

NEEDS VERSUS WANTS

Years ago, I heard a great sermon about praying for needs vs. wants. I conducted a little experiment in the store after hearing that sermon. I walked through the aisles and picked up items and asked myself, "is this something that I need, or something that I want." I found out that I put things back on the shelf more than I put in the basket because in reality, we can live on needs alone, and not wants, although I will say that wants are nice, but are they the things that Yahweh wants for us.

As time passed, I continued to do this whenever I went to the store, even when I shopped for a car. My prior vehicle was a Toyota Truck and it was a basic truck, no cruise control, no power windows and the wipers only had two speeds. My thinking is that the more something has, the more chance of something breaking.

Barbara is a lot like me. We realize that the things of this world are wood, hay and stubble, and when all things are considered, the things of this world will all burn someday, but the things of the Spirit of God will last forever; throughout all eternity. When we pray, we pray that we would receive the things that we need, not necessarily what we want. With this in mind, I'm sure that there were some who thought it crazy that with me out of work, and Barbara's income our only income, that we would see if we would qualify for a home. We were even a bit surprised when we were told that we did, and a no money down loan with low interest. We found this home we're in now and we love it. No, it's not the Taj Mahal; it's not some fancy home on lots of land; no, it is just what we need; a modest home with a roof over our heads, a good well and surrounded by neighbors who really love Jesus.

You see, both of us have been through the keeping up with the Jones' thing, not that either of us were ever that way, but that is the American way and many are that way. We realize that simple is better, cheaper and that 1200 square feet is much cozier than twice that much that needs to be cleaned and maintained and such. We know that many of our friends are feeling the same way. We live amongst people in a town where nobody really craves to have everything, and where people are content. And isn't that what it's all about, being content and happy, without the stress that having so many things tend to bring to a person's life.

Personally, I believe that the financial woes that the nation is going through is a good thing. It is causing people to realize that it isn't the material things that are considered important.

And especially in Christianity, people are starting to see that the real prosperity comes when Yahweh gives us the fruits of His Spirit; when we make Him happy. We have 11 grandkids, soon to be twelve. We love each one and each one is unique. One of the most rewarding things is when they do something out of love to win our approval, and the love that they crave and seeing them receive that love and recognition. Yes, they could do all sorts of things to try to make us happy, but the happiness that comes from both sides when love is shown through obedience and respect is something that trumps all other things that they could ever do. And, I know that is how Yahweh feels about us. When we're happy and content with the needs that he supplies to us and forsake craving the wants, it blesses Him.

With the economy going south and society disintegrating I just know that more are going to realize that we need to turn to Yahweh for everything that we need. Some people see opulence and material needs, when acquired, as being a blessing; and for some they might truly be blessed with material things, by Yahweh. If that's you, then Yahweh bless you. But I also know that there are some who have corrupted the Gospel message with the notion that prosperity in material things is a sign that Yahweh has blessed them, while at the same time thinking that material blessings are the only blessings and that those who have little are cursed and lost favor with Yahweh. Well, a good read through Scripture proves that wrong.

It's just my prayer that those who see material blessings, money, power and such as being blessings; that they would crave the things that will not burn up in the great consuming fire, but will last forever. To me, the spiritual blessings, and pleasing our Father in Heaven and Yeshua our Lord are the things to strive and ask for. I'll take the simple things in this temporary world, and if it turned out that I didn't receive many rewards in heaven, I'll just be happy that He brought me there through His righteousness; nothing that I did. And if I get the job of cleaning the toilets in heaven, then I'll be happy too because that is His will for me. I guess that is what being a servant of Yeshua is; accepting whatever we get, whether bitter or sweet, knowing that He uses those things to make us into what he wants us to be. I just can't bring myself to pray for those material things. I find it akin to getting my reward in this temporary realm; to depending on gold to survive, knowing that I'll be walking on the same thing when I get to heaven. Yahweh takes the things that we see as being important here, and uses it for building material in heaven.

I have seen people who have prayed to receive material things, and I have seen what they have become when they received those blessings. Yes, I have also seen some become altruists that want to give it all away to benefit others. Yeshua gave this option to a rich man that approached him and wanted to be one of his disciples. He told the man to sell everything that he

owns and to follow him. The man walked away sad, knowing where his heart really sat in regard to the matter. I've actually seen the angst on the face of those well off when they have to weigh between their possessions and living a fuller life in Mashiach. I see it too in a lot of those who call themselves Christian Patriots. We're clearly told that we don't belong to this world, so our patriotism lies solely in Yahweh's kingdom, but so many can seem to get away from the temporal patriotic fervor that comes with living in a free society (or one that wears that facade). They walk on the fence-top, leaning toward one side while knowing that the other side offers eternal rewards and the "real" God given freedom, but they just can't give up human political systems. I see it too in the eyes of the young girl that is walking into the abortion clinic, knowing in her heart that the people outside that are begging her not to kill her baby are indeed right, yet she values the opinions of her friends and family all the more. And I see the same look in the faces of the elderly person lying in their bed, wishing that they had made the right decisions when they were younger and constantly questioning what awaits them on the other side of the curtain of death; heaven or hell.

Such people are constantly faced with hard decisions. Do I give up a life that is fairly comfortable for one that is uncertain? Did God really bless me to get me where I am or did the enemy give me all of what I have to direct me down a wrong path? Believe me, I know people like this, and I've seen the compromise they make in their lives; and, I've seen the attempts that they make to try to make it seem like what they have are a blessing from Yahweh. Believe me, I've prayed for prosperity, but I've always prayed that it would only happen if it was His will and that it would not keep me from keeping my eyes on Yeshua.

I have a relative who is very well off financially. I remember visiting their home several years back and marveling at how opulent the house was, and the relative wasted no time making sure that I saw every square inch of the opulence. After the house I was shown the cars, the motorcycle, the boat, the dock and later on, all of the other things of value that this man had. Everything that he had was nice, but I thought about several things. The house was humongous and would cost a fortune to heat and/or cool it. The cars were top of the line and cost a mint to maintain. He rarely rode the motorcycle so it was just a trophy; and the boat, well, something else to maintain. He owned several businesses which he constantly worried about. One time we went to meet a perspective client and the hour of lunch consisted of him telling this man about everything that he owned. I felt embarrassed to be there. He treated his employees like commodities that are traded on the market and nobody was happy to have him as a boss. What sort of life is that?

I know others too, who are believers and they flaunt their things on Facebook constantly. They're constantly on the go because their business dictates that they travel. We constantly see pictures of them in places that the common man can only dream of visiting. In many ways, looking at those pictures which seem to come incessantly are another form of showing off their opulence and their success. Now please understand that I believe in Biblical Capitalism, meaning that every man should be able to work and attain success. I do believe that the success should be shared by the way that the Ruach Ha Kodesh touches a person's heart, and that is Yahweh's job, not the job of the government or other people. However, a person has to be yielded to Yahweh so that His Ruach can speak to that person. Without yielding to Yahweh, a person's life is null and void.

Some might say that I'm writing this out of jealousy. That is so far from the truth. There was a time when I was blessed with a pretty good settlement and was doing well. Yes, I bought things for my immediate family and watched as people came out of the woodwork for loans; not for food, or rent, but to buy motorcycles, cars and other such things. I never noticed the change that came over me. I lost most interest in Church, yet I still called myself a believer in Yeshua; but I wasn't acting like one. A few years later I realized that I was out of money and broke again. That was the best time of my life because being broke caused me to see how far I had strayed from Yahweh. As I drew closer again to Yeshua I began to lose the things that I bought with that money. Periods of unemployment caused me to have to sell my guns and other things. I met a woman in another town and we seemed to be hitting it off pretty well, so I sold my home and took a bath, making only pennies on the dollar. I sold my truck for a family car and had a car payment again. Everything that I had gained, I lost, but like Paul, I counted it all joy. Those things caused me to wander from Yahweh, and the loss brought me back. All of this happened within the period of about eight years; I went from normal everyday guy, to riches and back to normal everyday guy. Yahweh wanted me back, so he took everything from me. I began to associate with what Yeshua said about it being easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than it is for a rich man to enter heaven. I am so thankful, even to this day that He took all of those things away, because He replaced them with Fruits and Gifts of the Ruach Ha Kodesh; much more precious than the things that this world offers. I like scraping and clawing my way up the hill because when I get to the top and I'm worn out, it is the hand of Yeshua that grabs my hand and pulls me up to the summit. He gets the glory, the honor and the praise, not any money or possessions that I have, and certainly not by my own righteousness, which is, like scripture says, like filthy rags.

So, let me encourage all of you that are barely making it. Let me commend you that are living one paycheck away from poverty. Let me tell all of you who hunger and thirst for righteousness; let me tell you to count all of those things as joy. Take them with a joyful heart because Yahweh is working a work in you. He's clay that Yeshua is molding into vessels that He can use for His own glory. While others are tooling around the world in their yachts, flying to exotic places and bragging about their possessions, don't be envious, but pray for them. One day in the future, hopefully soon of course, Yeshua will send the angel to shout for us to join Him in heaven and you'll get a rocket ride (metaphorically speaking) that those in yachts and jetliners could never imagine. While they're eating dinner in Rome, Istanbul or Tokyo, we'll be feasting at the Lamb's Wedding Feast. While they enjoy their high towers or stately mansions it is nothing compared to the New Jerusalem, which we're all promised a mansion. Imagine what a mansion within a mansion must be like; awesome. There is so much joy ahead for us that the ills and pains of this world will not even be remembered someday. Yeshua never promised us riches and material things. He promised us that we would be persecuted, hated and yes, even killed for loving Him. I'd rather trust His word, that these things are the things that we can expect from the world, rather than to believe the lies that we can achieve prosperity by simply asking for it; and after what I've seen those things do to people, they can have them. I'll wait for the blessings that will come where moths don't fest on them and they aren't affected by curse of entropy.

In closing, I would like you to read Hebrews chapter 11-12. If you want to walk with Yahweh in a deeper way, and you want to receive greater rewards later rather than the perishable ones at present, then these two chapters should be a primer just for you:

Hebrews Chapter 11

By Faith We Understand

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

² For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.

³ By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Faith at the Dawn of History

⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

⁵ By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, “and was not found, because God had taken him”; ^[a] for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God. ⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

⁷ By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Faithful Abraham

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

¹¹ By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child ^[b] when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.

The Heavenly Hope

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, ^[c] embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. ¹⁵ And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

The Faith of the Patriarchs

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called,"^[d]¹⁹ concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.

²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

²¹ By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

²² By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the departure of the children of Israel, and gave instructions concerning his bones.

The Faith of Moses

²³ By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command.

²⁴ By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in^[e] Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

²⁷ By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned.

By Faith They Overcame

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

³² And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again.

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted,^[L] were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

³⁹ And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, ⁴⁰ God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

Chapter 12:

The Race of Faith

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Discipline of God

³ For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. ⁴ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed,

striving against sin. ⁵ *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:*

*“My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord,
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;
⁶ For whom the Lord loves He chastens,
And scourges every son whom He receives.”*

⁷ *If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?* ⁸ *But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.* ⁹ *Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?* ¹⁰ *For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.* ¹¹ *Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

Renew Your Spiritual Vitality

¹² *Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,* ¹³ *and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.*

¹⁴ *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:* ¹⁵ *looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;* ¹⁶ *lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.* ¹⁷ *For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.*

The Glorious Company

¹⁸ *For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest,* ¹⁹ *and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them*

anymore. ²⁰ (For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.” ²¹ And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”)

²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

Hear the Heavenly Voice

²⁵ See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, ²⁶ whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.” ²⁷ Now this, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.

²⁸ Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire. NKJV