



GUIDELINES DAILY COMMENTARY ON LIVING WITH DR. HAROLD J. SALA

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THE QUEST FOR MORE

Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." Luke 12:15

"My husband and I have been listening to you for a long time," writes a friend of *Guidelines*. Omitting the very kind things she wrote, she continues: "We have been ever evolving in our spiritual walk and find ourselves at a painful standstill, not knowing how to proceed."

The letter tells the story of so many today. As the years pass by, your life gets more complex. Increasing demands are made on your diminishing time and energy. More seems to be better. Going to the bottom line, she wrote, "Every day...we talk about...how we can go to the next level of serving the Lord. We are being called but do not know how or which way to proceed in this matter. When you are surrounded by everyone that acts like it means something to move to a bigger house, have your kitchen redone, or win a soccer game, I acquiesce and painfully give in and follow the masses. We truly are living lives of quiet desperation."

In the moments that are left on today's edition of *Guidelines*, ponder the following guidelines that can make a tremendous difference—ones I constantly strive to follow personally.

Guideline #1: Prioritize. You can't do it all. You can't have it all. You can't be all things to all people so, like it or not, you have to decide what is important in your life. This, of course, includes the upward perspective. What is my purpose in life? Does God have something new, something different, something valuable for me to yet accomplish which isn't going to get done with the grind and routine I have right now.

Guideline #2: Authenticate. That means draw the line in the dirt and step across the divide of being driven by our culture, buying things, doing things, even saying things because everybody else is doing the same thing. Being different is not always being better, but being authentic and genuine often means you are in the company of the few—not the masses.

Guideline #3: Simplify. I'm thinking of a group of middle-aged adults who got fed up with the commercialism of "having more and more," and decided to pledge to each other that with the exception of food, medicine, and toiletries they would buy nothing new for six months. Was it a challenge? You know it was. The six-month experience lasted a year and changed their lives. One of the books that has influenced my life is Richard Foster's *Freedom of Simplicity*. The media and the constant bombardment of ads have brainwashed us into living beyond our means, unhappy and frustrated without the newest of everything.

Guideline #4: Purify your thinking. That was why Gandhi dressed in a loincloth and spent time every day spinning wool. Take time to fast and to seek God's will for your life. It's never too late to redeem your future, whether it is long or short. Wash away the acid of commercialism by touching the lives of hurting people. Give away the junk in your closet or garage and refuse to refill the same space.

Guideline #5: Refocus and reconnect. If you're married and you've lost your first love, strive to regain it. Rekindle the spark you had when you were first married, dirt poor, but madly in love with each other. Walk through the woods. Look at the stars. Meditate on God's greatness and His love for you and determine that you will no longer walk the broad path to the shopping center but find the straighter one, the one less traveled on which brings peace and contentment. It's not an impossible quest at all. Corrie ten Boom was right when she said we ought not to hold onto our possession tightly because it hurts too much when God pries them out of our hands. Indeed.

Scripture reading: Luke 12:13-21