

The Top 10 for Life Series #11
Cmdt. 10 “Right Relationships”

We are just grateful everyone is here, that we have gathered. I know we have an adjusted time schedule this morning and, of course, we have all had an adjusted week so we are just glad you are here and want to help you to get in and be a part of this gathering this morning.

Before I begin my message today I do need to take just a moment and say thank you to all of you who participated in one way or another in what I believe was one of the greatest community events that we have ever shared as a church family and that was “Christmas in the Park” last Sunday evening down at Mizner Park. What an incredible evening it was. So many of you went out of your way to see to it that you invited friends and neighbors and workers and students to come and be with you. Of course, God just gave us such a wonderful favor in the night and evening we had there. Our boys and girls did a wonderful job as did our choir, our orchestra, the Praise Band, all of those who volunteered to be a part. It was just a marvelous, marvelous evening!

I want you to know there is something about the spiritual gift of being a pastor that you always have a need to know how many participated. It just goes with the territory. We didn’t count! But I want you to know what did happen. There were police officers who were there, who were a part of the city’s ordinance that we have to have them there as a part of the crowd control and doing an event outside like that. He said to us that clearly 3500 people came and participated in that event. It was the largest event that had been held in Mizner Park this year. I want you to know that only God could have reserved the 20th of December and given us that opportunity and I praise the Lord for that! From every note of music and from the wonderful testimony that Elizabeth Mitchell shared, it was just an incredible evening and I believe that Christ was glorified and magnified in it.

Then, for those of those who were here on Thursday evening, Christmas Eve, my goodness, what a beautiful candlelight service we shared together. You know we just had some incredible appointments from God, they have not been accidents. It wasn’t an accident that God kept that date of the 20th of December nor was it an accident that I had lunch in a restaurant last week in Boca and was planning to give every boy and girl who came to our service a yo-yo, a WWJD yo-yo, as a part of a Christmas Eve service and sitting in that restaurant next to me was the world champion, the man who has held the record as the yo-yo world champion. He is a man I have known through my life but have not seen in seven years. He simply heard Ken Muenstermann and myself discussing yo-yos and a Christmas Eve service. He tapped me on the arm and there he was. The next thing you know he came and did a demonstration. I don’t know how we put together stringed instruments, marvelous praise, Christmas carols, yo-yos, and candles but it all went together and it was a fabulous service. If you missed it, I want you to know you really missed something last Thursday evening. That will be a regular tradition for us on Christmas Eve and I am just so thankful for the time we have had, that kind of time. I do

trust you have had a wonderful time celebrating and sharing the Christmas season with your family.

Today I have a message that I think is the perfect message for the Sunday after Christmas. In fact, this message is very specific for all of those of you who didn't get what you wanted for Christmas. If you are here this morning and you didn't get what you wanted and even worse, somebody else did, this message is just for you.

I want you to take your Bible and I want you to open it to the 20th Chapter of the Book of Exodus. In fact, this morning we are coming to the final stepping stone on what has been a ten step journey as we have walked together through the 20th Chapter of the Book of Exodus and as we have been considering together God's Top Ten List for Life. We have learned on every step that there was something specific that God designed and God was determined to transfer to us, to teach us, what really matters and how we are to live. We have been making our way along the way in this journey. Today we come to one of the most probing, one of the most penetrating, one of the most disturbing of all of the standards, all of the statements that God made for each and every one of us. Yet, as we come to the close of 1998, as we will soon be peering over into 1999, I really do not know of an issue that is more important and more pressing to the heart of every person in this building this morning than the issue to be found in the message here in Exodus, Chapter 20. We will read together beginning in verse 17. Exodus 20 and verse 17. "You shall not covet. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's." Specifically God is dealing with the issue of desire and what drives us in life. Covetousness is the law of more and it is the law of mine. It simply says, what is mine is mine and what is yours I want to be mine. It is probably best summed up in a masterful literary piece entitled, The Toddler's Creed.

I don't know if you have been introduced to this piece but if not I thought I might share it with you this morning. It is called The Toddler's Creed. It goes like this.

If I want it,
It's mine.
If I give it to you and change my mind later,
It is mine.
If I can take it away from you,
It is mine.
If I had it a little while ago,
It is mine.
If it is mine,
It will never belong to anyone else no matter what.
If we are building something together,
All of the pieces are mine.
If it just looks like mine,
It is mine.

What is a laughing matter with a toddler and what is very true of every toddler, is not such a laughing matter when we see that attitude being exhibited in adults. Yet the fact of life is that there are people living all around us every day who are struggling with an internal sense of craving for the lifestyle and the life circumstances of someone else. It seems that so much of life is caught up in this dynamic of living with a desire that is endless and ceaseless, wanting what others have. The Bible calls that desire, that sense of wanting more and that sense of wanting mine as being covetousness. Let me give you a specific definition this morning. What is covetousness? It is simply when I look at what someone has and that I don't have, whether it is a tangible or intangible thing, and I desire it to the point that I think that I cannot be satisfied in life if I don't have it. It is not just the issue of the possession. It is the desire that I have to have that possession. Now, frankly, ladies and gentlemen, there is nothing wrong with possessions. There is nothing wrong with desiring a house. There is nothing wrong with desiring a wife or a husband. There is nothing wrong with desiring an animal or a car, as it might be today. But there is something desperately wrong when we are not content with what has been provided for us and with what we have but when we look at what others have and we assume that we have to have the blessing that someone else has if we are going to be happy in life. The Bible has a lot to say about this subject of covetousness. I believe it is very important that we just take time to slow down before we jump into another year, before we get back into all of the activity and agenda of the year ahead and work and pressing competition and all of the things that float out there in the social system of our lives and that we take time to stop and say, what is God really saying as he is closing out the Top Ten issues of life. What is he really saying to me about my desires? This thing called covetousness is a very destructive thing. In fact, the Bible tells us that covetousness does some things to us, some things that we need to be aware of, some things that we need to be concerned about. Let me just mention several of those things to you, what it is that covetousness does to us.

Proverbs, Chapter 23, and verse 4 says that covetousness brings fatigue. Listen to what the scripture says. "Do not overwork to be rich because of your own understanding cease." When we spend all of our health to gain wealth we will ultimately turn around and spend the wealth that we gained to try to regain our health. One of the things that happens in life is that when we live with the pressing desire of covetousness it ultimately brings fatigue. Not only does it do that but also the Bible says it causes conflict.

James, Chapter 4, in verse 3 it says that the reason that you have wars and fighting and strife among you is because you do not have what you want. You are lusting after things around you and the result is that it divides and it devours the relationships of your life. One of the most clear examples that we see of that is that we see it over and over again in families when there is the death of someone in that family and the inheritance is being divided. It is amazing how divisive, how separative, we can become when we fear that someone else may get more of what we think ought to be mine. Yet, it plays out into every arena of life. We don't get along with the people we work with and we can't get along with the people who live in the home with us because of this problem of constant conflict that comes out of covetousness so it brings fatigue, it causes conflict.

It does something else. It increases debt. One of the reasons that so many of us live in this insatiable quicksand called debt is because of the fact that we do not believe that we can live without what somebody else has. We always feel like we just need to charge it and add it and gather it and have it because we have this need to look as though we are keeping up with the who? Yes, the Jounces. You know the problem with that. Every time you catch them they refinance. You know that in the process it is an amazing thing, you can't catch the Jones's. You need to understand that one of the reasons that we end up in so much debt in life and all that goes along with that, is because we are constantly thinking that we have to have something else to bring satisfaction, completion, and contentment in life. Therefore, it brings fatigue, it causes conflict, and it increases debt.

The Bible also tells us in Ecclesiastes, Chapter 5, and verse 12 that covetousness expands worry. We become a more anxious and worrisome person. Ecclesiastes 5:12 says the abundance of the rich man will not permit him to sleep. Insomnia increases with income because you have a lot more to worry about. You have a lot more people who can take it from you because it is yours. It takes a lot of time, energy, and effort not only to get it but also to protect it sometimes. How interesting the contrast in the scripture is that God gives his beloved sleep. God wants you to sleep. God wants you to rest. God doesn't want you anxious about the things that you have and, even more, the things that you don't have. God wants you to rest because he owns everything and he is going to take care of you if you belong to him. So covetousness brings fatigue, causes conflict, increases debt, expands worry, and then it adds dissatisfaction. It just causes me to be dissatisfied in life. When I am living feeling that I don't have all that I need, feeling that I am cheated, feeling that I am entitled to something that someone else has when I am living with that feeling inside, I am constantly frustrated and agitated and dissatisfied.

I love what Pastor friend Rich Warren out at Saddleback Valley Community Church says about covetousness. He said I am covetous when I am resenting God's goodness in other's lives and I am ignoring God's goodness in my own life. Isn't that a powerful statement? When I am resenting God's goodness in other's lives and I am ignoring his goodness in my life. Now, don't get me wrong; please don't get me wrong this morning. I am not telling you that you shouldn't have any desires in life. I am not telling you that you shouldn't have any ambitions in life. But I am simply telling you that when desire goes untapped and when ambition is simply the attitude that I have to have more, I have to have what someone else has, then, in the ultimate end, rather than finding satisfaction in life, rather than finding significance in things, rather than finding security in my holdings, I find I am constantly vulnerable and constantly struggling. God, on the other hand, wants you and God wants me to learn what it means to live life to the fullest but to find that fullness in him.

Do you want to know what is wrong with the majority of people in Boca Raton, Florida? I will tell you what it is. They live a life that is driven by the emptiness of excess. They live a life that is driven by the emptiness of excess. They have gained so much. They have so much to live on but they have so little to live for. It is because there is an emptiness that is found in the excesses of life if ultimately the goal of life is just more. You see there are basically two ways in which you can live in life. One way in which

you can live your life is to seek to try to find all of your satisfaction in life in this world. If you try to find satisfaction in this world which you can get, what you can gain, what you can hold, what you can have – if that is your paradigm for living then I can promise you that ultimately you are going to find an emptiness there.

There is another way in which you can live. There is another paradigm for living. That other paradigm is that we can live our lives in such a way that we can find contentment in God. Those really are the two tracks of life. Either, one you live to seek to find all of your satisfaction in this world, in the experiences, in the excesses of the world or else you seek to live your life to find satisfaction in God. Really, that is the dividing point of where we have to go from here, because the Bible says that the antidote to covetousness is contentment. Paul said in the New Testament, Godliness with contentment is great gain. But you have to learn to be content. In fact, it was Paul who said, I have learned in whatsoever state I am to be content. Contentment is a process; it is something we have to learn, because we are naturally greedy. We are naturally covetous. We are naturally restless. It is vital that we learn in our lives how to be content. I really believe that every true follower of Jesus Christ should be a portrait of a satisfied life. I believe that if you were truly a follower of Jesus Christ that your life, whatever state it may be, whether it is with much or whether it is with little, that your life should be a reflection of a satisfied life because God promises satisfaction to those who follow after him. I didn't say he promises ease. I didn't say he promises PERKS. But I did say that he promises satisfaction. He will complete and satisfy your life and he can give you contentment.

So, the question is this morning, how can I live a contented life? If God says do not covet, don't covet your neighbor's house, don't covet your neighbor's wife, don't covet your neighbor's holdings. Then how am I to live my life so I am content? I think it is actually a fairly simple process. Simple to explain, hard to apply.

Let us just take a few moments this morning and just consider what it takes to have a satisfied and contented life. Here you are today, closing an old year and getting ready to open a New Year. What is going to make the difference next year as to whether you end the year one more time feeling as though something is missing, that there was something you were entitled to that you didn't get this year versus beginning the year with a spirit of contentment, joy, and satisfaction? What is it that would make the difference? Let me suggest several things today.

If I am going to live a satisfied and a contented life, then first, I must recognize the emptiness of acquiring things. I just literally have to take time to sit down and understand that life when I live it to acquire things is an empty existence and yet, so many people live with this little philosophy, if/then. If I could just live in this neighborhood. If I could just have that job. If I could just drive this kind of car. If I could just wear that brand of clothing, then I would be happy. Then life would be complete. We really have to come to a place in our lives ladies and gentlemen where we just hit the pause button and say, hey, I am not going to live that way anymore. I am going to understand that life is not consistent of the things that I have because there are many things I am not going to have in life, no matter how hard I try. If you make one

million there will always be somebody who has two. If you make two million, there will always be somebody who makes ten. If you make ten million, there will always be somebody who has 50 or 100. You see, it just doesn't matter how much you acquire or you accomplish in life, ultimately, it can be and it is an empty thing because things disappoint.

Now, you have just finished having, I trust, a wonderful Christmas. You have opened some beautiful Christmas presents. Some gifts have been given to you lovingly, graciously, by people who care about you and wanted to affirm you during this holiday season. Let me ask you a question. How many of you could really list five things that you got last Christmas if you had to this morning? You know it is amazing how quick we have forgotten, isn't it? I mean, those things we thought we had to have and now we have had them and we enjoyed them but they are gone. They didn't last. That is the problem with things, they just don't last. I mean, last year if you didn't have Tickle-Me-Elmo you were in trouble in December. Who heard anything about Tickle-Me-Elmo this year? I mean, this year it was Furby! Get out of the way Tickle-Me-Elmo because Furby was the thing to have this year. I mean you had to have a salad shooter because everybody said it is the salad shooter year. Now it is the George Foreman grill, because if you are not eating like George, George, George, and George Junior, then you are in trouble. But, you see we constantly get caught up in thinking it is more things. Yet, the reality of life is that those things will never satisfy us. They come and they go and they come and they go and they leave us empty. I think the following formula describes the outcome of how so many people live in this world. If you are living in this world to find satisfaction from this world, you will find that this formula will always prove true for you. The formula is this: The more I put into the world trying to get satisfaction from the world, the more I want. That is greed. The more I want then I find that it is the more that I need. That is emptiness. The more I need the more I become obsessed. That is slavery. Frankly, many people are living in the endless acquisition of things which is the endless enslavement of emptiness because the more I put in the more I want, the more I want the more I need, the more I need the more obsessed I become and ultimately I live my life in slavery. If you and if I are going to overcome the tendency toward covetousness and to being to live our lives with contentment, then we have to recognize the emptiness of acquiring things.

There is something else we have to do. That is we have to resist the temptation to compare ourselves with others. Comparison is a very dangerous thing. Yet, we all have this tendency to look at where I am and to look at where he is or to look at where she is and before long, instead of being content, I find that I am distracted. I find that I am dissatisfied in life. In reality, if I have to have what other people have to make me happy, then I have chosen to be miserable. Do you realize that? If I have to have what other people have to make me happy, then I have chosen to be miserable.

An incredible insight, I think, comes from David Robinson who has been the star center for the San Antonio Spurs. He describes what happened in his life when he saw Michael Jordan clinging to a basketball trophy, the World Championship, for the first time. Robinson said, I looked at Michael Jordan and looked at myself and I had to come to

terms with this, that I had to get over this idea that a piece of metal could validate my life. He said, here I am a star athlete, I have five cars, two houses, and more money than I ever thought I would have, what more could I ask for? Where am I going? But here is Michael Jordan, he has a piece of metal that I don't have so I am living my life unhappy. He said I came to the realization that it didn't matter how much I had, it didn't seem enough because material things can't satisfy your deepest needs and that is when I realized I needed the Lord. I quit comparing myself with what others had and I realized something was missing in my life that was more important than pieces of metal. Things that you drive, things that you live in, there was an emptiness in all of that. He said, I realized I had to quit comparing myself to the wrong standard and I needed to realize I had been made for something more, I had been made for God. You see, in all of our lives there is a great danger. It doesn't really matter what your material status is or your net worth may be. There is a great danger in life of equating the value of your personhood with the value of your possessions, that there is somehow a significance that comes from what you have. What a dangerous thing that is, of comparing yourself wrongly, of valuing yourself wrongly. I want you to hear me this morning! It doesn't matter what kind of car you came to church in today. It doesn't matter what kind of clothes you have on your body today. It doesn't matter what kind of home you live in today. It doesn't matter what kind of job you work at today. You are valuable because God made you and God loved you and that makes you equal in value to any other person on the face of this plant. That is the only thing that makes you valuable. It is not what you have. It is who made you and what the purpose is for your existence. You are valuable because God loves you and God has given you worth. Frankly, every one of us is to value every other one of us because of this reality that we are valuable to God.

Recognize the emptiness of acquiring things. Resist the temptation to compare yourself to others. If you are going to be contented and satisfied in life, you have to resolve to balance your desires by choosing to acquire by God's standard. You have to resolve to balance your desires by choosing to acquire by God's standard. God does not set a limit on the earnings of a Christian. You may hear me talking this morning and thinking, now, you know, I have had a pretty income, actually I am doing pretty well. I am grateful for what I have and you are thinking is he this morning saying that if I am a Christian; I am a follower of Christ, that I just need to not have anything. No, I am not saying that. God doesn't put a limit on the earnings of Christians. In fact, this place where we are today, this piece of ground and the piece of ground across the street was purchased because of many people who received from God and gave back to the work of God in order that a dream could be fulfilled for the work of God and the blessing of people, not only in Boca, but literally from around the world. Thank God for vision! Thank God for that kind of a value system! I don't simply mean those who had much, many who had little, gave because they saw the vision. But God does not set a limit on our earnings. What he does do he sets a limit on how we acquire what we acquire.

There is a process that requires ballots in our lives. Hear the limits that God gives. If you have never taken time to think about or to outline it, I just want to take a minute and do that for you this morning. God has given us four limits on how we acquire what we have in life.

1. He tells us that whatever we have and whatever we acquire it must not hurt our health. Proverbs 23:4. Look it up when you get home today. It is okay to work hard but don't jeopardize your health for your wealth.
2. How I acquire what I acquire must not hurt my family. I must never trade the things that I can never replace for things that will never matter if I gained them. Proverbs 15:27.
3. When I acquire things I can acquire whatever God allows me to acquire but I must not hurt other people in the process. Proverbs 20:21 and 16:8. We are to love people and use things, never to love things and use people. What an important principle that is in life.
4. If I am to acquire in life, it must not distract my spiritual growth. It must not stunt me spiritually because I am so constantly caught up in the financial world, the material world, and in the physical world that I am not attending to matters of the heart and the matters of the spirit, so I must understand that it must not distract my spiritual growth.

Over in the little Epistle of III John you read there about the importance of your soul prospering as you prosper. See there is a balance, ladies and gentleman. A balance inwardly that needs to guide and to guard my life so I will not constantly be swallowed up in the pursuit of things.

Next, if I am to live a satisfied life, I need to rejoice in what God has provided for me. I have to learn to rejoice in what God has given me. I have to let the things that I have maintain a sense of value in my heart, not just live to consume whatever comes my way but to be thankful and to be contented with what I have.

I know so many of us, in one form or another, either read or watch the Christmas Carol every Christmas. That is the joy of life! It is having a Father, it is having a family called a Christian family, a church, a place where we are really connected with other people where we share a sense of community and where our relationships are not just surface and social but where they are to the heart and they are real and where we bear one another's burdens and where we share in one another's cares and joys, where we have a spirit of community. We have a Father, we have a family, and we have a future. This isn't all there is. There is more to come. There is always more to come in the Christian life and the greatness of that will only be known some day when we get to heaven. We need to see and understand today that living life to the fullest and living life with satisfaction means enjoying what I have and being grateful for it.

There is another secret to a satisfied life, to a life of contentment. That is I need to refocus my priorities from getting to giving. When I quit worrying about what is mine and when I start thinking about what is around me that can be given, to be shared and what can become yours. There is a real secret to satisfaction in life and it really is linked to giving. The more you give the more complete your life is. It is an amazing principle but it is true. The Bible really describes and outlines this even more specifically over in

the Book of First Timothy. You might want to turn over there just for a moment this morning. This might just be a good verse for us to take a minute and take the time to look up. First Timothy, Chapter 6, and verse 17. Listen to what the Bible says.

“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty (that is not to be proud) nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God who gives us richly all things to enjoy and let them do good that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come that they may lay hold on eternal life.” The greatest thing you can do in life is to learn to be a giver. You don’t have to have a lot to give. All you have to be willing to do is to give what you have. If you will simply take what you have, grateful that it was given to you and give it to others, you will not only increase your gratitude but you will be amazed how much you will increase your security in life because God will give you so much more.

God loves generous things. When people start getting generous with what God has given to them you know what God inevitably does? He gets real generous with you. I am not talking about the stuff we hear and see about driving pink Cadillac’s. God bless Mary Kay, I didn’t mean that as a slam against her. She is a devoted believer. Thank God for her. She gives, she really does. But I am simply saying that if you will simply give to God and trust him and not trust in your riches and trust in what you can get and trust in trying to make satisfaction for yourself, you will be amazed with what God will do for you!

There is one final step in life if we are going to live a satisfied life. That is, we need to redefine our lifestyle from excess to enough. There has to become a moment in my life when I quit saying that I have to have more and when I can say Lord, whatever you provide for me that will be enough. If God keeps giving you more then you just keep giving it away. Learn to define your lifestyle not just from the excesses of what you can do and what you can leverage and what you can have but, instead, to simply say, Lord, it is enough that I know you enough that you give me such that I can give to others. Now God, again, is not trying to take away from you. God is not interested in us being a passionless people. God doesn’t want people around him serving him who have no passion, no desire. What he wants us to do is find the fulfillment of all of that in life in Him and in our relationship with Him. That is what makes the difference in life. It is when it is found in the relationship that we have with him.

Do you remember earlier when I said that if I live my life to find satisfaction in this world, I will find that the more I put in the more I want and that will be greed? And then that the more that I want the more that I need, that will be emptiness. And then the more that I need the more I will become obsessed and that will be slavery. That is what happens when I live for excess. I want you to think just for a moment about how that formula in life changes, if what matters to me is depth of relationship with God, because if that is where I am, then I find that the more that I focus on my spiritual wealth, the more contented and fulfilled that I am. Then, the more content that I am the less that I require from this world to make me happy. Then, the less that I require, the more freedom that I have to enjoy God and the wealth of his creation and that is real freedom. See that is where God wants you to live. God says I don’t want you living your life on

the bottom of this list coveting what other people have. He says I want you to be free of covetousness and I want you to let me teach you what it is to meet every need in your life and giving you all things richly to enjoy. That is what real living is about. That is what it takes to be satisfied because things never satisfy.

Maybe you have heard about this couple called Mr. and Mrs. Thing. They are a very successful couple. There he is sitting on a very expensive thing, almost hidden by a large number of other things, things to sit on, things to sit at, things to own, and things to eat from. All shining and new – things, things, things. Things to clean and things to wash. Things to amuse and things to give pleasure. Things to watch and things to play, things for the long hot summer and things for the short cold winter. Things for the big thing in which they live and things for the garden and things for the kitchen. Things for the bedroom and things on four wheels and things on two wheels and things to put on top of the things on four wheels. Things to pull behind the things with four wheels. Things to add to the interior of the thing on four wheels. Things, things, things. Then right there in the middle is Mr. and Mrs. Thing smiling and pleased pink with things, thinking of more things to add to their things and secure in their castle of things. Well, Mr. Thing, I have bad news for you! You say you cannot hear me because your things are making noise? Well, I just want you to know that your things can't last. They are going to pass. There is going to be an end to them. Oh, maybe an error or judgement or maybe you will pass them off to some secondhand thing dealer. Maybe they will wind up in a mass of tangled metal being towed off to the thing yard. What about all of the things in the thing you live in? Well, it is time for bed. Put out the cat, lock the door, hope some thing taker doesn't come along and take your things! Well, that is the way life goes isn't it? Some day when you die they put only one thing in the box. That is you!

Don't waste your life trying to find things to make you happy. There is only one thing you need and it is not a thing, it is Someone, His name is Jesus Christ. If you know Christ then he will meet the need of every thing that you need in life. Let us learn what it is to live a satisfied life. Let us show what it is to be contented and complete as people who are followers of Jesus Christ.

Would you bow your head with me in prayer?

While heads are bowed and eyes are closed, before I pray this morning, I just want you to take a moment and just inventory your life and your heart. Is there any thing right now that you feel that you have to have to be happy? Is there something you missed at Christmas that somebody else and you are just disappointed today? Friend, life does not exist in the things that we acquire. The greatest thing that can ever happen in life is for you to know the Someone, Jesus, who changes life and fills it up from the inside out. You know, I just believe, not by accident but by appointment that there are some people here today who needed to hear this message, who needed to do some readjusting of the things of their life. Maybe there are some things you need to let go of. Maybe the thing that needs to be let go of is the control of your life and the determination that you will satisfy yourself. What you need to do right now is that you need to make room in your heart and in your life for Jesus Christ. I am going to give you an opportunity to do that

right now. While heads are bowed and eyes are closed this morning, if there has never been a moment in your life where you have pushed aside the clutter or you have pushed aside your past, or you have pushed aside even the desires and ambitions of what you thought you needed to make life full today, we want to give you the opportunity to receive Jesus Christ. It is very simple. With a simple prayer of faith you can open your heart and receive Jesus Christ today. He will come in and he will fill your life. He will start wherever you are. If you have a lot of things, that is okay, you still need Jesus. Let him come into your life and he will show you how to manage the things you have. If you have absolutely nothing this morning, if you have Christ, you will have everything that you need in life. So, right now, whether it is man, woman, boy, or girl, teenager, or senior adult, if you have never invited Christ into your life, I want you just quietly and reverently in that place to pray this prayer with me:

Dear Lord Jesus (not out loud but in your heart). Dear Lord Jesus, today I know that I need you. I want you to come into my heart, Lord Jesus, to forgive me of my sin, my selfishness, and my foolish determination that I could have a satisfied life apart from you. Come into my heart dear Jesus; fill that emptiness in me. Take control of my life Lord Jesus. Let me live a satisfied life with you. Thank you for doing what you promised to do if only I would call upon your name.

Now while heads are still bowed and eyes are closed if you have just prayed that prayer

Sermon by David McKinley
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