



# *REFLECTIONS*

April 3, 2016 Refreshed from June 4, 2006

**Now all has been heard;  
here is the conclusion of the matter:  
Fear God and keep his commandments,  
for this is the whole [duty] of man.**

*Ecclesiastes 12:13*

## **Activities**

“Activity suggests a life filled with purpose,” Captain Georg von Trapp said cynically in the enduring story captured in the musical play and movie, *The Sound of Music*. And isn’t it true that we bury ourselves in activity as if it was the essence of our lives. We fill our days with activity in our effort to gain approval from our fellow workers, friends and family—or even ourselves. Activities should serve our meaningful goals, not become a distraction from them.

Recently I visited with a man in the process of transitioning the leadership of the family business to his son. As is often the case in these situations, he found it hard to hand over the day to day responsibilities to his son because he feared that his personal identity would be lost if he assigned those duties to someone else.

In the course of our discussion, I observed that we all live a certain number of years then one day someone will stand before a crowd of mourners, and in the course of 15 minutes, summarize our lives. I asked him what he would want his life summary to be. After a few moments in thought he replied, “To be a friend...to be there for others in times of need.”

“So, how does that goal relate to your role in the business?” I asked.

William Pollard in his book, *The Soul of the Firm*, explains that we have end goals and we have means goals. For this man his desire for his life was to be a friend. The success of his business provided a platform and resources to be a friend and to meet the needs of those around him. But he allowed his identity to be defined by *his activities* in the business instead of *servicing as a vehicle* for becoming who he wanted to be.

Activities should serve our goals, not just fill our day. Jesus made the point to Martha when she allowed busyness to distract her from more important things.

We easily fall victim to the problem and allow activities to distract us from more important goals. We easily become too addicted to busyness only to lose sight of the purpose we set about to serve. Perhaps it would be helpful to begin each day with the question “How will the activities I plan for today serve God’s Kingdom?”

It’s a question that might help keep our activities directed toward serving God.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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