

**Welcome to the  
Common Ground Café!**



**Sunday, January 14, 2024**

**Lullaby for the Restless Soul  
A Study of Psalm 131**

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As a child, what was the bedtime routine your parents set for you?  
Alternately, describe the bedtime routine you set for your kids.

In Psalm 131, the poet confessed that in the past he let ambitions rule his life. He compared his soul to an unruly child that needed to be quieted. Read Psalm 131.

In the Bible, we see two views of ambition:

What's **wrong** with ambition according to Galatians 5:19-21, Philippians 1:15-17, James 3:13-16?

What's **right** with ambition according to Ecclesiastes 9:10 and Daniel 1:17-20.

How can we reconcile the cautions against ambition with the encouragements to be ambitious?

### **Why We Should Wean Off of Selfish Ambition**

Pastor Tom suggested four consequences of letting selfish ambition rule our lives.

First: When ambition rules, it keeps us from simply enjoying our God-given talents.

Read Ecclesiastes 5:18. Why does this verse regard meaningful work as *rewarding*?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11. Is this the message from most speakers at graduation ceremonies or do they promote a different vision of a fulfilled life?

Second: When ambition rules, it can keep us from living a balanced life.

Pastor Tom said we need to see life as a pentathlon. In sports, what is a pentathlon? Can a competitor who excels at just one event expect to win the pentathlon?

The pentathlon of life includes work, family, church, community, and personal growth. If someone focuses just on work, how are the other four areas impacted?

Third: When ambition rules, it makes us jealously compare our lives with others.

When we measure our worth by achievements, how does that impact our relationships with those who become more successful than us? How does that impact our relationships with those who fail in the areas where we're successful?

Fourth: When ambition rules, it leads us to justify ethical compromises.

Read Proverbs 22:1. In light of prominent athletes, politicians, musicians, and screen stars, does the world tend to agree with this verse? Why should we prize *integrity* over power and riches?

### **How We Should Wean Off of Selfish Ambition**

In Matthew 18:1-4, Jesus said we would have to *change* in order to become like trusting children. Pastor Tom suggested four ways to change and wean ourselves from ungodly ambition. Use your sermon notes to fill in the blanks below.

First: Begin a personal \_\_\_\_\_ with God.

How is finding our identity and worth in God better than trying to find it in our achievements?

Second: Find ways to \_\_\_\_\_ what you're presently doing and what you presently have.

In "Soak Up the Sun," Sheryl Crow had a great line about finding peace: "It's not having what you want; it's wanting what you've got." What advice would you give someone who needs to learn contentment?

Third: Seek b\_\_\_\_\_. Pursue excellence in all areas of life.

In the “Pentathlon of Life” discussed earlier, which **one** of the five will you choose to improve this upcoming week? How?

Fourth: Make your \_\_\_\_\_ clear.

Mission statements are popular in business. How does a mission statement help a business make decisions and determine success? Could a mission statement help you in the same way? What’s your life’s mission?

### **Conclusion**

In Psalm 131, the poet ends by advising others to practice the trust and contentment he’s learned.

Are you at peace inside to the point that you could recommend following Christ as a path to inner peace?

How should gathering with this Life Group help us grow in trust and contentment?

Close with praise reports and prayer requests