



We all desire to achieve the best in life. In striving to achieve the best, we get the best education which leads to a well-paying job. Once employed, we then have the opportunity to accomplish our dreams. Whether it is purchasing our own home, buying a new car, starting our own business, or traveling extensively, our objective is the same ... be the best in life and achieve the best in life. However, in the Christian's pursuit for these earthly treasures, we sometimes become side-tracked.

When we get so caught up in attaining "things", our spiritual vision becomes blurred. While we are fervently seeking how to gratify our lusts we're missing out on a superb opportunity to seek the One who is the giver of these things. The Bible declares that all that we think is important and labor to achieve will pass away; it will not last:

I John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

I John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

Please bear in mind that attaining wealth and material possessions is not sinful. It is when they take the place of God in our lives that we offend and hurt God. Wealth, power and fame all come from God and must be kept in their proper perspective. It is God first, then whatever else you regard as important. As a matter of fact, if you put God first, you won't even have to work as hard as you do to achieve the thing which is important to you.

God promises to bless you when you seek Him first. He desires us to prosper and be in health even as our soul prospers. When we worship things, instead of the One who made those things, that's when we have crossed over to idolatry. "For be sure of this, that no person who is covetous (who has lustful desire for the property of others and is greedy for gain) for he (in effect) is and IDOLATER and has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Ephesians 5:5 – Amplified).

It is important to note that whatever or whomever occupies most of your time or dominates your thoughts is who your god is. God warns, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3). In God's Word, we learn some of the pitfalls of many Christians. They are:

- * lust of the flesh (craving for sensual gratification)
- * lust of the eyes (greedy longings of mind)
- * pride of life (assurance in one's own resources or in the stability of earthly things (I John 2:16 – Amplified)

"...These do not come from the Father but are from the world (itself). And the world passes away and disappears, and with it the forbidden cravings (the passionate desires, the lust) of it, but he who does the will of God and carries out His purposes in his life abides (remains) forever" (I John 2:16a-17 – Amplified).

The meaning of life. We're all searching for it, but what is it, really? According to Heidi Kole, author of *The Subway Diaries*, it's about finding your passion. "The thing you can do every day that makes you smile – it can be more than one thing, but that's what life is all about," says Heidi.

Heidi found her passion in what some may call an odd place, the subways of New York City. Heidi has been driven by music her entire life. A singer, songwriter, actress, and stunt woman, among other talents, Heidi found her true calling among the underground trains of the city, performing music for the people who come and go in and out of the city by the minute. Driven to the underground by her friend and physical therapist after a rather debilitating accident, Heidi experienced a change as a person and as a musician, "I left something there when I performed, which kept me coming back. I felt completely at peace, completely free. Then I realized what left was my ego. You gotta check your ego before you can play down there."

In her book, Heidi gives a personal look at the subculture of the subway musicians to anyone who may wonder what goes on underground. "People make a lot of assumptions about people playing underground," she tells me, "a lot of people think 'Oh, these poor homeless people,' or 'Why aren't they in bars or clubs playing?'" and her book gives an insider's look that this is not always the case.

For Heidi, she has performed in multiple venues before heading underground; from cruise ships to off Broadway, national tours to TV and film and loving them all. Yet it was underground that Heidi found what she was searching for artistically; a truth and a passion that she now carries over into all of her artistic endeavors on stage, film, television, and radio. "Being underground is one of the last places an artist can be an artist and do what they want. I can create my own world, my universe, daily. The trains give me a place to be free." Performing in the subway subculture provides its own set of adventures unique to performing anywhere else in the world. A big thrill for Heidi is finding the right spot. Finding an area where enough people are coming and going is a challenge and adventure of its own. While musicians do perform for money, which would dictate a crucial spot full of people, it's not just the money that drives Heidi to find the perfect spot and play her best. Actually touching someone is more meaningful than the money. "Hearing someone say 'you've changed my day' or 'I missed my train or got off the train because I heard your voice' means so much more than a dollar. It completes my day."

When asked if she had any advice for newcomers to the subway music scene, Heidi says when you first go down, commit yourself to a certain amount of time and actually stay for the amount of time you've committed to. Know that some days will be better than others. "Playing in the subways can at first be very intimidating, so take notice of where other musicians play and find a spot where you are comfortable and mostly don't worry about what anyone may be thinking. Sing what you love and with conviction and it will convey" She also advises to always bring water and make sure you use the bathroom before you start. There are no bathrooms underground and once you find a spot you like you definitely don't want to leave it.

When talking to Heidi, it is evident that this is her true passion in life and she is very in love with the music happening underground in the subway stations, "I often find myself on the platforms feeling that if I died right now, I'd die happy. That's what happens when you're living your truth, in anything."

The *Subway Diaries* can be found at all online outlets and is available for all eReaders. It can also be found at the Barnes and Noble on 14th Street Union Square and several stores in Hell's Kitchen, as well as the Transit Museum at Grand Central Station and Politics and Prose in Washington, D.C. Or, you can visit her website to order an autographed copy. Follow Heidi on Twitter at HeidiKole and on Facebook at HeidiKole or SubwayDiaries.

written by
RACHEL PORTO

