

Life in the Easy Chair - Matthew 25:14-30

Introduction: One of the icons of TV back in the 70's was Archie Bunker's chair. Archie Bunker was a fictional lead character in the series, "All in the Family" that ran from 1971 – 1979. Archie Bunker was a reactionary, bigoted, conservative, blue-collar worker who lived in Queens, New York with his wife and daughter and son-in-law. Archie's chair was a rather rickety, high-back wing chair, but it was more than just a comfortable seat in the house for Archie. Archie's chair was his throne where he reigned as king of his castle.

Almost every head of the house has their chair. It may not be a literal chair, but everyone has their sofa, or their place, or their nook where they call their own. It may be a place to be yourself, or a place where you assume authority, or just a place of ease and comfort. We all have our place – our easy chair.

But tonight, I want to turn our thinking around about our easy chairs. The reason is, in many regards, our easy chairs may be the most dangerous place in your house.

Now, I know what the statistics say. Studies show that each year: 460,000 injuries are caused by kitchen knives. 100,000 injuries are caused by power tools. 4,000 people will injure themselves every year with pillows. But the easy chair is even more dangerous than all those things. How? Well, let me explain.

We like our easy chairs and our sun rooms and our dens because they are very comfortable places. Think about your own life and how much of it is devoted to making life more comfortable? How much money and time have you invested in making your life comfortable? Do you wake up as excited about getting to go work that day as you do getting to come to that chair in the evening and get comfortable?

Now I know I may be getting a little audacious here, but if I may be a little bolder, I would tell you that what makes the easy chair and the comfortable places in our houses so dangerous is not so much what is done in those places – it's the things that are **not** done in those places.

In those easy places there are relationships that never grow; there are people that never get a witness from you; there are prayers that never get prayed; there are gifts that are never given, and good deeds that never get done; there is the great adventure of life with God that you never live.

We were created for more than life in the easy chair. We were created to live the life that God called us to live. God made us for a purpose. The psalmist said about God: *"You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed."* Psalm 139:16 (NLT)

The Bible says you were custom designed by the Almighty God. You are not an accident. God planned you before you were born. The Bible says that each of us is made in God's image. That means God gave you a mind so you'd have the ability to reason; a will, so you'd have the ability to choose; and emotions, so you'd have the ability to feel. You were put on this earth to make a contribution. There are purposes God wants you

to fulfill. There is a life He wants you to live. So the question is – what are you doing with yours? Are you trying to live it from the easy chair, or are you living it for Him?

I want us to look at our Scripture tonight, and see how we can get out of the chair and start living the life God has given us. Mt. 25:14-30 is a parable Jesus told to His disciples just days before He was to fulfill His purpose on earth. It's a story about three guys who were challenged to get out of the chair and live their lives the way God intended.

READ Matt. 25:14-30. In these verses there are 2 reasons why your life and what you do with it matters to God. First:

1. Your Life is an Opportunity. (14-18)

This parable is about a wealthy employer who entrusts three key employees with some of his money. He gives the first employee 5 talents, the second 2, and the 3rd 1 talent. A talent in that day was equal to about 10,000 denarii, and 1 denarii was equal to a day's wage, so the guy who received 1 talent had about 27 years wages. It was an incredible amount of money!

Think about it – up until now these guys were just ordinary working stiffs, but with a single act, their master changes their destinies forever. It was an opportunity of a lifetime – it was a defining moment for them.

Now, the first guy, realizing the opportunity, immediately goes to work. He wastes no time because he knows that he may never get another opportunity like this.

Now remember, Jesus is telling a parable. So the master, the servants, and the money represent something deeper. The master represents God who gives generously. The servants represent believers, who have been entrusted with much, and the talents or the money represent the abundant life God has given us. It represents all of life - our mind, our abilities, our spiritual gifts, our body, our money, and our will. Like the servants in the story, our God, our master, has given us in this one life we live, literally an opportunity of a lifetime.

The master has called each of us, and He offers us some incredible opportunities in this gift of life:

- To do away with our old life and bring a new one.
- To have our past cleaned up & our sins forgiven.
- To have a friend who will never leave us.
- To gain a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind.
- To be led to do right, encouraged when we are discouraged, lifted up when we fall, filled when we're hungry, equipped for every good work, and given the power to overcome any circumstance.
- To be given a hope for dying, a peace that passes all understanding, a joy unspeakable, and a purpose for living.

God has given us an incredible opportunity so we need to learn to live it well. It is a gift from God.

Second, your life matters to God because:

2. Our Life has Accountability (19-25)

In our parable, the master was coming back to hold his servants accountable for what they had been entrusted with. It is interesting that the one talent guy is the one who goes and buries his gift. Maybe he thinks that his one talent is so small compared to the others, that it doesn't matter. Maybe he wished that he were one of the other guys that got more. We don't know why he buried his talent, but he did.

The point is; we need to quit trying to compare ourselves with others and quit wishing we had what belongs to them. Listen, if you spend your life wishing for gifts and talents that you don't have – you will miss out on the life that God wants you to live. At the end of the day, God will not ask you why you didn't lead someone else's' life or invest someone else's' gifts. He will not ask you, *“What did you do with what you didn't have?”* Instead, God will ask you, *“What did you do with what I gave you?”*

One day God will come back and hold us accountable for our life. So what we do with it matters. Have you buried what God has given you? Are you living life in the easy chair because you have been comparing your life with someone else's - and somehow you feel ripped off, treated unfairly – short changed?

Listen, in Christ, God has given you everything you need to accomplish and fulfill the purpose for which you are created and to live a life that pleases Him. You haven't been short changed – maybe you've just been trying to live someone else's' life.

The master is coming back someday, and He is going to settle up with everyone. He's going to want to know what you did with your life. And He's not going to ask your boss, your spouse, your parents, or your friends – Jesus is going to ask you.

But look at the reply of the one talent guy in vs. 24. Life in the chair is full of excuses. It's always, blame someone or something else for the things we do or fail to do. Like so many of us, this guy tries to make excuses for the way he lived his life. *“I was afraid to try. I was afraid I'd fail. You expected too much out of me. I wasn't comfortable doing that. If you'd been more gracious... I might have done something. It's your fault – that why I stayed in the chair... that's why I buried your gift...”*

What the master doesn't say is: *“You know you're right. I should have been clearer. It's none of my business how you live your life or whether you use your gift or talents. I'm sorry I made you uncomfortable. I should have been worried about giving you a comfortable chair. Let's just forget the whole thing.”*

But no, he didn't say that. He called the man *“wicked”* and *“lazy.”* He told him that he knew what kind of gracious master he was! Don't misunderstand God's grace. Many people look at God's grace and think that God's purpose for them is to put them a nice easy chair, but it's not true. The Lord of opportunity is also the Lord of the accountability.

Every one of us is responsible for our own lives. In this story, the master brings everyone into account. When Jesus returns He will do the same. And Jesus has no intention of settling for mediocrity. We will be held accountable for the stewardship of the life the master has given us.

But notice this, the 3rd servant is not judged for doing bad things. Rather he's judged for doing nothing. He didn't steal or embezzle or defraud – he just buried his gift – stayed in the chair and did nothing! He didn't do anything with his life. The potential was there to do something positive, but the 3rd servant refused to even try to develop it.

The rebellious choice is to live life in the easy chair. But the rewarding choice is to get out of the chair of “*do nothing*” and do something positive and beneficial with this wonderful opportunity of life God has given us.

And look at the reward in vs. Mt. 25: 21 & 23. Jesus' reply to the faithful servants was: “*Well done... You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now, I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!*” (NLT)

What you do with your life matters because God has given you a wonderful opportunity of a lifetime - His gift of Life. It matters because God will someday come and hold us all accountable for what we have done with this opportunity.

Conclusion: Imagine that your life is over, and you are led to a room with a huge screen on the wall, and it has your name on it with the caption underneath that says, “*What Might Have Been*”

Imagine watching all that God wanted to do through your life if you would have gotten out of the chair. Imagine seeing all the lives you could have touched if you had not buried yourself in your selfish pleasures. Imagine seeing all the people you could have helped if you had given God your resources. What you do with your life matters.

Here's the good news....your life is not complete yet. There's still time for you to get out of the chair and live life to the fullest. God is giving you the opportunity of a lifetime.