



THE NOBLE HEART™

Answering the Two Big Questions

October 7, 2009 eLetter

There is something we love to offer; some particular, powerful way that we see, hear and/or perceive. When we are aware and clear on what we have to offer (our glory: brilliance, strength, beauty, splendor, abundance) we can be far more discerning as to what opportunities we are to take or what tasks we need to release. We know how God has gifted us and whether our glory is needed in a certain situation. When we are clear about who we are and what we have to offer, we are not as easily seduced by the needs, predicaments, urgings, prodding's and manipulations of others.

The glory of our life answers the question, "**What do I have to offer?**" As we gain clarity about our glory another question arises, "**Toward what end, what purpose, what cause?**"

Many people begin the pursuit of their calling by looking for a cause that they can give themselves to... and eventually find themselves living a life that is far from the desires of their heart. It is unhelpful to start with a "cause". We must instead pursue the **discovery** and **development** of the glory of our life. Too many people have allowed their life to be contained, limited and defined by a "cause," only to find that the very thing that energized their life, was now draining the life out of them. How often have we entered into a cause with excitement and passion, only to leave burned out and resentful? You see, our life is far bigger than any job, position or cause – these kind of positions are simply places of contribution... these causes touch who we are, but they don't *define* us.

The genesis of a personal cause

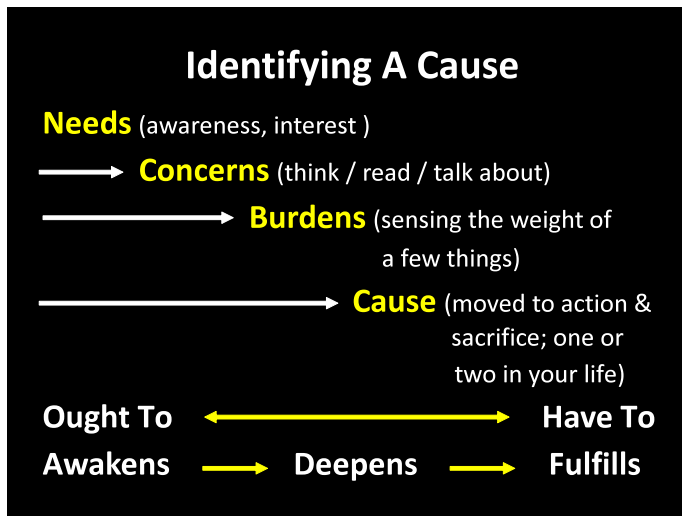
We live in a day and age of massive exposure to the needs of the world. If we pay attention to the conditions of our surroundings, if we read or listen to the news or if we watch any educational shows, we are aware of a myriad of needs. Some needs grab our interest, while others do not.

Out of the needs that we take interest in, some can evolve into concerns – things that we occasionally think about, read about and talk about. But these concerns are still too numerous and distant from our heart to really act on or do anything about.

However, a few of these concerns will become burdens – things which for some of us, will carry an undeniable and profound weight. Burdens create a yearning or demand that someone do something concerning the issue. The heart can only carry a few real burdens.

One or two of these burdens will reveal themselves as "our cause" – something that we cannot escape, nor do we want to - at a deep level. A personal cause cries out, "I have to do something about this!"

rather than, “Someone ought to do something about this.” This burden goes beyond just reading, thinking and talking about the need. It goes beyond sensing the weightiness of it. The burden becomes compelling – something we must do, something we structure our life around, something that we will sacrifice for, something that will give us a directional heading.



Let me make this more personal. (Needs) I am constantly reminded about the corruption, arrogance and foolishness that permeate many governing institutions. I am deeply aware of the brokenness and bondage of the human heart and the corresponding deception and despair that reigns over people’s lives. I am conscious of the financial plight we are getting ourselves into as a nation. I notice the irresponsible and damaging ways that we manage the environment. I am mindful of the dangerous and hideous things that are occurring around the world.

(Concerns) I find myself paying special attention to anything that touches on the potential of the human heart – books, articles, movies, speakers – from a biblical world-view standpoint. I love to read or hear about people who (often unnoticed by others or even themselves) offered what they saw, knew, imagined or could do and in so doing really *changed* things.

(Burdens) I am unsettled by the diminishment, dismissal and side-lining of individuals who carry the image and glory of God – be it through the relentless assault of the world and Satan or the abuse and abandonment of people. I am disturbed by the quick-fix teaching and counsel about calling that ultimately disheartens people, distancing them from God. I absolutely love when I see the glimmer of the vein of gold that runs through a person’s life, but more importantly, when they recognize and own the glory of their life.

(Cause) I love and am compelled to help people recover their heart, walk with God, interpret their life, offer their glory, and persevere with joy. I want to “spur [others] on toward love and good deeds” (Heb. 10:24), “warn[ing] those who are idle, encourage[ing] the timid, help[ing] the weak.” (1 Thess. 5:14) I know that my impact is limited, so I want to come alongside others who are compelled to do the same.

(Calling/Glory) I am to do this by bringing clarity, focus, design and intentionality to others.

Writing my progression through “needs, concerns, burdens and cause” took quite a bit of time and fighting-through for me, surprisingly. But spending time with this progression brought me some valuable clarity. Let me encourage you to try it yourself.

Your inquisitive friend,

Gary