

**“To be upset over what you do not have is to waste what you do have.”  
(The Big Three)**

Three key elements comprise the essence of life itself: opportunities, relationships and time. However, just as they can be quickly experienced, in like manner, they can vanish. With this reality in mind, there is a critical choice that must be made. Everyone must decide whether to focus on what they still have and remain content, or risk losing it all by becoming distraught over what they perceive is lacking. To be upset is to fall prey to the blinders that rob one of a rewarding life. Therefore, I concur with Sir Templeton that *“To be upset over what you do not have is to waste what you do have.”*

Every human being is presented with opportunities throughout their lifetime. Whether it is performing at a school talent show or being promoted at work, we all get a chance to express ourselves and our worth to others. However, the world is plagued with social and economic inequalities, which leave many with far less opportunities than others. As a result, numerous people become jealous of what others possess, restricting themselves by the first of three blinders: envy. Envy, what another has, propels one into a quandary of debilitating self-doubt. Questions such as *“Why didn’t I get that?”* or *“Why not me?”* have the capacity to do greater damage than the bullet, and are often the core motives behind hands that pull the trigger. Envy limits a person from embracing the prospects and joys they have in life. In this regard, anyone hoping to maximize what opportunities they have, must first dispose of the blinders of envy. This comes through realizing the truth; no one chooses where they are born, but must use what they have to succeed in life.

In addition to opportunities, relationships are another key resource which many find themselves disgruntled about when not obtained. Though mothers, fathers, siblings and friends all feed our human need for socialization, no one necessarily has a perfect relationship. Naturally, there may be broken bonds in someone's life which leave them craving what they lose. Not having a good relationship with his mother, a young man goes astray chasing after women to acquire that female connection. Similarly, lacking a father, a young woman pursues abusive men hoping they will fill the void of a male presence in her life. These scenarios indicate a second blinder: insecurity. Being insecure and upset about the relationships they lack, a person can overlook and even lose those that they still have, leaving them truly lonely. To avoid this tragic outcome, they must look to those connections they still have and strengthen them even more. Also, finding an emotionally healthy alternative to terminated relationships can help to expand their interpersonal connections further.

Finally, time is the third and most valuable resource in a human being's possession which many wallow over in one respect or another. As Dr. Myles Munroe once said, *"There is one thing which every person has in common, and that is time."* Every opportunity and relationship is framed within the parameters of time. However, many squander what time they do have while desiring the glory of the future or reveling over the joys of the past. Being ungrateful for where they are in life, children longing only to grow up, lose out on the stress-free joys of early childhood. With older individuals, there is an opposite temptation to desire the return of earlier youthful days, a fruitless longing that wastes the years still ahead, since the past can never be relieved. Yet, by doing this, both groups are predisposing themselves to lose everything, simply because they are being restricted by the third blinder: ingratitude.

Ungratefulness for the time given, can lead to a disastrous waste of the experiences that make life enjoyable at every stage. To overcome the temptation of ungratefulness, everyone must learn to appreciate their current condition. By being thankful for, and investing energies and attention into the present, a person maximizes their time and is able to enjoy every moment of life. At the end of life, they will be able to look back with satisfaction and fulfillment, all because they focused on what they still had, and not what they lacked.

Every man, woman and child must manage what is in their possession, whether opportunities, relationships or time. As Matthew 13:12 states: *“Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”* Here, scripture shows us that it is the choice of the individual to use what they already have wisely and gain more by doing so, or to desire what they lack and lose what little they do have. Like plants, human beings do not control where they are planted or how much rain or sunlight they receive, but wherever we are, our instinct is to grow. We can allow ourselves to shoot up to the sky or stay stunted within the shadows by comparing ourselves to the surrounding trees. Ultimately, it is not our choice to be planted, but by breaking free from envy, insecurity and ingratitude, we choose how high we will grow.