

GIVER > GIFTS

Jesus is more satisfying than anything in this world. Another form of comparison and self focus is to believe that if God is good and really loves you, He'll bless you with more things. Health, wealth, and success are not signs of God's favor or a right relationship with Him. To desire God's gifts more than God Himself as the Giver, is idolatry and will never satisfy us. To know and trust Jesus gives rest and joy greater than any circumstance, good or bad. God does not delight in suffering, but He does use it to bring about growth and beauty. This week we will focus on how Jesus is enough:

- 1 Idolatry: too much of a good thing
- 2 Every good & perfect gift
- 3 More than this world

Trusting Jesus gives us rest and joy. He not only gives good things, but He is every good gift we will ever need. Our hope and satisfaction is in God's love for us in Jesus and the promise of all things being made right (resurrection, justice, healing). Jesus is enough.

FOR MORE, READ CHAPTERS 6–7 IN THE BOOK: *JESUS > RELIGION*.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

read

Do you ever view God like Santa Claus? I don't mean imagining Him with a white beard and living far away in a magical place on top of the world. What I mean is, have you ever acted as if God exists just to give you what you want as long as you're good enough to deserve it? And Santa grades on a pretty easy curve when it comes to naughty and nice, right? So as long as we're not awful compared to other people, we should get what we want.

This is how I used to view God at times. If I was at least as good as everyone else, I expected to have a pretty good life and to get into heaven when I died. Basically, this is using God, not loving Him. It's treating God like a vending machine. You're putting something into your relationship with God only to get something out of it. It's all about you and what you want.

To put this in biblical terms, we're talking about idolatry. That might sound pretty harsh and foreign, right? After all, you probably don't worship statues made of wood, stone, or precious metals. But in Colossians, Paul explained that covetousness is idolatry.

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. COLOSSIANS 3:5

Covetousness is like greed and jealousy rolled into one desire. To covet is to want something that someone else has—and maybe even believe you deserve it at least as much as, if not more than, they do. Covetousness is an insatiable hunger. No matter what you get, you'll never be satisfied.

What or who have you felt that you had to have in order to be fulfilled?

Did you get what you wanted? If so, how long were you satisfied?

Read Exodus 20:3-4 and Romans 1:21-25.

