

chapters of Luke's Gospel wouldn't do any harm). It is simply that many of our ways of enjoying ourselves are actually destructive, bringing about more misery than happiness.

What we often end up doing is worshipping the god of family or television or food or alcohol or sex. All these things are right and good in their place. All have a real part to play in most of our lives. But when we elevate any of them to the highest position then we experience a few days of selfish over-indulgence, followed by a time of miserable recovery, then an increased sense of emptiness and pointlessness as life begins again after the New Year.

Why not get our priorities right? Learn to spend time in God's presence. Learn to receive his love and forgiveness. Learn to accept others as he accepts us. Learn to make our whole lives, not just Christmas, celebrations of love, goodness and generosity.

**Donald Allister
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A gift with real meaning

In a remote village in Central America the word got out among the peoples of the region that one of the American missionaries that had served this country for many years was about to return to the US to live out the remaining years of her life.

The nationals desired to honour her for her years of service with a public time of appreciation. News of the event went to all parts of the country in which the missionary was known to the people. One very old and very poor man walked to the ceremony over mountainous terrain for four days to bring his gift to the missionary.

The gift consisted of two coconuts, but it was all the man had. The missionary recognized the man as coming from the remote village in the mountains. "Brother, I cannot believe that you would walk so far to present me with this gift," said the missionary to the man.

His response? "Long walk part of gift."



Cancel that card!

Millions of people are putting themselves at risk of identity fraud by failing to cancel their old credit cards, according to recent research from online credit report and ID fraud alert provider MyCallcredit.

On average, people in the UK hold 2.3 personal credit and charge cards, but 35 per cent of these are dormant. MyCallcredit says: "This means more than 10 million Britons may have credit facilities registered in their names which are open to theft by an ID fraudster who would be able to run up bills without their knowledge."

Cutting up a credit or charge card is not good enough to prevent your ID and credit file being stolen by a fraudster. You need to inform the lender that you no longer want the facility.