

You've heard that saying, "*You can take the boy out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy.*" It means, you can't change someone's character, just by changing their surroundings. How many of you have watched the Beverly Hillbillies? They took a bunch of hillbillies out of the country, and they gave them a lot of money, and stuck 'em in the big city, but they couldn't take the hillbilly out of who they were. That was a funny show, because people are who they are, and it's not that easy to change who someone is. Moving to a different location won't do it. Giving them a bunch of money won't do it. They just keep on being exactly who they are.

It takes something pretty powerful to change someone's character. To change their character, you've got to change their heart. You've got to change their mind. I suppose money CAN actually change a person's heart and mind but usually not for the better. ***1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*** But notice that it's not actually the money that changes someone; it's the LOVE of money. Jesus stated a very basic principle, and a very basic truth, in ***Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*** "Mammon" means "riches, or wealth" You can't be a servant of God, if you're a slave to riches and wealth.

Riches, wealth, money, they're a part of this world. And you can't love the world, and love God at the same time. You can love life, but you can't love the world, or the THINGS of the world. ***1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.***

That's why the bible says, in ***Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.***

Israel Came Out of Egypt. You might remember how God brought Israel out of Egypt. He raised up Moses to lead them, and He brought judgment upon the Egyptians, and He parted the Red Sea. The problem wasn't getting Israel out of Egypt. The problem was getting Egypt out of the Israelites!

God changed Israel's location; He changed their surroundings, but it was up to them to change their character. It was up

to them to change their heart. Israel was required to have faith in God just like we're required to have faith in God. That's the very first thing that God has always required from all people; Faith! ***“And without faith, it is impossible to please Him.” Hebrews 11:6*** Israel had seen the ten plagues that God brought upon Egypt. You'd think that would have produced a good amount of faith in the Israelites. But they had no sooner gotten out of Egypt, when they saw Pharaoh and his army chasing after them. And instead of having enough faith to realize that God wouldn't bring them out of Egypt, and then abandon them, they turned and said to Moses. ***Exodus 14:11 And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? And then they said; Exodus 14:12b ... For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.***

The Israelite's lack of faith, caused them to rather be back in Egypt. They had come to rely on the things of the world. That's what they had faith in. What they needed to LEARN was to have faith in GOD, and to rely on God. And we need to learn the very same thing. We need to learn to NOT rely on the things of this world for our happiness, and our pleasure, and our contentment.

When we learn, to find our happiness and pleasure, in GOD, that's when we'll find contentment. That's when we'll find ***“the peace of God, that surpasses all understanding.” (Philippians 4:7)*** What's it going to take today for you to be happy today, or to be happy tomorrow? What's going to have to happen, for you to say, “I really enjoyed this day.” Will you be able to say that you found pleasure in this day, simply knowing that God is here for you, and that He has forgiven your sins, and that He's promised you a home in heaven? Or is it going to require something else to allow you to enjoy this day? Jesus said; ***“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Mathew 6:21)*** Whatever you treasure, that's what will make your heart happy. That's what you'll find pleasure in.

Work Brings Pleasure. Finding pleasure in God isn't necessarily “automatic” for us. We've got to work at it. ***Philippians 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*** It's not automatic, we've got to work at it. We've even got to “work” at what bring us pleasure, and happiness, and comfort, and contentment, and peace.

Temporary pleasure isn't hard to find though. And temporary happiness, temporary comfort is not hard to find. Good food can do that. Do you know what the Israelites said to Moses after they had come out of Egypt, and were out in the wilderness? ***Exodus 16:3 And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.*** They really missed that temporary pleasure, the temporary comfort, of all that good food. They must have really treasured it, because that's where their hearts were.

God had overthrown the Egyptians; He had freed the Israelites from slavery, and He promised the Israelites, in ***Exodus 14, verse 13; "For, the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever!"*** You'd think that Israel would have found comfort and even pleasure in that. But the bible says in ***Exodus 16:2-3 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: (3) And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.*** Egypt, and it's wealth, was in the hearts of the sons of Israel. They had come out of Egypt, but Egypt hadn't come out of them.

Here's the part of those verses, that really sums it up. ***"..when we had pots of meat, and we ate bread to the full.."*** That's not a statement about the mere fact that we need food to survive. It's a statement about being led by the flesh, and not being led by the spirit. It's a statement about not understanding, what's truly important in this life. And it's also a statement about not trusting in God.

God's Word is our Example. I wonder if we take seriously enough, the words of ***1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*** Even though the sons of Israel were slaves in Egypt, Egypt still offered material comforts that they had come to rely on. Egypt offered plenty of food, something they could see, and feel, and taste. They were led by the flesh, and so the people were comfortable in their slavery. And so when God brought them out of Egypt, they brought Egypt with them, in their hearts.

The lesson I want us to grasp is that God calls us, to come out of the world. He says in **2 Corinthians 6:17** *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,* And we hear God's call, and we go to God. But all too often, we bring the world with us, just like Israel did. The world stays in our hearts, because we're so used to being led by the flesh, like Israel was, that we're more comfortable in the world, than we are in God's kingdom.

Coming out of the world, and being separate from the world, is the equivalent of coming out of sin, and being separate from sin. Egypt was the slavery that Israel was in. And sin is the slavery that we are in. If we're led by the flesh, we're in slavery to sin, but if we're led by the spirit, then we come out of slavery.

But it still depends on where our treasure is. We're not going to be led by the Spirit if our treasure is in the world. I mentioned how the pleasures and the comforts of this world are just temporary. Well, sometimes that's how faith is. Our faith can sometimes be only temporary. Israel had "temporary faith". Their entire history is an illustration of temporary faith. God performed miracles, and executed judgment on the Egyptians, and they believed, temporarily. God performed miracles, and executed judgment on some of them, and the rest believed, temporarily. God raised up judges, to rule over them, and they followed the judges, and believed, temporarily. God raised up prophets, to bring them back to God, and sometimes they returned, temporarily.

That's how some people are today, isn't it? We can have a gospel meeting, or a bible school, or any religious get-together, and people will get fired up, for a day or two, or maybe even three or four days, but then what happens; their faith and their zeal kind of "fizzles out." People haven't changed. That's our tendency. But we've got to overcome our "tendencies". We've got to develop a faith, that won't "fizzle out". We've got to learn to trust GOD, and not the world. We've got to learn to be LED by God, and not by the world. And we've got to learn to come OUT from the world, and get the world OUT of us!

"These things happened to them as an example, and they are written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages has come." We've got work to do. The offer of salvation is free. The price has been paid by God. It wasn't free to Him, but it's free to us. But we've got work to do! We've got to learn!

Invest Wisely. We've got to learn not to let our faith fizzle out. And we've got to learn to treasure what's really important. How do we invest our treasure in God? Think of your "treasure" as the things that you possess. We are in control of your possessions. You possess your abilities, your money, your energy. You possess freedom of choice.

Where are you going to choose to invest all those treasure that you possess? If you invest it in the world, that's where your heart is gonna be. And if you invest it in God, then your heart will be there also, with God. Paul ask some sobering question in *Romans 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* Then Paul tells those in the church at Rome some comforting words that applies to us today. *Romans 8:38-39 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

In other words, the world can take you from one place and put you in another. It can give you things, or take things from you, but it can't take God out of you, if you decide to put God in you! Note too that the blessing of God's love is "in Christ Jesus our Lord." This is one of those spiritual blessing referenced in Eph 1:3

Invitation. Are you in Christ?