

Wayne Out There (.com)

wayne-out-there

Stuff that matters to Wayne

Manna: What is it? It is this.

Posted on February 11,2016 by admin

UPDATE: I've included a response from a friend to this post in the body of the post below under these neat little == markings, removing some personal identifying items. ===== I could feel the heavy burden on my back when I woke up. It was also on my chest. I could also feel it pushing on my temples (both sides). I was being slowly crushed under it - again. How did this happen? How did I end up back here again - back under the horrible weight of stress and worry? Maybe I should have just gone the way of other men. Maybe the wide road of comfort, ease and abundance is the better way. Maybe pushing papers for the government or a big company isn't so bad because there at least I'll know that my mortgage and bills will be paid and by whom: me! STOP THE PRESS! WOAHHHHHH, NELLY! CONDUCTOR, STOP THIS TRAIN! I NEED TO GO VISIT CAPTAIN JESUS! And so I went into the Holy of Holies to pray (I call it that because I have curtains that go between my home office and the place where I find myself crying out to God on the floor). I stopped talking and thinking and got down on my knees and started worshipping. Within less than three seconds (sometimes He's fast) He said 'Manna'. Manna? What is it? (Exodus 16) And what does it have to do with this burden of stress that is slowly sucking my will to live? Although I don't have the entire revelation, here is what was shown me in convenient bullet point form for millennial encouragement:

- no matter how many hours of the day I work I cannot provide more
- if I sweat all day long and all night long and gather storehouses full of it, it rots leaving me with exactly what I need when the delivery arrives the next day
- it's about being in God's will, not about the easy life that matters
- the wilderness might not be pretty, but it's there where faith grows
- no matter how poor I am, no matter how empty my basket is, no matter how hungry I am, the amount I need always seems to show up - but not always exactly when my stomach growls.

and, the key take away point for me, for today, when I could feel the burden lifting off of my chest, temples and shoulders was this:

- no matter how much I worry, I cannot add or subtract to the amount of Manna provided because God Almighty knows what's best for my soul.

Jesus asked this (Matt 6:27, NLT version): Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? I write this today in hopes that someone out there who is in my shoes is encouraged. I'm thinking of one particular friend in Ottawa with whom, although we rarely have time to chat these days, has also chosen the path of most resistance for many years and found himself with humbled and asking for continual help. He, like I, know that there is something so important to learn on the journey that we have, for many years gone without, worked countless hours more than our neighbours and friends and have ended up with just enough Manna for today. I've always wanted to ask him if his heart, like mine, has become so thankful for the small things in life. I've always wanted to ask him if his relationship with God, like mine, has become so much closer through the journey of learning to trust our Heavenly Father. And so, brother, I hope that this short post has boosted your faith in Christ, multiplied your thankfulness, encouraged you for the day, and given you hope for tomorrow. Manna. It is this.

Hey bud,

Thanks again for sharing that blog post.

To be honest, I see things a bit differently. Bear with me as I go through some of the things you wrote and offer a different point of view :)

The Lord Provides

Full transparency here, and forgive me if I'm repeating stuff I already shared.

A few years back I was pretty fed up with my employment. I had spent a lot of time studying and earning certifications so I could work my way up the ladder and actually help people. Well... when I got there it was just more sales.

As my dissatisfaction grew, my desire to be independently wealthy grew, too, so I made the decision to resign and go it alone.

That was the first in a long series of bad decisions.

In those first few months of unemployment (self employment) I tried various investments and even online marketing.

My wife and I met the Lord in Dec 2011. Shortly after things got to their lowest. We nearly had to sell the house to pay off all the debt I had got us into. Fortunately we were able to work out a debt repayment plan through a government agency here, and as long as we were able to pay X amount back to our creditors each month, we could keep our house.

After that our monthly obligations were more burdensome than ever, and I was still too stubborn to get a job. I was determined to be self employed and had myself convinced that I was very close to having a breakthrough.

I went through many many sleepless nights, crying out to God for help. Every new win encouraged me, so I kept going despite the irrefutable reality that I couldn't afford to take care of my family.

We were "borrowing" money from my parents on a very regular basis. I was working very long hours. And we just couldn't get ahead.

There actually were a few times I nearly caved to get a job. My wife kept reminding me to trust the Lord. So I did, and kept going.

Now My Comments:

"Maybe pushing papers for the government or a big company isn't so bad because there at least I'll know that my mortgage and bills will be paid and by whom: me!"

The point you seem to be making here is that if you're self employed you're relying on the Lord to provide, but if you were to get a job you'd somehow be relying on your own strength.

I think the danger of relying on your own strength is just as great in either case, but I think that is beside a much greater issue:

In My Case:

I now firmly believe that I was missing a greater commandment and mistakenly thought that I was somehow trusting God more by sticking with self employment.

Here was the reality when I was self employed

- I was often stressed
- I wasn't able to provide for my family
- I was a great burden to my parents
- I had very little time with my children and my wife
- When I DID have time with my family, I was often preoccupied with the demands that come with running my own business
- I felt like a failure, but didn't want to admit that I couldn't do it
- I wanted to succeed

Here are some truths I have come to understand better in the last year:

- The professional path I choose does not define my level of trust in the Lord (Col 3:23-24)

- The Lord commands me to train up my children and have a great quantity of time with them (not just 'quality' time) (Deut 11:19, Prov 22:6)
- The Lord commands me to be the head of my wife, ministering to her faithfully (Eph 5:25-30)
- The Lord expects that I will make wise decisions and provide for my family. (1 Tim 3:5, 5:8)

I Was Very Wrong

I came to the conclusion that I was no more pious in working for myself, nor would I be any less pious for getting a job.

I realize that my understanding of what it meant to "trust The Lord" was flawed.

I realize that The Lord gives us a very long leash - even enough with which to hang ourselves.

We are expected to be wise. We are commanded to make good decisions. I was using my "trust" in The Lord as a cover all for poor planning and poor decisions. Not intentionally, mind you, but that was what was happening.

With all due respect, love and tenderness, brother, I think you're missing something when you equate getting a job with seeking a road of comfort, ease and abundance. I don't think they are the same thing, at all. If you were guilty of that, you'd be guilty of it as a self employed entrepreneur or an office worker. Rather, could getting a job not be a means to obeying a great commandment? If you were to get a job (and it can be one with purpose, that you enjoy), how much more time would you be able to spend with your family? How much more effective would you be in ministering to the wife and daughters the Lord has entrusted to your care?

"Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it."

What a promise!!

I'm not saying you are NOT doing these things, but I'm just asking how much MORE could you be doing them were you not preoccupied with work? That was certainly the case with me.

Things Have Changed

Last year I decided to finally get a job, and one that I could enjoy. I decided on a field that I was interested in, and thank The Lord I have a lot of fun doing it.

Last June I started to study, and the Lord connected me with all the right people and opportunities to really grow in this field I enjoy so much.

I was looking for work, but I still had much I needed to learn before I could be an effective team member on a team in this field.

Praise God, through a very unlikely turn of events I landed a job at a startup just 5 minutes from home. Things are still a bit tight financially, and I get up very early most mornings to study, but we're making it, and it's getting better all the time. I have no doubt that The Lord has provided all of this.

I get to spend each lunch hour with my family. I have had the opportunity to share Christ with my young coworker, and I sit next to a woman who recently fled her native country to provide a better life for her sons.

My Point

Your post did indeed resonate with me, brother. I saw so much of myself in your struggles, and I find it no accident that we share so much in common.

To answer your questions. Yes, I have been humbled, and continue to be most days ;). Yes, I am very grateful for everything. Yes, I love The Lord so much more than before. But none of those things had to come from the poor decisions I made before.

Now I'm not saying you are guilty of the same things I was. But maybe something in my experience matches your own.

I just urge you to reconsider your assumptions. You are NOT being unfaithful by seeking employment if doing so means more time with your family.

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Thanks Brother. This response will help countless people as it has and will myself. I wholeheartedly agree with 100% of your points and I ask God to rebuke me sharply if I am on the wrong path. I want to also add that there is a very good book (I have no idea about his faith) called Art of the Start by Guy

Kawasaki that talks about becoming an entrepreneur within a company. There is a cool term for it that I forget but if I could do it again, I would probably go this route for the first round: get a nice paycheque every month, win the hearts of the ownership/directors, and then get their permission to start a new venture under the financial power of that company. What an easier path than the painful path I have taken my family through, as my friend described above. That said, God is very gracious. He speaks to us through friends like this and through His word and if we're listening He quickly shows us whether we are on track or need to readjust our trajectory. Thanks again for taking the time to respond, brother. Next time spare me the pain of editing and just post the comment yourself! ;)

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