

## **STUFF**

In 1981, comedian George Carlin debuted his observations on accumulating stuff. Carlin was a brilliant comedian with very funny insights on daily life, things that we often take for granted. Carlin had no use for religion and used explicit language in his comedy routines, but to say the least, he had a unique and often hilarious perspective on the daily life experience.

Carlin's main premise in his routine ***A Place For My Stuff*** is, "All you need in life, is a little place for your stuff." He adds that the purposes of our houses are places to keep our stuff. The more stuff that we accumulate, the bigger the houses that we need. When we go on vacation, we have to take our stuff with us. We have to decide on which of our stuff is really important, and pack it in our suitcases. Suitcases, by the way, are miniature versions of our houses: places to keep our stuff.

Carlin's musing about stuff continues for quite a while and I thought about his comments recently. As I was leaving for work one morning, and was about to get into my truck, I noticed that one of my CD's was lying on the ground by the driver's door. I thought maybe I had accidentally knocked it out as I exited the truck the night before. When I opened the door, I saw that the glove box and console was open and my "stuff" was scattered everywhere. I am not the brightest guy in the world but it didn't take me long to realize that someone had broken into my truck. Surprisingly, as I checked my stuff, I realized that nothing was missing. I texted my wife to inform her of what had happened, and she replied that her Suburban had been also be broken into. Just as in my case, none of her stuff was missing either.

Having our vehicles broken into is not that big of a surprise, it is not an unusual byproduct of living in a major metropolitan area. What was unusual was that nothing was taken. Not even the coins that filled my ashtray. While I felt good that nothing was missing, I felt a little sad that my stuff is not even worth stealing. The person had gone to the effort of getting into our vehicles and rifling through our stuff and then decided, "I don't want any of it." I must say, it is a bit humbling.

Humbling but not totally surprising. We have had the fortune or misfortune, depending on your perspective, of moving to different housing arrangements in the past 6-7 years. Each time, we have gotten rid of stuff. The last move was about a year and a half ago. We had a lot of stuff to give away including several pieces of furniture that

we no longer needed. I took a trailer load of stuff to donate to the Salvation Army only to be told, "We really can't use it, it doesn't really have enough value for the time needed to refurbish it." So we took it to the dump.

The long and short of it is: Not only is my stuff not good enough to steal, it is not even good enough to give away. Which brings me back to Carlin's assertion: "All you need in life, is a little place for your stuff." If all of life is focused on accumulating and keeping stuff then I have done a poor job because my stuff has no real value to it.

Mathew 6:19-20 says: "***Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.***

I have a God that loves me and forgives me. A family and friends that support me, that love me, and laugh with me and sometimes at me. And I have a church family that does all of the listed above. When you have that, who needs stuff anyway?

Jeff