect of life, including “This Is Your Life” by the American band Switchfoot. The first stanza says:

*“Yesterday is a wrinkle on your forehead  
Yesterday is a promise that you’ve broken  
Don’t close your eyes, don’t close your eyes  
This is your life and today is all you’ve got now  
Yeah, and today is all you’ll ever have  
Don’t close your eyes  
Don’t close your eyes”*

- Switchfoot

Yesterday is a wrinkle on your forehead. Yesterday is a promise that you’ve broken. Don’t close your eyes, don’t close your eyes. This is your life and today is all you’ve got now. Yeah, and today is all you’ll ever have. Don’t close your eyes. Don’t close your eyes

### 3. Taking Inventory: Evaluating your current life situation.

How can we improve in our pursuit to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves? Let’s take a moment now to think about that question.

In life there are many demands. We must learn to manage well our relationships, time, talents, financial resources, and other aspects of our lives.

We also need to factor in margin so we can refresh ourselves, we can evaluate and set God-honoring priorities, and we can have time to help others struggling with their management of life issues.

So how are you managing? It’s time to reflect and get focused.

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#### Blog Entry

*Pause the lecture now to take the inventory just described, recording your thoughts in the blog.*

Review the following questions and record your answers in your blog:

- How is your spiritual life? Poor / Average / Great? (Jot down a few ways to improve in this area.)
- How is your work life? Poor / Average / Great? (Jot down a few ways to improve in this area.)
- How is your family life? Poor / Average / Great? (Jot down a few ways to improve in this area.)
- How is your health? Poor / Average / Great? (Jot down a few ways to improve in this area.)
- How are your financial matters? Poor / Average / Great? (Jot down a few ways to improve in this area.)

Now, think about your answers? Are you pleased? What needs to change? Record your thoughts in your blog. Do not wallow in guilt over your present situation. Instead, simply allow the Holy Spirit to use this reflection to convict you of changes that need to be made. As we identify and address the issues, we can set a course that honors God.

During this time, pray:

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24).*

And think about Philippians 4:8,

*“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”*

On a routine basis, I receive a message on my computer that informs me that a software update is available. By clicking an icon, the update begins, and my computer then has the latest software updates to protect it and improve its performance.

Look at your time with the Lord in prayer and Bible reading as

## Matthew 22:37-40

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself.*

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## Micah 6:8

*He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

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*Glorifying God with our Dash*

*Next Lesson: Calling and Giftedness*

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your software update. Your time with Him needs to be fresh. Give Him opportunity to update your operating system. For us to grow in Christ and have a testimony in the workplace, we must develop the spiritual disciplines of prayer and Bible reading, along with a commitment to Christian fellowship, sharing our faith, service to others, and stewarding our talents and resources.

Make it your life focus to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind and to love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40; Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:4-21). If we do this, we will most certainly have effective testimonies for Christ in the workplace, at home, and elsewhere.

*What is the mark of a God-honoring life? Consider the words in these passages of Scripture: “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).*

*“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).*

*“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).*

*“Now when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed” (Acts 13:36).*

*“I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do” (John 17:4).*

*“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’ ” (Matthew 25:23).*

*Be reminded: “We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).*

## Summary

So what’s the purpose of the dash? It’s about glorifying God with

our lives. It's not about you and me; it's about Him. Be mindful of time. We must grasp the brevity of life so we can gain hearts of wisdom. Take inventory. Evaluate your current life situation and resolve to set God-honoring priorities.

God has given us the distinct honor of glorifying Him with our lives—and in the workplace. You or I may be the only point of contact some people make with Christianity. Some measure church success by the number of people present on Sunday morning. Perhaps success should be measured by how effective the church is during the week as the church is scattered and penetrating many segments of the workplace at all levels.

In our next lesson, we will look at calling and giftedness. In what ways has God gifted each of us? Are we using our talents to the best of our ability? Now that our focus is to glorify God with our lives, let's take a look at how we can do this with the talents He has given us.