

portion with someone even less fortunate than himself.

His great example helped me realize that the source of his family's happiness was based on gratitude and a willingness to share. This attitude of gratitude is certainly a key to happiness. It is impossible to be happy without feeling gratitude. Sharing not only evidences our gratitude, it also helps us develop more gratitude.

If we believe material things are the source of all happiness, we will be sorely disappointed. The pursuit of happiness through materialism is insatiable. We can never acquire enough stuff to fill the emotional black holes that drive us to 'succeed.' There will always be something else we want, or something else that is a little bigger or better. We will never be fully satisfied in life until we find the source of truth and love, God.

I find it very instructive that Christ referred to His message as a "well of living water" to a Samaritan woman at a well. Every day for decades, this woman had probably come to this well to draw water in a futile effort to satisfy the demands of a parched earth and human thirst. She could never draw enough water to fully satisfy all of the demands for this life-sustaining substance in this dry and barren place. She had to repeatedly return, day after day. No wonder her interest was peaked when Christ told her:

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."⁶⁴

He then instructed her that the only way to really worship God is in truth and through the spirit. As many Christians can testify, once we invite God's spirit into our souls, it becomes a well of living water, quenching our emotional and spiritual thirst, and satisfying our quest for

love, meaning, and well-being.

Cars break down, clothes go out of fashion, properties require maintenance, and stocks rise and fall. Satisfaction achieved through material wealth is fleeting, at best. If fame and fortune were really the ticket to happiness, rock and movie stars would not be seeking to escape their empty and shallow lives through drugs and alcohol.

Granted, this is a material world that we live in, so acquiring the necessities of life is essential to a well-balanced existence. But, many individuals fall into the common trap of taking a good or necessary thing too far to where it obstructs their ability to acquire the peace and happiness they seek.

I strongly believe that materialism is one of the biggest problems of modern society. As the Bible states, “the love of money is the root of all evil.”⁶⁵ Because material things temporarily satisfy our physical needs, as the water from the Samaritan well, many are lured into the false belief that temporal things will completely satisfy our quest for well-being. But, it never lasts. Just as the Samaritan woman had to return to the well every day, material things will never fully satisfy our thirst.

Let us not waste our life endlessly pursuing things that cannot satisfy and will leave us wanting more. Instead, let us turn to God who will become a well of living water inside our being that will fill our souls with love, perspective, understanding, peace, and satisfaction.