

Don't Live In Fear Of Being Deprived!

Fear of Deprivation - Lesson 2

A lot of our crazy behaviors have come from a fear of “missing out”. It was hard to stay faithful to one person, for fear that a better relationship might be waiting for you out there. It was hard to stay away from bars, for fear that they might be having a better time in there than you were having. We’d get frustrated with how long it was taking to make enough money to get the stuff we wanted, so we’d take criminal shortcuts, like robbery or selling dope.

God understands. And he actually wants us to be completely satisfied and happy. He promised us paradise – in heaven – and he paid to make it happen through Jesus’ death on the cross:

Luke 23:43—Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth: today you will be with me in paradise." [Jesus’ promise to a man dying on a cross next to him]

- What’s your idea of “paradise”? (Think: What would be my dream vacation? What would my dream home be like? What was a time in my life when I was really happy?)
- Have you been afraid to dream too big about heaven, for fear that your dreams weren’t religious enough? (Have you had some unpleasant ideas of what heaven would be like?)
- How does it make a difference to you to hear Jesus *promise* you paradise?

The Bible doesn’t talk about heaven being somewhere far away and a long time from now; the Bible tells Christians that they’re as good as there:

Philippians 3:19-20—Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven.

Colossians 3:1-3—Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

- Does it change your stress levels to think, “I’m practically in heaven already”?
- Does it change your priorities to think, “I’m practically in heaven already”?
- What else changes when you start thinking, “I’m as good as there”?

GOD’S PROMISES ARE UNCONDITIONAL, EXTRAVAGANT, AND ALWAYS KEPT! THAT INCLUDES HIS PROMISE OF PARADISE!

- been using our addictions to avoid. What do you see God promising to do for you in those experiences?
- Have you already started to experience “life to the full,” including the stuff you used to be so scared of? How has Jesus helped you with those fears?