

Rock Solid Renewable Rhythm

BLOG

May 2011 – I've got a question for you. An important one. Really important.

You've heard of a BHAG, right? But how about a BHAQ? A big hairy audacious QUESTION.

Here it is: Is it possible to be more passionate, more energized, and more productive for the Kingdom...*a year from now?*

Read it once more.

Just between you and me, what's your knee-jerk reaction to the question?

Truth be told, my gut response the first time such a question was tossed over the fence into my backyard was a combination of "are you crazy?!" and "what are you smoking?!"

If you dim the lights, close the blinds, and run the game film of my life, there are a ton of seasons where simply SURVIVING seemed like success. And if you replayed countless conversations with those whom I have teamed with through the years, my counsel has often been about creating a SUSTAINABLE approach to life and leadership.

Which leads me to my mea culpa: I was wrong.

...the single biggest threat to our own wellbeing tends to be ourselves. Without even giving it much thought, we allow our short-term decisions to override what's best for our long-term wellbeing.

–Tom Rath and Jim Harter

Here's the deal. In God's economy, He calls us beyond mere survival. He calls us beyond scraping together a life that is simply sustainable. He call us, better yet, He invites us into what I like to refer to as a RENEWABLE RHYTHM of life and leadership.

Need a little convincing? Need to kick the tires? If so, sit in and soak up the words of Jesus Himself. (Consider reading these words slowly and audibly).

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to Me. Get away with Me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with Me and work with Me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with Me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

How do you respond to the words of Jesus? If you are like me, it is something along the lines of "Yes! That's it. That's what I'm talking about. Sign me up! I want to learn to live freely and lightly. THAT'S the rhythm of life I'm seeking."

One of the themes of my personal journey is to lean more and more into THIS way of life. And in this current chapter of my life, as I walk this pathway, I have an ever-deepening friendship with three faithful companions—three spiritual practices. At the end of the day, these practices are creating the space for God to school me in how to live more fully in a renewable rhythm of life and leadership. (And even as I write those words, I am compelled to stop and say “Thank You, Father, for what You are showing me”).

So allow me to introduce you to my faithful friends, and then to unpack them in more detail over the next few newsletters. Deal?

Meet SABBATH. In a word, Sabbath is the spiritual practice of taking a weekly 24-hour period of time that is devoted to God for the purpose of rest, renewal, and relationship where things that you’ve “got to do” give way to things you “get to do”.

Meet SOLITUDE. Solitude is the spiritual practice of taking a block of time where you are intentionally absent from people and things so that you can be fully present with God.

And meet CALLING. Calling is the spiritual practice of discovering and living out your unique part in God’s grand story. It’s the “one thing” that gives platform and purpose to all you are and do.

We’ll talk some more about these spiritual practices in the months ahead. But for now, I’ll leave you with the haunting words of Thomas Kelly, an educator from the early 1900’s:

I am persuaded that this fevered life...is not wholesome...over the margins of life comes a whisper, a faint call, a premonition of richer living which we know we are passing by. Strained by the very mad pace of our daily outer burdens, we are further strained by an inward uneasiness, because we have hints that there is a way of life vastly richer than all this hurried existence.

Lord, Your offer is so clear...so compelling...and so gracious. But we blow right by it...so often. Meet us in our weakness. Grant us the strength and wisdom to ACCEPT Your offer to live within the renewable rhythm of Your grace.