

Panthers:

Would a little extra money satisfy any of your desires? Do you want to decrease your liabilities? Perhaps you desire to reduce your mortgage, pay off your car, or eliminate credit card debt. Do you want to increase your assets? Maybe you would like to buy a new car, a new boat, a new house, a new set of golf clubs, a new technological device, or a new piece of jewelry. Money in and of itself is not evil. Owning stuff is not evil. The problem occurs when the stuff owns you. Ironically, it isn't money that we desire, it's something deeper.

God created us with at least four primary desires. The first desire is *significance* which came from being created in God's image (Gen. 1:27). The second desire is *contentment* from being blessed by God to be fruitful, multiply, and subdue (bring contentment to) the earth (Gen. 1:28). The third desire is *control* from being empowered by God to rule over the earth (Gen. 1:28). The fourth desire is *security* from being given every seed bearing plant and fruit bearing tree (Gen. 1:29-30). These desires flow vertically from the heart of God into each one of our hearts. They flow horizontally in our relationships with others (Gen. 2:18).

The first sin was pride, man desiring satisfaction of these desires apart from God (Gen. 3:5-6). God had created Adam and Eve with humble hearts. The object of their desires was God. He satisfied their desires. Pride made man the object of his own desires. Now each person is born with and chooses a proud heart (Gen. 8:21). He trusts in his giftedness rather than his godliness.

Money is pride's measurement of our giftedness (time, talent, and treasures). Wisdom is humility's measurement of our godliness (Christ in us). Christ is the image of God (Heb. 1:3). He is humble in heart (Matt. 11:29), and He is the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24). Humility is the beginning of His wisdom in our lives (Prov. 11:2).

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned His disciples about attempting to satisfy their desires with money. He offered wisdom as an alternative. The first desire He addressed was significance (Matt. 6:19-21).

Pride seeks significance from money. Jesus said, "*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth*" (Matt. 6:19). Why do we *store up* treasures on earth? We do so in order to find significance. Significance is expressed meaning, purpose, importance, or value. Significance can be encapsulated in attention, acceptance, affection, and approval. People might say, "Look at him. He is successful." Others say, "Look at her. She's got it all." We often say to ourselves, "Storing up this stuff really satisfies. I feel significant."

The result is insignificance. "*Where moth and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal*" (Matt. 6:19). In the end, the stuff in just that, stuff. The more we pursue it as the satisfaction of our desires, the more we thirst for more. The result is a never ending cycle of dissatisfaction.

Humility stores up relationships. Jesus said, "*But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal*" (Matt. 5:20). Relationships are the only treasure that we can store up in heaven because they are eternal. These relationships flow vertically in communion with God and horizontally in community with others.

Our treasures reveal the object of our desires. Jesus said, "*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*" (Matt. 5:21). Valuing people over profit, or

relationships over remuneration, is what God designed for our lives. A proud heart searches for significance from money. A humble heart discovers significance in a relationship with God in Christ and shares that relationship with others.

The result is the love of God in Christ (Jn. 3:16; 1:14). Christ is the love of God, a love that is so undeserved, a favor that is so unmerited, that it's called grace. Paul said, *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich"* (2 Cor. 8:9). God humbled Himself in Jesus Christ offering us the satisfaction of our desires when we humble our hearts' desires to Christ. Only He satisfies our desires. This frees us to bring His satisfying Spirit to our relationships with a love that sacrificially serves others.

This week, discover the satisfaction of your desire for significance in the love of Christ and take that love to others. Initiate conversation with your customers and prospects, whether you are in sales or service. Get to know them, asking questions and listening, rather than attempting to sell them a product or service. Do it just for the sake of relationship—storing up treasures in heaven rather than for storing up treasures on earth. With your spouse and family, connect relationally, serving them rather than expecting them to serve you. You will be satisfied. You will be significant. You will be love. You will be loved.

Significant in Christ's Love,
Mitch