

Lifelines

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Pastor, Gwynn's Island Baptist Church, Gwynn, VA

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Topic: Rest and Contentment

Chasing After the Wind © 2025 by Dr. Ed Jordan

The more illusive the “new,” the more satisfying the “old”. I am so very grateful that God opened up my life to His reality and truth many decades ago. God’s reality and truth is eternal and trustworthy. The timeless, eternal truth in the Bible is the best thing to use to build one’s life, relationships, work place, or any aspect of one’s life, because it is truth that has over many centuries proven to be real and true. Such truth brings surety and peace to our lives. Chaos cannot bring peace nor solidity to life because chaos, by its very nature, is unstable and disruptive.

The world is in chaos, and so are the people who think that what is brand new and radical is somehow totally superior to what has gone before. They think anything new is the magic pill that will make them happy, or bring fulfillment to their lives. It doesn’t, and it can’t.

There is a stability that comes from timeless, proven truth, and proven timeless functionality. For example, think of the automobile. There was a time, not so long ago, when cars were fairly simple, with simple electronics: a battery, starter, generator and wiring. If you regularly changed the oil and lubricated the moving parts, cars lasted for many years, perhaps decades. Then automatic transmissions came along, which made driving easier, but required more maintenance.

Then transistorized or digitized computer-controlled driving systems were embraced, and malfunctions grew like mushrooms after a rainstorm. Furthermore, repairing them required experts, and lots of money. It isn’t as easy to repair cars now because they are more computerized, and less mechanical.

Am I saying that everything new is bad? No, I am not. It just seems that in our quest for speed and convenience, we have given away reliability, affordability, and simple maintenance. This need for ease has led to a “throw away” culture. It is easier, faster, and perhaps even cheaper, considering lost productivity hours, to buy something new rather than spend hours trying to find the mysterious fault or disruption in data, perhaps to no avail.

The Biblical book of Ecclesiastes is attributed mainly to King Solomon, who at the time was world-renown for his wisdom. Ecclesiastes 4:6 (NASB95) states: “One hand full of rest is better than two fists full of labor and striving after wind.” The simplest meaning is about the importance of rest and contentment. Rest allows us to function better, than when we are work-weary. We do need our rest, and rested workers are better able to face the rigors of work challenges. Being content with what we have also produces peace and satisfaction.

However, I think that there is also a more subtle meaning here as well: Doing what is tried, true, and frequently proven through human life and history, brings more peace and less stress to your life, than spending twice the hours to learn to use a new device to accomplish what you could have already accomplished in half the time it took to learn to use it.

Too many people today spend the majority of their daily and weekly time, chasing after wind. Instead of enjoying what they already have in their hand, or using what they know to be tried and true, they chase every new illusive and unproven fad, only to watch what they are trying to grasp blow right past them, producing nothing useful.

God's words gives us timeless truth and practical advice. The Bible contains accurate information on almost every issue that humans face. It has truth about: God (Theology), humans (Anthropology, Biology, Psychology, and Sociology), relationships (Psychology, Psychiatry), planning, wise use of time, priorities, history, systems and organizations (Business), managing our money (Economics) and about organizational management.

While humans may have become more productive with the passing of time, their lives seem to become more and more meaningless as they remove humanity from our values and priorities. Robots may be twice as fast as humans at doing something, but I really don't find becoming a robot an appealing goal. Do you?

Life is short, and passes so quickly. Enjoy the people, opportunities, and gifts which God has brought into your life. Spend some time savoring what you already have, instead of frantically seeking to be cutting edge new. Often it is on the cutting edge, where a person gets cut. Having one handful of God's gifts and treasures is much better than expending all your energy to fill two hands with wind.

Award-winning columnist Dr. Ed Jordan is pastor of Gwynn's Island Baptist Church, Gwynn, VA. He can be reached at szent.edward@gmail.com. Dr. Jordan's new book: "Doing Love! It can change your life!" can be purchased on Barnes&Noble.com or Amazon.com.