

Shelf-Life

See the Passing Pleasure of Sin

If you've ever poured sour milk on your cereal in the morning, you probably paid much more attention to expiration dates next time you went shopping. Most food has a shelf-life, but have you ever considered that our worldly pleasures have a shelf-life too?

"For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:16-17).

The Big Idea: The pleasure of worldly pursuits doesn't last long, as three men in the Bible learned firsthand.

David's Lust

"It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful." (2 Samuel 11:2).

David, a man after God's own heart, struggled to see the shelf-life of sin (2 Sam. 11). Whatever pleasure he experienced in his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba, it was certainly short-lived. Soon after, he faced severe and terrible consequences for a few fleeting moments of gratification.

When you struggle with self-control, don't just focus on the pleasure — think about the consequences (Prov. 5:3-4). Like Paul, discipline yourself now, so you don't miss out on the eternal reward in the end (1 Cor. 9:27).

So, will you see beyond the momentary pleasure, to the eternal consequences?

Achan's Covetousness

"when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing 50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath." (Joshua 7:21).

Achan, a greedy Israelite, struggled to see the shelf-life of sin (Josh. 7:21). In spite of God's instructions about the riches of Jericho, Achan stole some gold and silver for himself. Sadly, he never even lived to spend his newfound, yet ill-gotten, wealth, since all the people stoned him to death after finding out.

When your eyes become fixated on what you don't have, don't just focus on the pleasure of acquiring it — think about the long term price you'll pay. Jesus said it would be better to be voluntarily blind than to allow your eyes to lead you into eternal destruction (Matt. 5:29-30).

So, will you guard your eyes against pursuing material satisfaction?

Nebuchadnezzar's Arrogance

"At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, and the king answered and said, 'Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?'" (Daniel 4:29-30).

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, struggled to see the shelf-life of sin (Dan. 4:28-33). During a routine walk on the palace roof, he proudly shouted about his greatness and majesty for building such a prosperous kingdom. But before the words left his lips, he was driven out to eat grass with the cows.

When your heart inflates with feelings of pride, don't just focus on your accomplishments — consider the consequence of forgetting God's role in your success. Not drunk on our importance, we need to sober up and realize that God makes us who we are (Rom. 12:3).

So, are you willing to lower yourself to honor God?

May God help us today to choose the limitless blessings of godliness over the limited pleasure of sin!