

It's Our Turn Now



By Rob Pue

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Please take a minute and think with me: what is it in this world that you value most highly? Many people might say it's their husband or wife, their children or grandchildren...their loved ones.

Others might immediately come up with a different answer related to their possessions. In my high school years, I had a friend who had a saying that he used to say often: *"He who dies with the most toys wins."* He was referring to his love for snowmobiles, ATVs, motorcycles, cars, boats, trucks, things like that.

Still others have their "most prized possessions," which might include family heirlooms, handed down from their ancestors. I, myself, am grateful to have some of the tools my grandfather used in his business as an architect and builder, when he emigrated here from Ireland. I also have some of his old hymnals, one of his Bibles, very worn and filled with underlined Scriptures and personal notes. And, I have a clock he used to own, with a plaque on it stating that it was given to him by his co-workers, on the occasion of his wedding, September 21st, 1910. These things are special to me, as are the precious photo albums we have of our children growing up and all the adventures we had as young parents. These are irreplaceable items.

For most people, the most significant (and valuable) property one can own is their home, followed by their car. These are

our most costly investments. Our home offers us a roof over our heads, a place that is “ours,” a place to come back to after a long day of work. Our “castle.” Our car allows us to travel and get from place to place safely – whether it be to work and back or to visit loved ones or take a vacation.

Many young people today place great value on their electronics – their cell phones, iPads, laptops and video games. If they were forced to go without them for even a day, I dare say many would become highly anxious and agitated, to say the least.

Someone once asked the question, *“what would you do if you woke up tomorrow with only those things left that you thanked God for today?”* Indeed, we have much to be thankful for in this nation. Even in the midst of unprecedented tyranny, we still have things pretty good here...for now. But what if everything you owned was suddenly gone? Or worse yet – taken from you, violently?

I grew up on a farm. We didn’t have cattle, but rather, we baled hay. As a child, my summers were spent working around the land, working in the huge garden we had, mowing an expansive lawn, but mostly, baling hay. Nearly every day in the summer, my parents, brothers and I were baling hay. In case you’ve never done it, it’s very hard work.

We filled the hay mow all the way to the highest rafters, and then my Dad would sell the hay to dealers in the winter months. It supplemented his income and kept our family going. I didn’t appreciate it at the time, to say the least, but as a kid, I definitely learned to work hard.

My Dad was also a private pilot and had his own airplane on our property. Usually on Sunday afternoons, if the weather was good, we would take an airplane ride. The pastor of our church was also a pilot and he and his family would usually spend *their* Sunday afternoons at our house and we’d all fly together. Other private pilots from the area knew of our

airstrip and would sometimes surprise us with a visit on a weekday evening (if we weren't baling hay!) or on one of those weekends.

Speaking of that airstrip, it certainly wasn't a *paved* airstrip. It had been carefully flattened and smoothed out and then planted with grass. And it was my responsibility to mow it every week...a mile long and about 50' wide. I'm thankful I had a riding lawnmower to do it!

One thing you immediately notice when you're up in an airplane is how small everything looks. Houses become tiny. Entire farms become tiny. Cars and trucks become even tinier. If you can see them, the people look like ants. Now, sometimes I travel by air for my work, and those airports are in larger cities. After going to the big city and encountering the tall buildings, the multi-lane expressways with very heavy traffic, and the vast expanse of the airport itself, we take off in the plane. I always like to look out the window.

What I see are many peoples' most prized possessions – their homes. They all look so small, so insignificant. Rows and rows of tiny homes, with tiny backyards, all laid out on a grid of streets. And sometimes when I'm in warmer places, those tiny backyards also include luxurious swimming pools. People put a lot of energy, money and work into their homes and yards. They plant flowers and gardens, the wealthy ones maintain their pools (or have someone do it for them). In their garages and driveways are their vehicles. Some very expensive and fancy, some not so much.

You see, from an aerial point of view, everything seems so very small. Like I said, so insignificant. Sometimes we can lose sight of just how insignificant our possessions are, even those things we value most highly. Imagine then, what God must see when He looks down from the heavens upon the people of the earth. How tiny and insignificant in the grand scheme of things.

But we are not “small” or “insignificant” to God. He has a personal interest in all His creation, and especially us, His image-bearers. His Son, Jesus, was persecuted, suffered and died a cruel death on a Roman cross, nails driven through His hands and feet, blood dripping from His head from the crown of thorns His killers placed upon Him. Their cruelty knew no bounds. Even His Father, God, seemed to deny Him that awful day. But He suffered willingly. He died, was buried and rose again – to rescue us from our hopeless, sinful state – IF we will do the most significant thing in our lives, and turn to Him in humble repentance and faith.

No, we’re not small and insignificant to God. We who are His, are His most prized possessions, indeed, His own children. Of course, not everyone is God’s child. There are those He calls “children of the devil.” Until a person seeks Christ, repents, and places his faith and trust in the only Savior of the world, that person is hopelessly lost. For them, this world is the only “heaven” they will ever know. For those who are saved by the mercy and grace of God, this world is the only “hell” we will ever know.

Jesus said, *“whoever desires to be the greatest in the kingdom of God must be the servant of all.”* He demonstrated that many times in His service to the lost and perishing. Some found their salvation after He served them. Others did not. But at the Last Supper, He formally demonstrated what it means to be a servant, as He took on the role of the lowest of the low, washing the feet of His disciples. And He told us all to do likewise.

There are many in the so-called “Christian” world today who have a very high opinion of themselves. Many pastors rake in huge salaries and enjoy equally huge packages of “benefits.” These are men (and women) who are able to draw large crowds with their charismatic speaking. Yet, the majority of them have no idea what it means to be a servant. Incidentally, the definition of “minister” is “servant.” Look it up. Shepherds

are to lay down their lives for their sheep, they're to protect, guide, serve and lead their sheep. It saddens me that so many do not... and even worse, that they deliberately and knowingly mislead the sheep that have been entrusted to them, with soft words and outright lies, rather than speaking the truth in love, boldly.

It's been said that most people are more afraid of public speaking than they are of death. Here are so-called "pastors" who are NOT afraid of public speaking, in fact, they're very good at it. Yet they ARE afraid of the opinions of men, afraid of speaking things that may upset someone, and so they do not speak the most essential truths. The "wokeness" of our pop culture has long since invaded the pulpits of our nation, and our nation now suffers because of it.

Charles Finney warned us nearly two centuries ago: *"If there is a decay of conscience, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the public press lacks moral discernment, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the Church is degenerate and worldly, the pulpit is responsible for it. If the world loses its interest in Christianity, the pulpit is responsible for it. If Satan rules in our halls of legislation, the pulpit is responsible for it. If our politics become so corrupt that the very foundations of our government are ready to fall away, the pulpit is responsible for it."*

Indeed, the pastors of our nation – if truly called by God – have so much power, yet they refuse to use it and instead, leave the sheep wandering, lost and confused. Instead of being salt and light in a dark and dying world, they've become sugar and cotton candy, because it's just so much more popular. I've said it before and I'll say it again: there was never any Godly man in all of Scripture who was ever well liked and popular among the people, yet that's what our pastors want most of all today – to be well-liked, popular and non-controversial. In other words, lukewarm.

These pretend ministers are not ministers at all, but rather hirelings. In Ezekiel 34, we read, *"Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: 'Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.'"*

And John 10 tells us, *"He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep."*

Folks, we have a crisis in our land, and I believe it would not be so if not for the hirelings that lead most of our churches today. Great deception has fallen on the people of our nation and the world, and the Christian churches remain mostly silent and irrelevant. The world has abandoned God because there are so few courageous preachers willing to speak the whole counsel of God, warn the wicked and snatch the perishing from the flames. Nothing turns my stomach more than a cowardly "pastor."

It's because of the lack of spiritual leadership that so many have turned to their possessions, their luxuries, and their toys for comfort. Hear the words of Matthew 6, *"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."

Friends, I'm afraid the "professional" Christians, the pastors and religious leaders have become a lost cause now. And thus, the point of this message. It's our turn now. It's time for the least of us, it's time for God's remnant people, His chosen ones, those who are true humble servants, saved by grace, to step up and take their position as courageous shepherds. God uses the "little people." He uses the ones who are "insignificant" in this world, to turn the world upside down for His kingdom. It's time we stop "playing church," rise up and BE the Church in this world that needs Godly leadership so desperately. Your possessions, regardless of how dear and precious they are to you, will mean nothing at all in eternity. God values your soul. You should too. *"Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last."*

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