

The Danger in Living For the Next Big Thing

Samsung adopted the theme “the next big thing” to typify upgrades on their new phones. I love that phrase.

All of us tech junkies get excited when Android or Apple comes out with an upgrade or a new product. Upgrades are important because they usually fix bugs and improve operations. But I am often taken aback at how passionate people are to be the first ones to get a new technological product.

When a new product is released it is not uncommon for many to stand in line all night to purchase it first. All this excitement may be okay for a piece of technology but it is dangerous as the *modus operandi* of our life.

I am concerned about the number of people I have met and ministered to who seem to be just holding on by a thread waiting for the—you guessed it “the next big thing.” There is a consistent theme and message I hear preached repeatedly in the body of Christ that goes something like this: “Your breakthrough is coming,” or “God is gonna come through,” or “You’re on your way to the promised land.” While I value the ministry of encouragement, it seems like we are teaching people to embrace contentment only *after* the desires of their heart are granted.

This is a dangerous way to live. If there is anything that Solomon teaches us in the book of Ecclesiastes it is that everything under the heaven has a vain component attached to it. Though what we desire might be good in itself—if we depend on it to complete us, or in some way count on it to make us happy—we have a problem ready to erupt.

How many people counted on the next job to make them happy until they encountered challenges on that job? How many have

put their hope of happiness on the new husband or wife until they came face-to-face with the complexities of marriage?

I have met many young people called to ministry who felt their moment of happiness would come when they landed the big church, the big TV ministry, or the best selling book. But these things do not bring happiness. There may be a moment of celebration but there are challenges attached to any promotion. Our measure of victory must be defined by something other than the next desired blessing.

The Apostle Paul learned the lesson of not living for the next big thing He declared:

“Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil 4:11-13).

If there is one thing we need to learn as believers, it is how to redefine success. We cannot keep living for a desired external influence to occur before we embrace joy. We must choose joy every day whether or not we are “successful.” Scripture teaches us to be content with basic necessities because as Christians we have the reality of Jesus, who gives us eternal life that begins in the here and now. Many on the mission field have met people living in abject poverty who have more life and joy than the missionary who came to “bless” them.

I am not against going after God for more. I certainly have a list of things I am in the process of believing God for, and my list is growing! However, I am simply saying that my emotional well-being must not be contingent upon receiving these things. I was successful this morning when I had fellowship with God—and He affirmed I was His and He was mine.

As believers we must learn to embrace contentment with Christ alone. Any external thing will be insufficient to bring us the joy, peace, or the status we desire. We must not wait for anything to complete us; we are complete in Him. If you woke up this morning still covered in grace, wearing His righteousness, and with the God who said He will never leave you and never forsake you by your side, you are victorious and successful.

Anything else that comes is an added blessing coupled with added responsibility. We must learn to live in the moment God is giving us right now, not just live for the next big thing.

Here are a few ways we can live in the now:

- **In everything give thanks.** Learn to be grateful, even for little things. Gratitude has a way of transforming the soul so that it rejoices in the moment rather than waiting for something external to invoke rejoicing. Even in seemingly negative circumstances, be thankful because God will use it for your good (Rom. 8:28).
- **Train your mind to look at the good and not the “bad.”** We may have all heard this before, but it we need to remember that it really works. Train your mind to look at the good in every situation. This mindset will transform you into a contented person who needs nothing else—although you may gladly receive more blessings. Your emotional cup will already be full.
- **Ask God what He is thinking about situations you do not understand.** Amazing things happen when we get God’s perspective on reality. Isaiah says God will keep you in perfect peace when your mind is fixed on Him. (See Isaiah 26:3.)
- **Have faith in God’s ability to fulfill the desires of your heart.** Trust is balm for the soul. When we trust God fully, it settles our hearts. We are able to be content knowing our life is in His hands.

Oh what peace our lives will experience once we realize the next big thing is already here—because the next best thing is Jesus! You cannot get bigger than that!

Kyle Searcy serves as senior pastor of Fresh Anointing House of Worship in Montgomery, Alabama, and Norcross, Georgia.