

A Personal Story of Brokenness

Bill Loveless

I was spending time with the Lord this morning, and I feel that He is leading me to share with you a personal brokenness event that happened in late February. I have told some of you about it personally, but I sense that the Lord wants me to share the event with all of you who are a part of our support family.

I shared with many of you at our supporters' meetings about the struggle that I was having in the area of saying "Yes" to every open door for ministry, which resulted in me becoming exhausted two times last year. For those of you who could not attend those meetings, the short story is that around January 2006 I started moving from being a "steward" of this ministry to an "owner" of it. The ministry was subtly becoming more important than the God of this ministry. There were several doors of opportunity that opened to me, and I believed that every one of them was of God. I was so convinced of it that I forgot to get before Him and to find out if they truly were of Him. As a result, by the month of May I was "spent". The Lord spoke to me through that exhaustion and reminded me that taking ownership of His work can only lead to exhaustion and misery. At the time, I thought that I clearly understood that message. I recuperated during the summer and felt recharged for the fall. However, once again I got caught up in the fast moving river of ministry and got overloaded. In early December the Lord was again speaking through the exhaustion. I thought by being transparent with you at our supporters' meetings and by bringing my two board members in for closer accountability that the situation was truly going to be under God's control. I thought that I was free from taking ownership of this ministry. However, I was soon to find out that there was a greater problem.

Early this year I planned a seminar in San Antonio for the purpose of teaching the "Key To Abundant Living" small group curriculum and scheduled it for February 24th. Two weeks prior to the seminar my sleep seemed to get shorter every night. By the week prior to the seminar, I was waking up at 2:30 a.m., and I could not go back to sleep. On the day before the seminar I was again in a state of exhaustion. However, even in this exhausted state I still thought that I could get enough rest during the day and could still teach the next day. My mind was thinking "move," but my body could not move. It was like turning on the ignition of your car, leaving it in PARK, and pushing the gas pedal all the way to the floor! It was a lot of horsepower going nowhere! God made it very clear that He was calling off the seminar, but I didn't get it. I told the Lord, "You have to come through. I have 40 people coming. The camera and cameraman are all set up. It has to happen." But God's response remained the same. At that point I realized it was over. There was not going to be a seminar. Some of our gracious volunteers contacted attendees to let them know of the cancellation. On the following day I got away and spent two days with the Lord. I sought Him diligently to reveal to me what I was missing. He graciously revealed to me that the larger problem other than taking ownership of the ministry was that I was "driven." Not only was I driven, but I was addicted to drivenness! The Lord opened my eyes to the fact that I have been that way most of my life. I am sure that none of you who know me are surprised by this revelation from the Lord, but I just couldn't see it. This has been such a natural part of my life for so many years that it has been like breathing. The Lord brought to my mind event after event that exposed and proved my addiction. On one hand I was teaching rest and on the other hand I was living a driven life.

I thought that God surely would not allow me to continue in ministry because of this problem. After all, He had warned me twice before he slammed the door on my fingers! I decided to place

the ministry on the altar. I told the Lord, "If you want to take it, it is Yours." What I got in response was, "Bill, it has been Mine all along, but that is not the point. What I have you doing is not about ministry. I don't want ministry from you. I want YOU! I want you in a deep, personal intimacy with Me. That is all I have ever wanted. I am simply using this ministry to bring you to Myself. I knew what you would do, and now you see it. Now you know how it has grieved Me that you thought ministry about Me was more important than Me. I don't want you to get out of ministry. I want you to have a personal, intimate relationship with Me, and then ministry will come from the overflow of our relationship." As the Lord began to open my eyes in a deeper way that what He truly desires is relationship, all I can say is that "once I was blind, but now I see."

I am still not sure what all is behind the drivenness, but I trust the Lord to reveal it in His perfect timing. The addiction is still very real, but, in His grace and mercy, I am recognizing more quickly the death of it when I start down that path. In just a few short weeks He has begun to move my focus away from ministry and more onto Him. As a result I believe that the Lord has ministered through me much more powerfully than ever before. He continually gives me a visual image of me standing before Him in eternity. As I see myself standing before Him, it reinforces what He is revealing in a deeper way that it will always be about an intimate relationship with Him. After all, this walk that we are on is all about a Person and not a program, a ministry, or an agenda, etc. I am also now beginning to experience His rest on the other side of my death to the drivenness. It is a rest that I have longed for but which up to this point has often eluded me. As I begin to enter into a deeper rest in Him, I now understand in a greater way that this God within all of us is a God Who loves us, Who desires us, and Who will stop at nothing to bring us to Himself.

Therefore, as difficult as it has been to write you this letter, I trust that the Lord will somehow use it for some divine purpose in your life. I pray for you that the Lord will expose any lie and/or deception that you may have within yourself that moves you away from continuously being at His feet and at the foot of His cross.

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