

HOW'S YOUR ROI?

(Matt 6:19-34)

WHAT IS OUR CONDITION? (Henri Nouwen, *Making All Things New*)

- We're worried
- Our worry manifests itself in
 - Filled lives
 - We're occupied
 - We're preoccupied
 - Unfulfilled lives
 - We're disconnected
 - We're bored, resentful, depressed

HOW DOES JESUS ADDRESS OUR CONDITION? (Matt 6:19-34)

To change your CONDITION, change your PURSUITS

- Our lives are organized around our PURSUITS that reflect what we TREASURE
- All PURSUITS have a **Return On Investment (ROI)**
 - TEMPORAL pursuits have an ROI of disappointment and worry
 - ETERNAL pursuits have an ROI of provision and peace

OUR RESPONSE: Choose wisely...

QUOTES OF NOTE

Henri Nouwen, *Making All Things New*

OUR CONDITION

More so than the people of Jesus' day, we of the "modern age" can be called worrying people. But how does our contemporary worrying actually manifest itself? Having looked critically at my own life and the lives of those around me, two words emerge as descriptive of our situation: filled and unfulfilled. (23)

Our lives are like over-packed suitcases bursting at the seams.... [We're] almost always aware of being behind schedule.... Although we are very busy, we have a lingering feeling of never really fulfilling our obligations. (23-24)

The great paradox of our time is that many of us are busy and bored at the same time.... Our occupations and our preoccupations fill our internal and external lives to the brim.... To be preoccupied means to fill our time and place long before we are there.... (30, 28, 25)

While we can hardly keep up with our many tasks and obligations, we are not sure that it would make any difference if we did nothing at all.... (30)

Disconnectedness is experienced as loneliness. When we are lonely we perceive ourselves as isolated individuals surrounded, perhaps, by many people, but not really part of any supporting or nurturing community.... Boredom, resentment and depression are all sentiments of disconnectedness. (32)

Boredom is often closely linked to resentment. When we are busy, yet wondering if our busyness means anything to anyone, we easily feel used, manipulated, and exploited.... We begin to see ourselves as victims pushed around and made to do all sorts of things by people who do not really take us seriously as human beings. Then an inner anger starts to develop, an anger which in time settles into our hearts as an always fretting companion. Our hot anger gradually becomes cold anger. This "frozen anger" is the resentment which has such a poisoning effect on our society. (30, 31)

Worrying... fragments our lives. The many things to do, to think about, to plan for, the many people to remember, to visit, or to talk with, the many causes to attack or defend, all these pull us apart and make us lose our center. Worrying causes us to be "all over the place," but seldom at home.... Most of us have an address but cannot be found there. We know where we belong, but we keep being pulled away in many directions, as if we were still homeless. "All these other things" keep demanding our attention. They lead us so far from home that we eventually forget our true address, that is, the place where we can be addressed. (36-37)

JESUS' RESPONSE AND OURS

Jesus does not respond to our worry-filled way of living by saying that we should not be so busy with worldly affairs. He does not try to pull us away from the many events, activities, and people that make up our lives. He does not tell us that what we do is unimportant, valueless, or useless. Nor does he suggest that we should withdraw from our involvements and live quiet, restful lives removed from the struggles of the world. Jesus' response to our worry-filled lives is quite different. He asks us to shift the point of gravity, to relocate the center of our attention, to change our priorities. Jesus wants us to move from the "many things" to the "one necessary thing." It is important for us to realize that Jesus in no way wants us to leave our many-faceted world. Rather, he wants us to live in it, but firmly rooted in the center of all things. Jesus does not speak about a change of activities, a change in contacts, or even a change of pace. He speaks about a change of heart. (42)

Living a spiritual life requires a change of heart, a conversion. Such a conversion may be marked by a sudden inner change, or it can take place through a long, quiet process of transformation. (57)