

## When Disillusionment Spoils Your Treasures ©

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“He who marries the spirit of the age soon becomes a widower.”

~ Dean Inge



### I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. When I was attending Dallas Theological Seminary I had the privilege to serve as a concierge for six years at the Hyatt Regency at Reunion Tower. During the 1990s this convention hotel was the second largest hotel in all of Dallas. From that position as a fella from East Texas I entered into a new and exciting subculture. Within the Dallas Fort Worth Metroplex I came to experience the sights, sounds, and tastes of Dallas in an incredible way! Exquisite restaurants, special events, and amazing gatherings! Often times I would bring my wife, my fellow students, and professors with me to enjoy the delicacies featured at fabulous restaurants. I would use those opportunities as platforms to connect with people and build relationships in order that I might share the good news of Jesus Christ.
- B. There was one fine dining restaurant owner I dearly love and he loves me; we became really close. Very handsome man with a disposition that could swoon just about any lady! He is smooth! I taught him much! As an immigrant from a certain country, he experienced the American dream as he went from rags to riches by working hard and making some brilliant business decisions. He owns luxury properties, amazing restaurants, a

number of expensive cars including a 16 passenger limousine, loves to workout, and experiences a life the world would envy. If that were not enough, he also possessed a fabulous personality! If you were with him, you would quickly realize he is all about you! He spares no expense! Always serving! Never arrogant!

- C. Well, one particular late night after I got off work I went to his most famous restaurant to spend time with him. He called me and asked if I would come over. There I found him wearing another classy suit, breath-taking diamond Rolex on his wrist, and a troubled expression on his face. He was experiencing a particular crisis that would cause most of us to go pale. As his confidant he unpacked his situation into the early hours of the morning. At one point, with tears going down his face, he looks at me, an impoverished seminary student, and says, "I would give everything to experience the peace you have, Paul."
- D. Ever feel that way? You dream, prepare, plan, work, work, and work so hard to acquire the comforts, the connections, the looks, and the treasures you so earnestly desire. People admire you and wish they could experience what you have.
1. But perhaps over time the responsibilities you are carrying causes your dreams to fade away. Your business is only making things worse. You thought this particular work would be the means to doing what you want to do but now it is absorbing you and everything else.
  2. The difficulties of life are hitting you with the raising up of your family. Your treasures are not helping.
  3. You are in the midst of a personal, family, or cultural crisis. No matter how much wealth you have, you can't change what has happened.
  4. The success you have achieved did not fill the void within and with every achievement you continue to gain the incompleteness deepens, the void widens.
  5. Or you come to the end of your life and reflect on what and where you spent your energy, time, and resources, you face the stark reality that you lived for things that do not really matter. The treasures you longed for and acquired did not give you the completeness you were looking for.
  6. What are these treasures? They do not have to be the acquisition of wealth or things, things, and things. These treasures could be good looks; a piece of beautiful candy tied to your arm; power; pleasurable experiences; certain possessions that bring about the ooh and awe by

both friends and strangers; personal perfection; a beautiful home; professional recognition by your peers.

- E. From 1989-2010 I pursued academic degrees with the long-term goal of having a PhD in philosophy from a research university. When I finally achieved my PhD in philosophy after eight years of intense studies, rigorous classes, grueling comprehensive exams, and an intense period of dissertation research and writing, all under brilliant professors, and walked the A&M graduation stage and celebrated the accomplishment with family and friends, the next morning as I lay in bed I discovered that all my insecurities and frailties remained. Accomplishing this goal with all of the dreams, decisions, and determination I had did not even alleviate any of my anxieties, fears, or strengthen my shortcomings.
- F. What treasures are you acquiring?
- G. In view of his social critique of our society, novelist Chuck Palahniuk, offer this cynical insight into what hoards of people are living for. He writes:
1. “You buy furniture. You tell yourself, this is the last sofa I will ever need in my life. Buy the sofa, then for a couple years you're satisfied that no matter what goes wrong, at least you've got your sofa issue handled. Then the right set of dishes. Then the perfect bed. The drapes. The rug. Then you're trapped in your lovely nest, and the things you used to own, now they own you.”<sup>1</sup>
  2. But perhaps my favorite line is, “I flipped through the catalogs and wondered: What kind of dining set defines me as a person.”<sup>2</sup>
- H. To be sure, this problem is not new:
1. In his famous trial in 399 B.C., Socrates explained that the reason why he was philosophized was that “*the unexamined life was not worth living.*”
  2. Why? He observed that most people spent their time, energy, and resources on certain goals such as pursuing popularity, pleasure, and wealth without ever seriously asking whether these pursuits are important? How does one know if this is worth pursuing? What if these goals were useless if not dangerous?

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<sup>1</sup> Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Fight Club* (1999 movie adapted from novel *Fight Club* by Chuck Palahniuk); David Fincher, directed.

- I. Ah, but it could be seen another way. Let's say your life is complete! You are really in need of nothing. Your home is beautiful. Your resources are abundant. Your physique finely-tuned. Your children are amazingly gifted and productive.
1. If that is the case, then are you qualitatively growing in the things of God or do you find yourself stagnant in your faith, your curiosity, your creativity. Have you lost your sense of wonder? Has boredom found expression?
  2. Thinkers like Blaise Pascal, C. S. Lewis, Ravi Zacharias, and Paul R. Shockley point out from their observances of such things that we qualitatively grow more from pain and suffering than we do from pleasure. Even the American philosopher John Dewey said it this way: *"The path of least resistance and least trouble is a mental rut already made."*
  3. And if, like Job, all the things you hold dear are suddenly snatched from you, what would your response be? "I curse you, God!" or *"This is tough, 'but like hymn writer once said as he was crossing over the location where he lost his four children, 'it is well with my soul.'"*
- J. This morning's message is titled, "When Disillusionment Spoils Your Treasures."
1. We will discover this morning that the ultimate source for every day conflict between God, each other, and even within is idolatry. Why?
  2. Idolatry we create and prize, generating from our own resources, whether they are certain activities, dreams, glamor, ideas, occupations, objects, ideas, dreams, looks, movements, or wealth, can never fulfill what were originally designed to be, namely, in a love relationship with the God of the Bible.
  3. In fact, anyone who is all about enriching himself, that is, living a life of selfishness by storing up earthly possessions for person enjoyment, feeding that ego, that pride, and does not lay up treasure in heaven is described by God as a fool (cf. Matt. 6:19; 1 Tim. 6:6-10; James 1:10).<sup>3</sup> Life is vaporous. As famously said by so many people, "I've never seen a hearse pull a U-Haul."
  4. But if we will treasure up what matters most to the God of the Bible in the moment-by-moment choices we make, especially, given the vaporous condition of our lives, whereby we are here one moment

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<sup>3</sup> Dr. Tom Constable, *Expository Notes to the Gospel of Luke*, 201.

and dead and buried the next, then we will have rightly lived unto God's glory and richly live in Christ.

5. Our study into every day conflict begins with Luke 12:13-21: The Parable of the Rich Fool.

## II. AN EXPOSITION OF LUKE 12:13-21

- A. Let's capture the scene. In this portion of the Gospel of Luke we receive a historical account whereby a member from the crowd recognized Jesus as a teacher. As a teacher or rabbi, one would be asked to discern, deliberate and offer judgments on all sorts of ethical matters. Here in Luke 12 we find a dispute between two brothers beginning in verse 13 over the sharing of their family inheritance.
  1. As so many of us have already experienced, the dividing up of family inheritances can bring about the worst in us.
  2. There's the story of a mother who unexpectedly died from a heart attack. The mother had several adult children. A grandchild discovered her dead on the floor. She calls her mom. Her mom rushes over. Once she arrives, she literally walks over the dead body of her dead mom and goes straight for the china before other family members arrive.
- B. But Jesus doesn't answer the question between the two brothers. Instead, Jesus, like he does in every ethical case, goes straight to the heart of the matter, namely, the brother's motivation for such a request. Jesus responds in verses 14-15:

**<sup>14</sup> "But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?  
<sup>15</sup> And he said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."**

- C. Looking more closely at verses 14-15:
  1. With the force of a command, he moves from asking a rhetorical question to the one brother and addresses the whole crowd:
  2. **"Take heed!"** In other words, take responsibility; see to it! What is Jesus Christ commanding the crowd, including his disciples, to do?
  3. **Make every effort not to covet.** Seriously avoid! Keep from! Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed.

4. Covetousness is a strong desire to acquire more and more material possessions, to possess more things than other people have; all irrespective of need; it is greed!
  5. *Why* be on your guard against all kinds of greed? Consider this last portion of verse 15: **“for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”**
    - a) True living is not found in the abundance of possessions.
    - b) **“One’s life”** means the conduct of one’s life. In other words, the way you live.
    - c) Abundance means to have more than enough. We see this same word expressed in Luke 15:17: **“all my father’s workers have much more than they can eat.”**
- C. Why this command from Jesus Christ? Because there is the real possibility that we, that is, all of us, just like the disciples who were part of the crowd, can find ourselves embracing idolatry!
1. Greed, at its root level, is a form of idolatry.
  2. While we may not bring offerings and bow to graven images, idols, and representations made out of wood, stone, silver, or gold as seen in Jesus’ day, the god of self reigning supreme, for example, has always been and will be a real possibility for each of us while we have air to breathe.
- D. But what is idolatry? I love the way cultural apologist Dr. Nancy Pearcey of Houston Baptist University explains idolatry. She states in her superb work, *Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism, and Other God Substitutes*.
1. “An idol is anything in the created order that is put in the place of God.”<sup>4</sup>
  2. “An idol is anything we want more than God, anything we rely on more than God, anything we look to for greater fulfillment than God. Idolatry is thus the hidden sin driving all other sins.”<sup>5</sup>
  3. Dr. Nancy Pearcey goes on to say:

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<sup>4</sup> Nancy Pearcey, *Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism, and Other God Substitutes* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: David C. Cook Publishing, 2015), 42.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

For example, why do we lie? Because we fear the disapproval of people more than we want the approval of God. Or because we value our reputation more than we value our relationship with God. Or we are trying to manipulate someone into giving us something we think we need more than we need God. The more visible sin (lying) is driven by an invisible turn of our hearts toward something other than God as the ultimate source of security and happiness.<sup>6</sup>

- D. This explains why, as psychologist David Powlison says, “Idolatry is by far the most frequently discussed problem in the Scriptures.”<sup>7</sup> Once again, idolatry drives all other sins.
- E. Since idols are fundamentally finite since they are aspects of the created order, disillusionment will emerge for they cannot bring about the fulfillment, meaning, and peace people are looking for; they were never designed to do those things. When you have this nagging, disappointed awareness or experience that something or someone is not generating all that you were looking for, the experience and the suppression of this truth can be quite painful.
  - 1. Actress Judy Garland put it this way: “How strange when an illusion dies. It’s as though you’ve lost a child.”
  - 2. The experience is also an epidemic in view of where we find ourselves today in this image driven society. Joseph Priestly stated it brilliantly when he said, “Living in an age of advertisement, we are perpetually disillusioned. The perfect life is spread before us every day, but it changes and withers at a touch.”
  - 3. So, when we say, “I must have this!” then “warning flashes” should register in our minds. “Why must we have this?” See, when a desire becomes a demand and it comes to control your thoughts and behavior, idolatry has found a foothold in your life. When you say, “I must have this” and it involves hurting another person, whether family member, friend, acquaintance, or stranger, then you are indeed in troubled waters of idolatry.

My first point is this: When disillusionment spoils your treasures, idols exist in your lives. Take heed, lest the idols you create captivate, capture, and control you in the most unexpected ways.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 37.

### **We could look at it another way...**

- E. The lack of completeness, fulfillment, and peace, are not only the negative consequences when we substitute God for anything from the created object. Idolatry also generates conflict with God, conflict with each other, and conflict within given the fact the moral law woven into us (Romans 2:14-16).
- F. If you are in conflict with God, with someone, or even within your own person, you have to probe why!
- G. Could it be that you have an unmet desire?<sup>8</sup> Do you see your desires as something you need? Something you deserve? Do you believe that this or that will make you happy?<sup>9</sup>
- H. Quoting from Peacemaker's Ministry, they write "The more we want something, the more we think of it as something we need and deserve. And the more we think we are entitled to it, the more convinced we are that we cannot be happy and secure without it."<sup>10</sup> This is idolatry.
- J. But like the Dallas businessman and restaurant owner who had everything the world values, handsome looks, power, physical pleasures, and wealth, it did not generate what he was looking for. He wasn't experiencing fulfillment and peace. Instead, the idols he prized became his own prison walls. Within those prison walls conflict grows, pain permeates, and bitterness finds expression. Let that not ever be any of us as believers in Jesus Christ!

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<sup>8</sup> I am indebted to <http://peacemaker.net/project/getting-to-the-heart-of-conflict/> in view of their work on idolatry and conflict. Accessed 23 July 2016.

<sup>9</sup> Idem.

<sup>10</sup> Idem.



### III. IDOLATRY IN EXODUS:

- A. If a Jewish person was listening to Jesus Christ speak about idolatry, a historic event from their past, one that is often remembered in biblical history, would likely be remembered. Take your Bibles and turn to Exodus chapter 32. Here we will see a historic scene that should reinforce the need to take heed lest we become captivated, captured, and controlled by the idols we create.
- B. As we turn to Exodus chapter 32, the second book in the Bible, let me share with you an observation the late Dr. John Witmer from Dallas Theological Seminary made in view of the religious worship of the Egyptians during the time of Jewish enslavement. He writes:

The Egyptians had a staggering array of deities numbering in the thousands. The Pyramid texts alone mention two hundred gods, and the Book of the Dead lists some twelve hundred. Most of the Egyptian deities were portrayed as animals, though the chief gods were pictured in human form. Egypt also worshiped cosmic deities, such as Ra, the sun god. The pharaohs themselves were viewed as incarnations of deity. Though Egyptian religion with its multiplicity of gods and grotesque idols must have repulsed the Hebrews, it nonetheless had a strong influence on them, as seen in the golden calf incident at Mount Sinai (Exodus 32).<sup>11</sup>

- C. Now let's just pause for a moment and consider where we are in Exodus. From chapters 1-12 we have Moses' preparation and confrontation with the Pharaoh. From chapter 12:37 to chapter 18 we have Israel's journey to Mount Sinai including the crossing of the Red Sea. Then from chapter 19 to the end of the book we have the Lord's revelation at Mount Sinai. Thus, in chapter 19 Moses goes up to Mt. Sinai with chapter 20 being the giving of the 10 Commandments.
- D. Just imagine the scene from the viewpoint of an eagle! While Moses was up on Mt. Sinai before the manifestation of the God of the universe, receiving instructions on how the liberated Israelites are to live as His distinct people, down below at the foot of the mountain on the desert floor we see Aaron, the mouthpiece and brother of Moses, gathering gold from the Jews who were miraculously saved from the Egyptians by the parting of the Red Sea. From the gold gathered from their persons, Aaron creates a golden calf for this newly formed nation of people to worship.

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<sup>11</sup> *The Theological Wordbook* by Donald Campbell, Wendell Johnston, John Walvoord, and John Witmer (Nashville: Word Publishing, 2000), 174.

- E. Aaron was a man who was born in Egypt three years before his brother Moses. He was also the sister to Miriam. Aaron was commissioned by God to be the mouthpiece of Moses. What authority! What leadership! What responsibility! Here is a man who walked with Moses, saw the dramatic, the extraordinary, and the miraculous! The 10 plagues! The parting of the Red Sea!
- F. But something happens to him that is even more extraordinary than anything else he ever experienced. Aaron and two his sons, Hadab and Abihu, along with 70 elders of Israel were permitted to accompany Moses part of the way up into Mt. Sinai where God had manifested Himself.

**Listen to these words from Exodus 24:**

- G. Aaron, who was given the awesome privilege of seeing a manifestation of God's Shekinah glory! He and his 70 elders celebrated such an occasion with a festive covenant meal and then made their way back down to the desert floor while Moses went further up the mountain.
  - 1. While Moses remained receiving divine instructions, and the people below could see God's consuming fire on the top of the mountain, Aaron, his sons, and elders returned and they waited.
  - 2. But in their waiting, the insidious force of sin emerges.
  - 3. Exodus 32 gives us the tragic event!

**Read Exodus 32.**

- 4. It took less than 40 days for idolatry to emerge.
- 5. And what does Aaron tell the liberated Israelites with the authority and privileges given to him:
- 6. He turns from the infinite incomparable God who was manifesting Himself on top of Mt. Sinai before Moses, One whose glory He had just seen, and identifies God as the golden calf:
  - a) Read verses 4-6 again:
  - b) If you look closely at verse 5 you will discover that in the Hebrew he actually names the golden calf Yahweh. This is the first time we see God's name being used for Idolatry. And this comes from the mouth of Aaron.

- c) Even having seen miracles and having a dramatic encounter with God was not enough to keep him from committing idolatry and leading an entire people-group into idolatry.

G. Why did Aaron do it? There are a number of possibilities:

1. Fear? Fear that Moses will never come back down.
2. A loss of hope.
3. Anxiety in view of being in the presence of these people without Moses' leadership.
4. Compelled to conform to the demands of the people? Not enough spine or resolve to stand up for what is morally right.
5. Ignorance? So steeped in Egyptian mythology, he just didn't understand
6. Lack of Patience? He wanted to move on! Get things going!
7. Unstable character?
8. Jealousy? He didn't like what Moses was receiving, so he decided to do his own thing.
9. Did he even think about the consequences of such idolatry? How would this affect his relationship with God, Moses, Miriam, the 70 elders, his four sons, etc.?
10. How did the creating and worship of the golden calf affect the moral law within himself in view of Romans 1 & 2?
11. Before the people who heard Moses' words of encouragement, hope, promises, and teachings that led to their Exodus, the Israelites are now being led to break the first three commandments of the 10 Commandments as they were being made:
  - (a) Worship another god other than the Lord God;
  - (b) They created a graven image;
  - (c) They used the Lord's name in false worship by identifying the gold calf as Yahweh.

## PAUSE!

- H. But are we so different? We may not have seen the Red Sea part or get a glimpse of God's Shekinah glory, but we have something that Aaron did not have. We have Jesus Christ. We have God Himself who entered into our human history. Here is Jesus Christ, who entered into space and time, walked among us, and then died on the cross for our sins and rose bodily from the dead so that we might receive the divine gift of eternal life. When we place our faith in Him, believing that He is the Son of God, who died on the cross for our sins and rose bodily from the dead, we receive unmerited favor, redemption, and absolute forgiveness. All we have to do is receive that gift of love in the open arms of faith.
- I. Upon receiving salvation the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the One and Only Triune God, takes up residence within us.
1. What do we do with these blessings? What do we do with Him living inside of us? What do we do as ones who have been united to Christ?
  2. Instead of living an unhurried life of intimacy with the God of the Bible, where we offer our God our utmost in our daily affairs, living on mission no matter where we are, we turn, exchange, and worship something or someone else. Instead of yielding to God in the choices we make, we yield to ourselves or some other idol we find ourselves attracted to and sadly trapped by.
  3. We struggle to give our best to God. We reduce God to another activity among other competing activities.
  4. Consequently, everyday conflict emerges as we feed our idols. Aaron was now in conflict with God and Moses. He was undoubtedly in conflict with himself and with others since they too knew but suppressed the warnings of conscience within so they could create and worship the gold calf... even while seeing God's consuming fire far above on Mt. Sinai.

When disillusionment spoils your treasures, idols exist in your lives. Take heed, lest the idols you create captivate, capture, and control you in the most unexpected ways.

When disillusionment spoils your treasures, not only do idols exist, but they also become sources of everyday conflict, namely, conflict between you and God, between you and others, and even within.

- I. Therefore, if we want to remove those idols in view of the conflict they will create between ourselves and God, others, and even within, we need to first identify them. A great way to begin is to probe our desires and examine our demands! Peacemakers Ministry offers an outstanding list of questions to ask to help us uncover the idols in our lives:<sup>12</sup>
1. What am I reoccupied with? What is the first thing on my mind in the morning and the last thing on my mind at night?
  2. How would I complete this statement: "If only \_\_\_\_\_, then I would be happy, fulfilled, and secure"?
  3. What do I want to preserve or avoid?
  4. Where do I put my trust?
  5. What do I fear?
  6. When a certain desire is not met, do I feel frustration, anxiety, resentment, bitterness, anger, or depression?
  7. Is there something I desire so much that I am willing to disappoint or hurt others in order to have it?
- J. As you probe your idols, you will often "encounter multiple layers of concealment, disguise, and justification."<sup>13</sup> Thus, doing it in terms of relational community and accountability is needed. In other words, are there people we can turn to who love us in spite of ourselves and are willing to talk truth to us in love and love in truth? Hopefully you have those relationships right here within our church family.

**But what is so incredible...**

- K. Like Moses who interceded before God upon Aaron's behalf for his idolatry, God has forgiven us through the person and work of Jesus Christ (Deuteronomy 9:10).
- L. Like Aaron who became the high priest, we are now God's believer-priests because of what Jesus did on our behalf. But to be faithful believer priests, we need to live for what matters most. If we will live for God, then we will not be generating sources of conflict. Instead, we will offer healing, hope, and peace in both our proclamation and in our personal touch. We will be peacemakers!<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Idem.

<sup>13</sup> Idem.

<sup>14</sup> Idem.

#### IV. THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL:

- A. Now having a historical context to see how the Jewish person might consider the heaviness of idolatry, let's return to Luke 12:12-16 for a final look into the calamities that flow from idolatry.
- B. Returning to Luke 12:12-16 Jesus unpacks his commandment and explanation to take heed against all forms of greed by offering us a parable, namely, the parable of the rich fool.
- C. **Read verses 16-21:**
- D. The parable centers on a farmer who is also a rich man. To be sure, there is no problem being a farmer, being rich, or being a good steward of those blessings. But the parable itself offers some clues about this farmer's problem-which is applicable to each one of us.
  - 1. Our first clue to the nature of the problem is found in the six times the word "I" is used in verses 17-19.
- E. His problem was his focus for the range of his focus is an all too common problem in this age of decadence: me, myself, and I. Selfishness. He came to the faulty but popular conclusion that the meaning of life consists in the abundance of possessions. He is living for his things. For him, this is the meaning of life.
- F. Look carefully at 19: *"<sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." Soul = one's self.*
- G. But what the rich man fails to realize is that one's circumstances can radically change! Like I tell my spiritual life students, "We are nothing more than cheese nip cracker. Wrong place at the wrong time and we are so easilt crushed." Reality seems to oscillate between moments of stability and moments of instability. I jokingly say that across my tombstone will read, "It's always Somethin!"
- H. Verse 20: Thus, God said to the rich farmer: **<sup>20</sup>But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'**
  - 1. Interestingly, our study begins and ends with the issue of inheritance.

- I. **“Jesus says, “So is he who lays up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God.”**
- J. When God calls the rich farmer a **“fool”** he is describing one who “disbelieves” or “disregards” God.
- K. The application is obvious! Instead of living for treasures that you can’t take with you when you die, become rich in God by yielding to the things of God in moment-by-moment living. Following hard after Him. In His empowerment, if you will anticipate, meet, and exceed the needs of others by exemplifying Christ in all of life, surrendering yourself to meet the needs of others with the resources God has given you (1 John 3:16-17), then you will live a rich life.
- K. Like 1 Tim. 6:18 states: **“Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share.”**
- L. Consequently, if we will make it our aim to be well pleasing to Christ in how we live our lives, then this rich life spills into eternal rewards. Like the apostle Paul states in 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 our attitude should be the same:

**<sup>9</sup> Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. <sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

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When disillusionment spoils your treasures, not only do idols exist, but they also become sources of everyday conflict, namely, conflict between you and God, between you and others, and even within.

When disillusionment spoils our treasures, if you will exchange your idols for the God of the Bible, making your life’s aim to be well-pleasing to Jesus Christ, then you will not only rightly live, you will also live richly in Christ.

## V. CONCLUSION:

- A. Recently I was in the home of a dear man. Honest man! Good man! A blue-collar man! Strong work ethic! Great reputation! Gifted! Dearly loves his wife. He did the best he could with what was given to him. He suffered tremendously in life in view of losing a son and terrible injury that left him bed ridden for a couple of years. Nevertheless, he endured, worked hard, built up a nice nest egg of resources, and after he retired, had his dream home built and paid it all out in cash.
- B. But there I am in his kitchen watching this John Wayne type of guy break down sobbing at the breakfast table one evening talking about how he has worked so hard to reach this point in life and now can't really enjoy it given their circumstances.
- C. See, he spent most of his years working hard to expect to enjoy the latter days of life with his beloved wife from the fruit of his labor. But now his wife is suffering from progressive dementia. The future they dreamed about has evaporated before his eyes. Now, he has to care for his wife as her mind fades away.
- D. But even in those moments, if we will seize God in the manner He has seized us, then we will experience a peace that surpasses all understanding, a satisfaction, a certain presence... that there is more to life than what we own, what we look like, or what we have or have not achieved. Jesus Christ makes that possible for each of us! Abandon yourself to Christ. He will never disillusion you!



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When disillusionment spoils your treasures, if you will exchange your idols for the God of the Bible, making your life's aim to be well-pleasing to Jesus Christ, then you will not only rightly live, you will also live richly in Christ.

Therefore, let's enjoy our vaporous resources but do not live for them or we will not only experience disillusionment, but also we will also be characterized by biblical literature as a fool. Instead, if we will seize God, walk with Him, embrace His priorities, and live out His values no matter where we are, then we will truly live. His joy will be ours.

## VI. FINAL THOUGHT:

So, I close with a sobering thought from C. S. Lewis: Does it matter to a man dying in a desert by which choice of route [if] he missed the only well?"

Oh, Heavenly Father:

As I think about the wealthy man who had everything the world values but what he needed the most; the two brothers fighting over an inheritance; Aaron who so quickly turned to lead your people into idolatrous worship, identifying your name with the golden calf they created, directly below the very manifestation of your presence on Mt. Sinai whether it is out of fear, anxiety, loss of hope, or deficient character, or the couple who worked hard to enjoy life only to see it take an unexpected turn, how I hope we will never be described as foolish we people look upon our casket.

Father: If we are living for wood, hay, and stubble, convict us. Since idols are those things that have occupied our hearts and control us that we have created and now control us, our desires, our drives, and dreams, then please probe us, examine us, test us, and help us remove these sources of conflict are affecting our relationship with God, each other, and even within.

Give us the empowerment like Josiah of old to break down every idol and give our remaining days to you, making our lives count for something great by making it our aim to please you realizing that by living for anything or anyone else, we are living for that which is vaporous. May we be found faithful before you, consistently living for what matters most, for your glory and our best.

In the precious name of Jesus Christ! Amen!