



THE NOBLE HEART™

Getting Our Legs Back

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Disappointment and joy seem to be the thematic elements of life. There must be disappointment, because life is not the way it was originally created to be. There must be joy because not all was lost in the fall of mankind and the Kingdom of God is here. The denial or dominance of disappointment or joy does not make the other non-existent.

There are times when I am so down and disappointed that my friends and family have to remind me that not all is lost, darkness has not overtaken the world, God is real and benevolently intervening. When I am in that self-sustained state of disappointment, I tend to disdain, disbelieve and distance myself from any expressions of happiness, joy, laughter, lightness and fun. People who view life as essentially disappointing are more consoling than encouraging or life-giving.

I have observed others who dogmatically push a singular, overriding state of joy, denying the existence of valid disappointment. They tend to be very careful with their conversations and experiences in order for their delicate world view not to be harmed. They tend to be thrown off by the slightest hardship and to be dismissive, if not harsh, with the hardships of others.

Usually, our view and ability to handle life as it really is has far more to do with our past experiences (personal theology) than with truth (biblical theology). Our view of life has everything to do with how we respond to situations and circumstances – and ultimately our heart.

From years of conversations and personal experience, I have observed that most of us have been significantly wounded by a ministry or a person in ministry. There may have been an opportunity that we were not invited into or that was taken away from us. There may have been a person of relational or positional significance that mistreated or betrayed us. Whatever the case may be, it went deep and destructive. It pushed every button and created a few. The level of disappointment was heartbreaking because, after all, a ministry wouldn't treat people like this. Non-believers...ok, but God's people? So, we become fearful, fatalistic and frozen. So many are stuck in life, not because they lack clarity or ability or opportunity, but because they have never gotten over some significant disappointment in their past.

Something gets released in big disappointments and it looks for a place to land, burrow down into our heart and defile. This is why God warns us, "See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many." (Heb. 12:14)

Bonnie Gray wrote in her blog, Faith Barista, about the block-buster movie, Avatar: "The protagonist in the movie, Jake, led an ordinary life as a soldier. Then, Jake lost his legs in battle and gained the chance of a lifetime to dive into a new body and start fresh on an uncharted planet...It's no surprise the film's a blockbuster hit. The storyline's lifted straight out of the pages of our personal journals. Somewhere along our earthly travels, we've all lost the use of our legs, on the battlefields of life. These are the legs to our passions."

"We've all lost the use of our legs, on the battlefield of life. These are the leg to our passions." What a great and true line. Most of us have been wounded by a ministry or someone in ministry and have lost our ability to walk into the passions or desires that God has written on our heart. We can become paralyzed by the toxins of bitterness.

I know what this feels like. Honestly. We think, "I'm not going to set myself up for disappointment like that again", "it's just not worth it" or "it never work's for me". The greatest danger is what this say's about the One to whom we have given our life and destiny, because ultimately it's the realities of our faith in God that will determine the way we approach life.

In CS Lewis' book, A Grief Observed, Lewis writes: "Not that I am (I think) in much danger of ceasing to believe in God. The real danger is of coming to believe such dreadful things about Him. The conclusion I dread is not 'So there's no God after all,' but 'So this is what God's really like. Deceive yourself no longer.'"

We must rid our self of the toxins from past wounds that have paralyzed us. We must get our legs back and walk into our God-given desires and place in this world. We can continue to live in the world of "if only" whose culture is one of being fearful, fatalistic and frozen or we can live in the uncharted world of "but now" filled with disappointment and joy.

Perhaps this is why Paul wrote, "we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid (fainthearted), help the weak, be patient with everyone" (1 Thess. 5:14) and Isaiah wrote, "Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; your God will come...'" (Isa. 35:3, 4)

Choosing the world of "but now" where we have legs with which to run,

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