

Dr. Ron Armstrong • February 14, 2021
Is This It? If Only ... Then I'd be Happy

Luke 12:13 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

¹⁴ Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" ¹⁵ Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

¹⁶ And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷ He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

¹⁸ "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹ And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"

²⁰ "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

²¹ "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God."

A. Defining the problem: "What if this is as good as it gets?" Jack Nicolson

1. The quarter-life crisis has joined the mid-life crisis. First, neither actually exists, but it's our way of describing an era of personal discontentment.
2. The problem of a general feeling of dissatisfaction isn't new. People have always struggled with it. Jesus' parable, Paul's declaration, Shakespeare's plays, and our social media all point to it.
3. We think discontentment says something about our circumstances, and it does, but it also says a lot about us. It's more than our circumstances; it's our heart too.
4. Our parable is about greed; this is one form of discontentment. Our culture keeps pointing out new things you should be discontented about.
5. More is not a problem; discontentment with what you have is. It will steal your joy, your peace, and your closeness to others.

B. Four practices that help. (We'll talk about these more, but I want you to have them now.)

1. I will choose a healthy perspective. Specifically, I'll practice distinguishing between big things and small things.
2. I will choose gratitude. It's the act, not the feeling, of being grateful for what I have.
3. I will choose patience. I will accept God's timing is wiser than mine. "Not yet" is tough.
4. I choose to get my act together. I will do the things I already know are helpful to:
 - a. My career.
 - b. My relationships.
 - c. Finances.
 - d. And my spiritual journey.