

# God's Bucket List



by Ken Proctor

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In 2007, Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman secured “the bucket list” permanently into our mainstream cultural lexicon in a movie by the same name. Two terminally ill men determine to accomplish everything on a long, carefully considered list of things they’ve wanted to try, or see, or do before they “kicked the bucket” but had never before made the time. Until each of them discovered that time was, for them, running out. So, with list in hand, the two set out to do what they wanted—experience the thrills, view the world’s wonders, enjoy life’s boundless pleasures—and, one by one, they tick each item from the list as their lifetimes tick away.

We hear it all the time now, someone exclaiming, “Oh, that’s definitely on my bucket list,” or, “Ah, that sounds like something I should add to my bucket list.” A clever new way of expressing a universal human condition. From infancy we are predisposed, our brains seemingly hardwired to think in terms of “what I want.” Ask anyone you meet what they want and most folks, young and old, alike, begin rattling off a long list. They don’t even have to think long and hard because the list is always there, ever present on our minds. Over time, the list changes; old desires drop away, new items get added at the bottom, or the list shuffles to reflect our evolving priorities. But there is always a list. The list of what we want.

In another movie, *Gladiator*, Russell Crowe, playing a great commander of Rome’s armies, asks his servant, Cicero, “What do you want?” The servant’s response is illustrative. “Sometimes, I do what *I* want to do. Most of the time I do what I must do.” While he obviously loves his master, his life as a bond servant is largely defined by his master, or by his servitude. His will is subservient to another’s will, his time is not his own to do as he pleases, to go where he likes, or to choose his own lifepath. His bucket list is overshadowed by his master’s.

Scripture enjoins us to have a servant’s heart, for we are bondservants of God. Many fine books have been penned by learned men and women over the centuries on that topic alone. In a nut shell, however, it all boils down to whose bucket list we are living our lives by. Our list? Or the master’s? And who’s will takes priority. My will? Or His?

Too often we hear ourselves and others say, “I want \_\_\_\_\_,” and we fill in the blank from our own lists rather than asking, “Lord, what would you have me do?” and having sought His will, answering, “Here am I, Lord. Send me.”

Psalm 37:4–5 says it best.

*“Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your ways to the Lord, trust also in Him and He will do it. And He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noonday.”*

This could be loosely translated, “Make His bucket list your bucket list, and along the way, the Lord will give you joy, both in this life and the next.”

**Try this:** Imagine standing before God on His high throne holding a small tin pail full of strips of paper, each strip inscribed with an “I want\_\_\_\_\_.” Now imagine tipping the bucket to let the scraps of paper flutter to the floor behind you, then holding out your empty pail for God to fill. A single bit of parchment appears there. On its face you read, “Feed my sheep.” So you do, each day finding new and creative ways to use the gifts, talents, and resources God has blessed you with, to bless others. From time to time, a new parchment scrap flutters down to land in your bucket, each an aspect of God’s will, or more specific duties as He has need; God entrusting an important task to a willing servant (that’s you) who discovers joy in partnering with Him to accomplish His will. And the joy is reward enough. Still, imagine from time to time, a paper strip flutters down, too, saved from the throne room floor by a loving King... who, having gathered up your scraps, has added them to His own bucket, to return to his good and faithful servant (that’s you, again), in this life or the next.

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” James Elliot, Evangelist/Missionary/Martyr

**Ken Proctor**, author, writes from his country home in Vancouver, Washington. Ken has recently rereleased *Magi*, the second book in his *Christmas Stocking Stuffer* series, and completed the third book, *Away from the Manger* (Christmas, 2018). Ken is currently penning “*Digits*,” an end times thriller drawn from scriptural prophesies overlaid with corresponding current events... and possible outcomes. Watch for news at: [KenProctorAuthor.com](http://KenProctorAuthor.com).

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A friend of Spirit Driven Leadership introduced Ken Proctor to us because Ken has a gift of communicating valuable lessons through stories and poetry. Fortunately, Spirit Driven Leadership has the wonderful opportunity to bring to our audience Ken's work. This material will come primarily in the form of articles, poems, short stories, lyrics and books.

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