

“I’m Bored”

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. Definition: “The state of being weary and restless through lack of interest; the condition of being bored; tedium, ennui” (Merriam-Webster).
 1. The greatest majority of people are convinced that boredom is an external problem generated by circumstances, or the lack of interesting and diverting circumstances.
 2. Illustration: In golf, 10% of your game depends on your equipment (clubs, golf balls, shoes, etc.), and 90% of the game depends on you (ability, concentration, swing, etc.). Most players spend a lot of money on buying the best equipment to improve 10% of their game, instead of practicing to improve the other 90% of their game.
 3. In life, a small percentage of boredom is based on circumstances, the greatest part depends on you and the perspective you choose.
- B. Secular writers agree
 1. “There are no uninteresting things, only uninterested people.” (G. K. Chesterton)
 2. “Boredom is the conviction that you can't change, the shriek of unused capacities.” (Saul Bellow)
 3. “Do you know, that in a universe so full of wonders, human beings have managed to invent boredom?” (Terry Pratchett)
 4. “Every day is important for us because it is a day ordained by God. If we are bored with life there is something wrong with our concept of God and His involvement in our daily lives. Even the most dull and tedious days of our lives are ordained by God and ought to be used by us to glorify Him.” (Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts*)
- C. Boredom is an internal problem
 1. Growing up, we had trees to climb, woods to explore, ponies and bicycles to ride, softball, football, basketball, horseshoes, bow and arrow, BB guns, books to read, TV to watch, music to listen to, board games to play, neighbors to play with, school, chores, and part time jobs. We had no time to be bored. If we told Mom we were bored, she found something for us to do, usually chores. She knew that boredom was an unwillingness to invest interest in something to do. Children today have all of those things and more. If they are bored, it is not because of circumstances.
 2. Boredom is not merely an irritation; it can become a spiritual problem.
 - a. 1Tim. 5:11-14 - It can lead to depression, trouble and thrill seeking, substance abuse, adultery, crime, and even suicide as people increasingly despair of life.

I. CAUSES OF BOREDOM

- A. Overindulgence in pleasant, fun things

1. The law of diminishing returns is any rate of profit, production, benefits, that beyond a certain point fails to increase proportionately with added investment, effort, or skill.
 - a. Over time it takes more to get the same result; intensity and frequency must increase
 - b. There are limits to amount of “good things” we can handle before it becomes harmful to us - Prov. 25:16
 - c. When pleasure and good times become our first priority, over time the paradoxical result is boredom
 - d. Boredom is a prevailing symptom of our pleasure-obsessed age.
 2. Pursuit of pleasure can lead to moral decay - Ez. 16:49-50
 - a. Overindulgence in anything can lead to apostasy - Deut. 32:15
 - b. It moves one to begin hiding his pursuit of pleasure - Prov. 9:17
 - c. It moves one to love money to pursue a good time - 1Tim. 6:10
 - d. When a child is bored, parents are tempted to solve the problem by giving more things. Instead of helping, they’re making it worse
 - e. When adults get bored, they implement same flawed solution. They buy things, eat things, take things, and do things to make themselves feel better. Even if they can’t afford it, or it is self-destructive, or they have to sin to indulge it, that’s alright, because nothing is worse than being bored.
- B. Under-exertion in necessary, important things
1. Laziness causes unproductiveness and want - Prov. 19:15, 26:14
 2. Lack of productive work makes one’s life disordered and meddlesome 2Thes. 3:11
 3. The lazy are too bored to even enjoy indulging - Prov. 19:24, 12:27

II. SOLVING THE PROBLEM

- A. Contentment with current circumstances
1. Life is not defined by abundance - Luke 12:15
 2. Often, less is more - Prov. 15:16-17, 16:8, 17:1; Ecc. 4:6
 3. More moves one away from God. Less draws him close to God.
 4. 1Tim. 6:6-8; Phil. 4:11-13
- B. Diligence in not being controlled by circumstance
1. Our approach to life often determines our attitude towards life.
 - a. Prov. 23:7 - We are as we perceive our lives to be.
 - b. Mark 7:21-23 - Sin comes from our heart and attitudes.
 2. The answer to boredom is deciding not to be bored
 - a. If we allow ourselves to be bored, we will be. If we decide we won’t be bored, we won’t be. Most conditions in life rise up or drop down to our expectations for them.
 3. If you are bored...
 - a. Rom. 12:11 - Be diligent in service; be fervent in spirit
 - b. Heb. 6:11-12 - Avoid sluggishness and show diligence
 - c. Ecc. 9:10; Col. 3:23-24 - Whatever we do, we must do it with all of our ability.

C. Grow to become what we were designed to be

1. Gen. 1:26-27 - We were created in God's image
2. 2Peter 1:5-11, 3:18 - We have been given the capacity to become more like Him
3. 2 Cor. 5:14-15, 17 - When we put ourselves first and live for ourselves, our lives become pointless and we are bored. When we put others first and give ourselves for them, our lives take on worth and meaning.
4. Rom. 12:1-2; John 15:8