

In the modern world, marked by unprecedented advancements in technology, wealth, and convenience, there is an ever-growing challenge for Christians: how to live in a world that pulls us toward material attachments and yet remain focused on our relationship with God. The concept of detachment, deeply rooted in Scripture and the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, is as relevant today as it was in the early centuries of Christianity. Through the lens of three key passages—**Wisdom 7:7-11**, **Psalm 90:12-17**, and **Mark 10:17-30**—we can explore the necessity of detachment in our pursuit of God.

Wisdom 7:7-11 — The Superiority of Divine Wisdom

The Book of Wisdom speaks profoundly about the value of **wisdom** over all material wealth. Solomon prays for wisdom and recognizes its superiority to all temporal goods: “I preferred her to scepters and thrones, and I accounted wealth as nothing in comparison with her” (Wis 7:8). This passage reminds us that **true fulfillment comes not from material possessions, but from divine wisdom**. This wisdom teaches us to see beyond the fleeting pleasures of this world and direct our hearts toward eternal goods.

The **Fathers of the Church** also emphasized this perspective. St. Augustine, in his “Confessions,” spoke of the futility of worldly pleasures in satisfying the soul’s deepest desires, stating that “our hearts are restless until they rest in You, O Lord.” Augustine’s conversion was a journey from attachment to the world—its pleasures, honors, and ambitions—toward a full surrender to divine wisdom. He recognized that detachment from worldly things was necessary for the soul to fully attach itself to God.

Psalm 90:12-17 — The Brevity of Life

Psalm 90 calls upon the faithful to seek wisdom in recognizing the brevity of life: "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Ps 90:12). This prayer acknowledges that life is short, and without divine wisdom, we can easily squander our days on fleeting pursuits. **Detachment** in this context means understanding that time is limited and that our true purpose lies not in accumulating wealth or status, but in living wisely in the light of eternity.

St. Gregory of Nyssa, commenting on this Psalm, spoke of the need to **detach from temporal concerns** in order to orient the soul toward the eternal. He explained that the soul, distracted by the material world, is like an athlete weighed down by unnecessary burdens. Only by shedding these burdens can the soul run freely toward God. Gregory emphasized that this wisdom—recognizing the fleeting nature of earthly life—leads to **greater spiritual freedom**.

Mark 10:17-30 — The Rich Young Man

The Gospel of Mark recounts the encounter between Jesus and the rich young man, who desires to inherit eternal life but is unwilling to detach from his wealth. Jesus tells him, "Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (Mark 10:21). The young man's inability to part with his possessions illustrates how material attachments can hinder one’s relationship with God.

The **Church Fathers** saw this passage as a clear call to **radical detachment**. St. John Chrysostom, in his homilies, emphasized that wealth, while not inherently evil, becomes a spiritual obstacle when it takes precedence over our love for God. He warned that attachment to riches chains the soul, preventing it from rising toward God. For Chrysostom, the rich young man's sorrowful departure symbolizes the sadness that comes from clinging to worldly things rather than seeking true joy in God.

Detachment in the Modern World

In today's world, the struggle with material attachments has intensified. While wealth, possessions, and status have always been temptations, **technology has introduced new forms of distraction**. Social media, entertainment, and the constant barrage of information have created an environment where we are always connected to the world but often disconnected from God. Studies show that excessive use of technology, especially social media, can lead to anxiety, depression, and a sense of isolation—conditions that can spiritually suffocate us.

Recent research from the **American Psychological Association** has highlighted the negative impact of overuse of technology on mental health, especially among younger generations. Constant engagement with screens can create an artificial sense of fulfillment, distracting people from the deeper needs of the soul. This mirrors the spiritual dangers posed by material wealth, as seen in the story of the rich young man. Just as wealth can weigh down the soul, so too can technology if it becomes an idol that dominates our lives.

However, just as Jesus told the young man that “with God, all things are possible” (Mark 10:27), the path to detachment is not one of despair. The Church Fathers offer a vision of hope: **through prayer, the sacraments, and the pursuit of wisdom**, we can begin to detach from the world and grow closer to God. St. Basil the Great encouraged Christians to practice **regular times of silence and withdrawal**, detaching themselves from distractions in order to listen to the voice of God more clearly. In our own time, this advice applies directly to our relationship with technology.

Detachment as the Path to Union with God

In summary, the readings from **Wisdom 7:7-11**, **Psalms 90:12-17**, and **Mark 10:17-30** invite us to consider the importance of **detachment from the world** in order to attach ourselves more fully to God. The wisdom of the Fathers of the Church, along with modern studies, reinforce the idea that attachments—whether to wealth, power, or technology—can prevent us from pursuing our ultimate goal: eternal life with God. In a world filled with distractions, we are called to follow the example of the saints, who found true peace and fulfillment by seeking first the Kingdom of God. Detachment is not about renouncing all possessions, but about ordering our lives in such a way that **God is our highest priority**. When we do this, we are freed from the chains of worldly distractions and can live in the wisdom and grace of God.