Subject: Greed
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YOU CAN'T HAVE IT ALL

"You can have it all!" is the slogan of a beer commercial. Having it all is exactly the desire of a generation of people who want it all, and they want it right now. Granddad may have been willing to wait, at least for a while, but today's generation wants it all, and they want it now. Young adults in China want it all, and that all includes the color TV, a washing machine, a refrigerator, and a motorbike. Their western counterparts include the compact disk player and the new young adult standard--the BMW automobile.

But can we have it all? Or is this another fraud perpetrated on us to cause us to commit ourselves to what we can ill afford? Tom Sine, writing for World Christian magazine, contends that you can't have it all, and trying to have it all will not only create unbearable stress but will leave you with little interest in anything or anyone other than self-interests. He says, "There is growing evidence that the rat race is a fraud. It isn't the good life at all. It isn't good for us, it isn't good for our kids and it certainly isn't good for those with whom we share the planet."

The problem is, though, that most of us don't know that not having it all can count for something too. Take, for example, Jonathan Blake. At 31, he had graduated from one of the day's most prestigious law schools and had become a partner in a law firm, having spent six grueling years working his way up the corporate ladder. Having arrived where most men would like to be at the pinnacle of their careers, he got there only to discover that the elation and fulfillment he expected didn't exist. He told a reporter, "I thought when I finally got to be a partner I would feel this huge release. But nothing's changed. I'm still the same insecure overachiever I was before. Only now my heart's not in it."

Having it all implies that if you can accumulate enough things, at some point "all" becomes "enough" and satisfaction results. Relationships are unimportant. Values are inconsequential. Morals are relative, but getting as much as you can as soon as possible is tremendously important.

A man who apparently "had it all" came to Jesus. You read about him in Mark 10. Often described as "The Rich Young Ruler," he had what most people are seeking--money, power, and authority. In addition he seemed to have a measure of self-respect and moral goodness. Unlike many who are trying to "have it all," he could truthfully say, "I've kept the commandments about murder, adultery, theft and dishonesty. I haven't given false testimony, and I've honored my parents."

What more could a person ask for? "One thing you lack," said Jesus. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me" (Mark 10:21).

Does "having it all" mean "giving it all away?" Not necessarily. But the "having it all" mentality commits one massive fraud: It puts you at the center of your universe, whereas Jesus Christ wants to be alone in that position. That was the failure of the man who was first committed to the "having it all" mentality. There is one more thing that needs to be said of him and you who are trying to have it all. Mark says, "Jesus looked at him and loved him" (Mark 10:21). That, friend, you must not forget.

The relationship that puts things in their proper perspective is the result of responding to the love of Jesus Christ and following in His footsteps. Let Him be Lord and Master of your life.