

Recreational Spirituality

My neighbour down the street works hard all week at a regular job but on weekends he fuels up his quad (ATV) and heads to the hills for some recreation. The sound of that quad roaring by my house stirs fond memories of the good times that I experienced during my last career. As a Provincial Parks Ranger I spent a great deal of time out in Canada's parks, climbing mountains, setting cross-country ski trails or patrolling with my ATV. I am an outdoorsman, so for me, being able to escape the office and take my All Terrain Vehicle up into the hills as part of my workday was indeed a great blessing.



As I was contemplating the joy of those years, I began to realize how my experience as a professional outdoorsman was much like my faith in God. The many years that I was committed to my career and going to work everyday, I was free to enjoy the benefits. But as soon as I left my job and retired, the joy of the outdoors could only be enjoyed on the rare occasion that I went out to the forest for recreation.

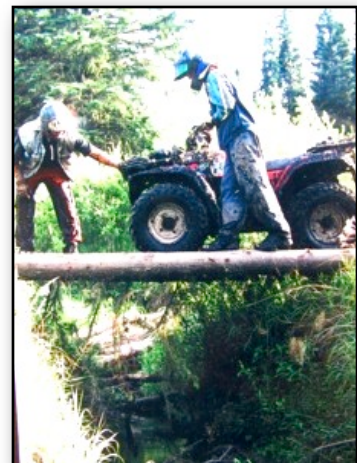


Similarly, as I consistently walked close to the Lord and worked hard at being obedient to His Word (the Bible) I was free to experience and enjoy His richest blessings.

On occasion, however, I became so involved in the world around me that I only offered Jesus a little prayer at night-time and a quick church service on Sunday. When my spirituality became simply "recreational" my relationship with Him became distant, and the daily filling of the Holy Spirit that I had been accustomed to, faded away.

Psalm 37 records some delightful promises of God. It is here that King David speaks of the benefits of our commitment to the living God, and states, "Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart."

I wonder if many of us are searching for the "desires of our hearts" in all the wrong places?



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<< Psalm 37 >>

King James Bible

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. 4 Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. 5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. 6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. 7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. 9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. 10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. 11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. 12 The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. 13 The LORD shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming. 14 The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation. 15 Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. 16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. 17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous. 18 The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. 19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. 20 But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away. 21 The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth. 22 For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. 23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand. 25 I have been young, and now am old; yet

have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. 26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed. 27 Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore. 28 For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. 29 The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever. 30 The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. 31 The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. 32 The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. 33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. 34 Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. 35 I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. 36 Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. 37 Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. 38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. 39 But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. 40 And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him.

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