



# THE NOBLE HEART™

## Aware and Alert

November 18, 2009 eLetter

I just came back from a Pheasant Hunt Retreat in South Dakota. While there, the God of “wisdom and revelation” opened the “eyes of my heart” (Eph. 1:17, 18) to see the deeper reality of a particular moment.

We were walking through a field, 26-men wide, with loaded shotguns in hand and dogs scouring the tall grass in front of us. As we stopped our march for a moment to shore up the line, I looked on my right and left and took in the scene. It dawned on me that what we were experiencing in this transitory moment was a glimpse into the often unseen reality of life.

As in that moment, life is a combination of peril and prospect. Each man had to be aware and alert of the potential threat he held in his hands and that surrounded him (every man had a loaded shotgun). More importantly, each man had to be acutely aware and alert to opportunities that could quickly present themselves (pheasants).

“Be careful how you live”, scripture says, “not as fools but as those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days. Don’t act thoughtlessly, but try to understand what the Lord wants you to do.” (Eph. 5:15-17 NLT) There it is – peril (evil days), prospect (every opportunity), aware and alert (be careful).

Are there levels of awareness and alertness? You bet – from being asleep to dazed to fully wide awake.

Jesus gave a stern, loving warning that we are not to be like those whose “heart...has become dull, they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts...” (Matt. 13:15)

Col. Jeff Cooper developed a Color Code of Awareness for self-defense and combat which I have found helpful in assessing my state of awareness and alertness. There are 4 states – White, Yellow, Orange and Red.

In the “White” state or condition, a person is foolishly unaware, unprepared and relaxed when it comes to potential peril or prospect – oblivious to the people around them, their heart, to the enemy and God. This is a foolish state of living. If an opportunity or opponent shows up, it is too large a mental and spiritual jump to take it on.

In the “Yellow” state or condition, a person is aware and alert to any possibilities. They take in their surroundings with eyes that see, ears that hear and an awakened heart. There is no present threat or opportunity, but they are looking for it, ready to move into “Condition Orange” or “Red”. A person in this state knows that God is always working <sup>(John 5:17)</sup> and that our adversary is always prowling <sup>(1 Peter 5:8)</sup>. “Condition Yellow” is where we must live – where we live wisely, making the most of our time.

“Condition Orange” is a state in which we are aware of a present threat or opportunity. We are in evaluation, situational development mode. In physical terms, it noticing a man who is watching you and now walking across the street toward you. All your alarms are going off, the potential danger is there and you are prepared to take action if necessary – fight or flight. In spiritual terms, you sense the movement of the enemy who comes only to steal and kill and destroy or you sense the movement of God who comes to bring life for you and through you to others <sup>(John 10:10)</sup>. With either scenario, you are ready to take action, to move into “Condition Red”.

In “Condition Red”, we are in the moment, in the battle, in the sweat-spot; we follow-through with the assessment and decision that we made in “Condition Orange”. It’s “go-time”.

This year, for our 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, I took Leigh to Sonoma, California. As Leigh was getting ready, I drove to a gas station to fill up the car. As I was driving I asked the Lord if there were any potential threats to our time. I heard “agitation”, “frustration” and “offense.” So, I prayed the Kingdom of God over our marriage, our travel and our time together. I was moved from “Condition Yellow” to “Condition Orange”. Sure enough, by the time we picked up our rental car, we had experienced all three and weren’t speaking to each other. Elevating to “Condition Red”, we disarmed the attack through conversation and apology and resisted the adversary with the blood and name of Christ. After that, we had a beautiful time together of romance and celebration. Peril and prospect.

Winston Churchill said, “There is a special moment when a person is figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to do a very special thing, unique to him and fitted to his talent; what a tragedy if that moment finds him unprepared or unqualified for the work which would have been his finest hour.”

Let us be aware and alert for our finest hours,

Gary