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It All Goes Back in the Box
Bursting the Bubble Retreat – Part 2
Lent 2011

No matter what happens in this life,
at the end, _____

THE PARABLE OF THE RICH FOOL

see Luke 12:16-21

"But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'" Luke 12:20

He was a fool because he became _____

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal" Matthew 6:19

"Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart rejoiced in all my labor; and this was my reward from all my labor. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun." Ecclesiastes 2:10-11

GOAL OF LIFE: _____

"So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12:21

"I go around doing nothing but persuading both young and old not to care for your body or your wealth in preference to your soul." Socrates

"But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition." 1 Timothy 6:9

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Timothy 6:10

"Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful." Matthew 13:22

"You are afraid that your wealth may fail. You may have begun to do some good generously from it, yet you do not know, in your wretchedness, that your life itself may fail, and your salvation as well. While you are anxious lest any of your possessions be diminished, you do not take notice that you yourself, a lover of mammon rather than of your soul, are being diminished. While you are afraid lest for your own sake you lose your estate, you yourself are perishing for the sake of your state." Cyprian of Carthage

***"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep
to gain that which he cannot lose."***

Jim Elliot

My Action Item:

Quiet Time #1
Bursting the Bubble
Lent 2011

Take some time to clear your mind, pray for God to speak to you and you to be able to hear His voice. Pray that God will help you be a doer of the word and not only a hearer. Take some time to reflect on the retreat to this point. Why are you here? What have you heard from God?

How does your life compare to a monopoly game? What are your goals? What are you trying to achieve? What are you trying to avoid?

How do you spend your time, treasures (i.e. money or possessions), and talents (i.e. gifts or energy)? Go through an average week and ask yourself: what do I labor for?

It's not bad to play the game. It's not bad to be really good at it. It's not bad to be Master of the Board. My grandmother taught me to play to win. But there are always more rungs to climb, more money to be made, more deals to pull off. And the danger is that we forget to ask what really matters. We race around the board with shallow relationships, frenzied schedules, preoccupied souls. Being smart or strong does not protect you from this fate. In some ways, it makes the game more dangerous, for the temporary rewards you get from playing can lull you into pretending that the game will never end. ---- John Ortberg

1. How have you been lulled into thinking that the game will never end?

Then one day it stops. Other people keep going. Somewhere on the board, somebody is just getting started. But for you, the game is over. Did you play wisely? We all want God, Anne Lamott writes, but left to our own devices, we seek all the worldly things — possessions, money, looks, and power — because we think they will bring us fulfillment. "But this turns out to be a joke, because they are just props, and when we check out of this life, we have to give them all back to the great prop master in the sky. They're just on loan. They're not ours." They all go back in the box. --- John Ortberg

2. Do you truly believe and know that the game will end and all the pieces will go back in the box (i.e. coffin)? Do you believe and know that the game could end tomorrow as it has unexpectedly ended for others (i.e. attacks on the Coptic Churches in Egypt, riots all over the world, Tsunami in Japan, car accidents, etc.)? How do you think you would stand before God if it did end tomorrow?

Human beings are the only creatures whose frontal lobes are so developed that they know that the game will end. This is our glory, our curse, our warning, and our opportunity... "Treat every day as if it were the day before your last." Arrange your life around what matters most...Everybody has to decide what he or she believes constitutes winning and losing in life. ---John Ortberg

3. What do you believe constitutes winning and losing in life? How will you change your life to reflect this?

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Mt 16:19-21

Take this time to say or write a prayer of repentance for any ways that you have laid up treasure for yourself on earth. Ask God for forgiveness. Ask God for strength to lay up treasures for yourself in heaven. Be specific in your prayer and ask God to reveal to you how he wants you to lay up treasures for yourself in heaven.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 Jn 1:9 "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him." 1 Jn 5:14-15