



Upside-Down Part 1 LESS IS MORE

→ When you think of Jesus' teaching, what first comes to mind? What were the hallmarks of His teaching? What do you think he 'turned upside-down'?

BIG INTRO QUESTION: Does our thinking need to be turned UPSIDE-DOWN? (Colossians 3:1-2, Romans 12:2)

- * If you're honest do you think HEAVEN'S way or EARTH'S?
 - * Is there a danger we find ourselves being SQUEEZED into the wrong MOULD?
- How would you answer those two questions? What are the differences between heavenly and earthly thinking? What are the moulds? How do we get 'squeezed'?

THE SUBTLE TRAP: Making life too busy, costly or complex to THRIVE; so we end up exerting all our valuable energy just to SURVIVE.

→ Do you ever feel that you are too busy? Or that it's all too costly (in monetary terms)? Or too complex? Are you thriving or surviving? If you're thriving, what changes did you have to make to progress from merely surviving? If you're just surviving, what would you like your life to look and feel like? Is it the busy, the costly or the complex?

THE BIG IDEA: LESS is MORE

- * Trouble is, we've been taught all our lives that MORE is MORE.
 - * Lie: When I have just a little bit MORE than this, then I'll be HAPPY.
 - * Danger: We spend all our valuable energy stressing, striving and straining for MORE, when true peace & joy are to be found in being prepared to SETTLE FOR LESS.
 - * LESS of what doesn't really MATTER ultimately makes room for a lot MORE of what does.
- Have you been convinced by the idea that more is more? Is more seductive? Is more insatiable? How does it masquerade as a good thing? What pursuit of more is healthy? What pursuit of more is a distraction?
- "It's possible to become so busy accumulating blessing that we have no time to enjoy it." Discuss.
- "The best things in life are often right under our noses and yet we're running around all over the place in pursuit of more." Discuss.
- "God seems to be closer to people who have less. God seems to do more in our lives in seasons of less." Discuss.
- What are the things that really matter / have eternal consequence / will mean something to us when we look back on deathbed?

SOME BIBLE VERSES

Ecclesiastes 4:6 → At what point do you have ENOUGH to be SATISFIED, because the perpetual PURSUIT of MORE tends to cause a great deal of unnecessary PAIN.

1 Timothy 6:6-10 → Perhaps we should make GODLINESS & CONTENTMENT our goal, rather than MORE.

Matthew 5:6 → Serious risk that we hunger & thirst for all the WRONG THINGS & find ourselves thoroughly DISSATISFIED.

Matt 6:33 → Seek FIRST God, His Kingdom & righteousness. If we are willing to SETTLE for LESS, God will give you a MORE you can't imagine.

John 3:30 → Your LESS in GOD'S HANDS is so much MORE than your MORE.

- * LESS of YOU opens the door to MORE of HIM.
- What are the dangers in pursuing more and more? What are the benefits of settling for less? (Refer to the Bible verses above for ideas).
- "There's a serious risk that we hunger and thirst for all the wrong things and find ourselves thoroughly dissatisfied." Discuss.
- Can you think of biblical examples of man's less making room for God's more?

Would we be better off if we turned a few things UPSIDE-DOWN?

1. Spent less TIME RACING AROUND; more TIME WITH GOD
2. Less focus on DOING; more on BEING
3. Less URGENT; more IMPORTANT
4. Less CLUTTER; more SPACE
5. Less STORING; more GIVING
6. Less PUSHING; more TRUSTING
7. Less SPENDING; more SAVING
8. Less TALKING; more LISTENING
9. Less CRITICISING & COMPLAINING; more BLESSING, PRAYING & ENCOURAGING
10. Less JUDGING; more DISCERNING
11. Less PROTESTING; more PRAISING
12. Less COMPARISON; more GRATITUDE
13. Less PROGRAMMING; more WORSHIP
14. Less OPINION; more WORD
15. Less ACTIVITY; more RELATIONSHIP
16. Less MAINTAINING; more MINISTRY
17. Less VIRTUAL; more REAL
18. Less FOLLOWERS; more FRIENDS
19. Less RUNNING; more RESTING
20. Less of what YOU can DO; more of what you can HELP OTHERS DO
21. Less FLESH; more SPIRIT
22. Less FEAR; more FAITH
23. Less WORKS; more GRACE
24. Less of MAN'S PLANS; more HOLY SPIRIT

→ Any of these jump up & down for you? How does the less make room for the more? How many of the left-hand column are a challenge for you, if you're honest? Which of the right-hand column particularly appeal to you and what do you have to give up to get there (hint: see the corresponding right-hand entry!)

→ "I am utterly convinced that if we balance and re-align much of that (the list of 24), we'll experience a lot less stress, anxiety and drama, and a lot more God, space, peace and joy." Do you agree?

→ If you have time, use this list as a basis for a prayer for less of you and more of Him.

CHALLENGE: Qs to take to Lord

1. With this principle in mind, is there anything you sense you should stop doing?
2. Is the Lord showing you that any of your ambitions are wrongly motivated and should be let go?
3. What of your more / pursuit of more is weighing you down?
4. Is there anything in your life you need to simplify or let go of to make room for more of the Lord?