

Some Things Are Missing

Bill Brinkworth

“... 10 There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.”

II Chronicles 5:7-10

After worshipping God in the tent tabernacle Moses had built while Israel lived in the wilderness, King David desired to create a permanent place for God. Because of David's past, God would not let him construct it, but He would let his son, Solomon, build it.

After the ornate temple was completed, Solomon moved in many of the objects needed for worship. One of the most prized and important was the Ark of the Covenant. The ark and its “Mercy Seat” lid were where God would sit.

When placed in the wilderness tabernacle, the ark contained reminders of what God had done for Israel. Inside the golden chest was originally the stone, ten commandments God had Moses inscribe, a pot containing miraculously provided manna as a reminder of how God fed Israel, and Aaron's budding rod that God used to prove who He was.

Because of Israel's sin, they lost control of the Ark several times to the enemy. Although God's people eventually got the Ark back, some reminders of God's miraculous interventions

were missing from the chest. When it finally was put in the new temple, many of those memories were lost. All that remained inside was the copy of the Ten Commandments.


Many Christians start similarly. After they are saved from eternal punishment for their sins, God fills their life with new, precious proofs and reminders of His goodness to them. They were “new creatures” (II Cor. 5:17), just as God promised He would make of them if they would trust and follow His commandments.

However, missteps, mistakes, and sin often take away the remembrances of what God had done for many. One treasured memory after another is forgotten and lost as the child of God falls further from obedience to God's commandments.

Soon little remains of the encouraging presence of God they once experienced and were joyful over. Their joy has been robbed by less important “priorities.” Worldly things become more important than obeying and serving the Lord.

Christian, do not allow your real treasures to be lost! Do not let temptations and iniquity steal the joy and usefulness God desires you to have. What God has done and will do in your life is more valuable than the temporary things this world may offer. Guard what He has given and is doing with you by staying far away from sin and disobedience.

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What's Really Important?

Bill Brinkworth

“Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.” Proverbs 17:1

A friend of mine has a deep appreciation for the “quietness” spoken of in Proverbs 17:1. He is a very hard worker. No dust ever settles under his feet. His fellow workers will attest to that. However, there are times when he sits back and relaxes. He drinks in peace and calm and marvels at how it soothes him. He manages the right balance between work and having a quiet time.



So many have never experienced or have long forgotten what it is like to have “peace.” They go, go, and go. Their day starts in haste, and it ends that way. Meals, work, school, football games, movies, dance recitals, and chores gobble up their time. Days are scheduled so that

one event after another is planned and that there is no free-time. There is no quietness for them to relax, “smell the roses,” and enjoy the life God gave them.

Relationships get neglected. Because of not having spare time, there are never moments to get alone with their spouse, family, and friends. Seldom is there ever a time to get apart with their God and learn His will, way, and direction. One wonders if their “busyness” is a cover-up to avoid reflecting on actions and relationships with others and their Creator.

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Not Much Remained

Bill Brinkworth

“Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”

James 4:14

After the four-hour labor of three workers, a large area in a wooded area was cleared of trees

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What's Really...

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“Well, we have to do all we do to have what we have,” is often the explanation. Indeed, things cannot be obtained by sitting around with your feet propped up, but are all those things really necessary? Is forfeiting time with family, yourself, and God worth the price you will pay?

The strife and turmoil created by being so busy leaves one empty and drained. One may have done many wonderful things and have obtained many of their wants, but what have their sacrifices cost them? Their children have gotten used to parents being too busy to spend time with them, so they created their own lives without their mothers and fathers. Wives left alone by always working husbands have compensated by having their own life, excluding dates and personal time with their spouses. Individuals, families, and eventually society grow apart because many self-absorbed people met their own goals and have excluded all others.

As this Proverb reminds us, it may be more enjoyable and profitable to have less (a “dry morsel”) than to have the ulcers and anxiety that often come from a jammed-packed life too busy to enjoy what they should.

Re-evaluate what your priorities should be. Our lives should be more about people, relationships, and devotion to God than

it is about things. Enjoy quietness.

Not Much Remained

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and brush. The waste was carried to one place. A pile 18 feet in diameter and seven feet tall resulted from all that work. It was a massive heap of trimmed branches and cut trees.

Although I originally intended to burn the heap, I deemed it too large to incinerate. Instead, I ran the brush through my small wood chipper.

The job was massive and took three days. After the hard work was complete, the remaining pile of chips was only four feet long and three-foot-high. Hundreds of feet of trees and brush, when ground up, resulted in only a tiny heap of $\frac{3}{4}$ ” wood chips. There was not much to show for the tree’s growth and our labor.

Several years previously, I had cleared another wooded area. The resulting pile of small trees and brush was much smaller, about eight feet long and five feet tall. It was burnt, and after the fire was out and the ashes cooled, there was barely enough of the plant remains to fill a five-gallon bucket.

One day, even this world will have little to show for all the building, civilizations, technology, lives, history, and accomplishments. After the rapture, Great Tribulation (as recorded in

The Revelation), and the 1,000-year millennial reign of Christ, the Earth will be “passed away” (II Peter 3:10). Nothing will remain of all man had made for thousands of years.

Elegant buildings, towering skyscrapers, technology, and all that remained on the Earth will be replaced by a new Earth that God will create. It will be an Earth without the curse of sin. All that man valued will be gone. There will be little to show for humanity’s efforts.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” Rev. 21:1

Throughout our lives, we have eaten much, earned much, accomplished much, been to many places, experienced much, seen incredible things, met and talked to thousands of people, and made some difference in this world. However, when our life is over, like the remnants of the trees and saplings and eventually the Earth, there will not be much left to show for our lives and efforts, just some bones in a casket or a small pile of dust.

Depressing, but a reality that little of man’s efforts will remain to show his existence. However, there can be a glorious eternal future for all. Those that are made “righteous” by believing and trusting Christ’s sacrificial death as payment for their sins can have an eternal life (John 3:16, 36, John 4:14).

“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

Mat. 25:46

What a waste of life to not invest one’s eternal soul in what will last for eternity (John 6:27). The unsaved have put no faith or trust in God’s way of Heaven and will be terrified by the Lake of Fire that awaits them.

However, many saved people will go to Heaven but have not wisely invested their time on Earth. They have not labored to store up “treasures in Heaven” (Mat. 6:20). They have frivolously spent their opportunity in this life on vain priorities (Gal. 6:8) that will not matter in their eternal future. *“... 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal...”*

Mat. 6:19-21

Christian, you have time here on Earth to do as the Lord commands. You should lay up treasures for your future. Obey the Bible and do for the Lord what He allows you to do for Him. Do not arrive in an eternal Paradise and find that you have done nothing or of little value for your eternity.

“In this world, it is not what we take up but what we give up that makes us rich.”

—Beecher