

Any Articles that are not Physically Attached ...

I'm not an amusement park kind of a guy – never have been. That's why I was less than enthused when Linda announced a few weeks ago that she had purchased *Hershey Park* tickets. Whoever first conceived that there was money to be made because people would willingly pay to self-inflict themselves with horror and nausea, may very well be the finest marketing mind in the history of economics.

One of the highest points in the park is the apex of an arch, the first climb on something called the *Storm Runner*. It towers above everything around it, not unlike the majestic *Gateway Arch* in St. Louis - only this thing is much steeper. I followed our group and did not even realize I was in the line for this particular ride until I looked out in front of me and saw that initial ascent. I was still wondering how I had allowed myself to be so passively led to slaughter when I looked up and saw a sign that was in no way helpful:

**Any articles that are not
physically attached to the rider
are not permitted on this ride.**

Surely, the sign was referring to cell phones, purses, sunglasses, *etc.* But then, I remembered reading the following a few years ago:

“When workers drained the lake below the Roller Coaster at Blackpool's Pleasure Beach, they found hundreds of pairs of false teeth that had fallen from the mouths of horrified, screaming passengers. Also found was a wide assortment of wigs and half a dozen glass eyes.” (*Union Jack*, a newspaper for British expatriates published in La Mesa, California).

No useful life metaphor was at all apparent until well after that ride was over. Still, that crazy sign continued to intrigue me. Maybe there was something worthwhile to be gleaned from the *Storm Runner's* posted warning. Perhaps, such a notice would prove useful in the Christian pilgrimage through this world. Just maybe, the key to the life abundant that Jesus promised His disciples is the willingness to lay aside everything that is not physically attached to us.

Is such an attitude not a key to true contentment? And, is true contentment not a key to a genuine spirit of generosity as well as to an authentic attitude of Christian stewardship?

“Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” – **Jesus**, Luke 12:15

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that." – **The Apostle Paul**, 1 Timothy 6:6-8

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,

'Never will I leave you;
never will I forsake you.' – Hebrews 11:5

God is with us always. Is there any simpler formula that could more securely give us rest and contentment in this life? I just wish I had done a better job of remembering that during the ride itself.

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