



THE NOBLE HEART™

Letting the “Good” Get the Best of You March 24, 2010 eLetter

Last week a friend called me asking if I would do a quick diagnosis of his life as he put his current “x-ray imagery” in front of me. There were a couple obvious abnormalities that I was aware of during our conversation. First, he said that he felt exhausted most of the time and shared that the things he used to love doing, he now had little desire for. He then explained how he would continue to work when he got home, not being able to turn his “work mind” off. He realized that though he was surrounded by people day and night he was becoming more emotionally isolated, anger was becoming a frequent companion, and though circumstantially everything looked good with his marriage, family, surroundings and work, he felt only discouragement.

From what I could see, my friend suffered from heart fatigue. He had put major mileage on his life without checking his heart fluid level. The engine of his life, his heart, was about to seize. As Proverbs 4:23 says, “Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.” (NLT)

There wasn’t a thing that I said to him that he didn’t already know. He just felt like he couldn’t change his direction and speed. What came to me as we were talking was 2 Peter 2:19, “By what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.” When we are overcome by something, it has gotten the best of us and we have yielded to it. We are familiar with the power of sin to enslave us, but are often unaware of the power of “good things” getting the best of us.

This was one of those conversations where I realized that I was talking to two people – one on each end of the phone. My friend’s story sounded uncomfortably familiar.

I have also been struggling to let go of my work responsibilities in the evenings and the weekends. I love what I do and what I do is in-line with who I am, but this relationship (me and my work) has started to feel unhealthy. My family tries to help me with this imbalance by telling me “work is over for the day” or for the weekend, but I had found myself sneaking away for brief moments with my work. I couldn’t sit still unless I was in my work. Like my friend, I felt like I couldn’t change direction or speed and there was a part of me (perhaps the best part of me) that was getting overtaken – my intimacy with God, my family and friends.

I recommended to my friend that he take time to fast from work for a while to break its unhealthy power over him – quickly admitting to him that I was prescribing this for myself as well. Fasting is such a powerful and necessary thing – whether it be from food, drink, shopping, media, talking, company, etc.

So, here I am in the middle of my “work-fast” writing this eLetter. I’m once again caught between the value of journaling and the need to fast from work. Oh well, it’s little-by-little I guess...

That we may be free in every way,

Gary