

## CAUGHT OFF GUARD

I have thought of Elaine and myself as being mid-range people in life, i.e. clothing, vehicles, restaurants, vacations and so forth. It's been a purposeful principle of life.

However, this notion was just put to the test. We were considering replacing our 2014 Toyota RAV4 with one with a power liftgate because the present one is getting pretty heavy for Elaine.

I found one nearby that seemed to be everything we wanted. It was a 2018 AWD with only 13,000 miles. It had highway safety features that are fitting for an 80-year-old, and other options that we liked. It was the perfect shade of red and the price was a couple thousand less than I expected. But - -.

After driving it I noticed that the interior was plainer than our '14. Plain black instead of black and grey, and lacking several things like textured door panels that would make it looker nicer. It was more like the base model.

Well, "no big deal" I thought - - except that suddenly it was a big deal and it caught me off-guard. It was everything we wanted and if the interior had been like our '14 I would have bought it on the spot.

My reaction contradicted who I thought myself to be, and I struggled to understand that as we talked on the way home. It moved me to search my heart about other areas where I might be deceiving myself. As Jer. 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

In Mt. 5:8 Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." I want to see God and be part of what He is doing in our chaotic Day, and that requires a pure heart. And I want to be "poor" (humble, devout) in spirit as in v3, which opens the Kingdom of God to me and is more fulfilling than any car interior could ever be.

God graciously offers us opportunities to repent and to turn our eyes and hearts toward Him, and I'm grateful for this one. "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me - -." (Psa. 139:23a) "What does this little drama tell me about me, and where else am I self-deceived?"

This is not about car interiors. It is about self-deception and about why we need nice things.

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