

“Stuff Will Not Complete You”

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It seems as though we're bombarded from all sides with the message that materials and possessions, often called "stuff," will bring you ultimate happiness and contentment in life. I believe many of us know this is false, yet there's a pull from the world's voice that states the more you have, the more abundant and fulfilling, your life will be!

Did you know there are 2 billion square feet of storage space in the U.S. alone! That's enough room to house every man, woman and child 7 times over! We've got kids in this country who go to bed at night without a roof over their heads, but our "stuff" is safely tucked away.

Rather than share with others from our plenty, we cling to it! Rather than give it away where it can be better used, we hoard it. And when we run out of space for all the stuff we've amassed, we rent out more space! We make less and less room for God in our lives, even as we make more and more room for our stuff! Much of this is because **The World is saying, “Get As Much As You Can”!**

No matter how much stuff a person has, fulfillment, joy, and completeness in life will never be found in possessions.

Open to Luke 12. Our parable from Luke tells us that rather than worrying about what we have and storing up riches on earth, our priority should be on our riches toward God in heaven! This is the kind of money problem Jesus confronted from the start! Verses 13-15, *“Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” But he said to him, “Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?” And he said to them, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”* **God is saying, “Getting Things Causes Emptiness!”**

The multi-millionaire John D. Rockefeller was once asked, *“How much does it take to satisfy a man completely?”* He replied, *“It takes a little bit more than he has.”* Of all people, Rockefeller should have been completely satisfied, but his reply to this question indicated that even he desired more!

The truth is that most people look for the wrong kind of satisfaction. They feel a yearning or an emptiness, and they try to fill it up with material things. What they fail to understand is that separation from God is what leaves them yearning for more! Trying to fill the hole left by God's absence in our lives with wealth and possessions is futile and senseless. It's like when you're thirsty, you drink water, you don't go shopping at Macy's!

Large Amounts of Stuff Don't Build Contentment! Verses 16-19, *“And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.””* Like the rich man, we are tempted to think that having large amounts of money and possessions stored up will make us secure.

Sooner or later, however, we learn that neither wealth nor property can secure our lives.

No Amount of Stuff Secures Life with God! When the rich man talks in this parable, he talks only to himself, and the only person he refers to is himself! *“What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?” “I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry’”*. He’s just thinking he’s done it all himself and he’s the only one important! God’s not even in the picture!

Our Lives and Possessions are not ours, they belong to God. We’re only stewards! The rich man’s land has produced abundantly, yet he expresses no sense of gratitude to God or to the workers who have helped him plant and harvest this bumper crop! He has more grain and goods in storage than he could ever hope to use, yet seems to have no thought of sharing it with others, and no thought of what God might require of him. He’s blind to the fact that his life is not his own to secure, and that his life belongs to God, and that God can demand it back at any time.

Rather than saying, *‘Look what I’ve done’*, we need to **Thank God For Everything!** Charles Spurgeon once said, *“Nothing teaches us about the preciousness of the Creator as much as when we learn the emptiness of everything else.”* God has given you everything! All of the stuff around you comes from God’s loving hand.

He proved this love, not only with what you possess, but with Him sending His One and Only Son to suffer and die to take your place, and to pay the price of your sin. His glorious resurrection gives you life forever as you walk by faith!

Open to Matthew 6. Look at verses 25 and 33 to see how your focus should be, *“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”* Verse 33, *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”*

The writer of Hebrews summed up this whole issue of us going after everything but God in Hebrews 13:5, *“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”*

Let the knowledge of the unending and unfailing love of God be your end all and be all! **Don’t Be Consumed by Stuff, Instead Be Consumed and Complete in Jesus Christ!**