



SOFTER

1 Kings 19:11-12 *“The LORD said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.”*

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.”

Trying harder can help if you are cleaning your house, calling relatives you don't want to talk to, or running another lap. But for us to truly become the people God calls us to be we need greater power than simply “trying harder.” There are limits on what trying harder can accomplish, we need surrender.

The people in the Gospels who got into the most trouble with Jesus were the ones who thought they were working hardest on their spiritual life. They were trying so hard to be good that they could not stop thinking about how hard they were trying AND THAT got in the way of their loving other people and God. *Franciscan priest Richard Rohr* “Faith does not need to push the river because faith is able to trust that there is a river. The river is flowing. We are in it.”

Jesus wants to take our souls and RESTORE them to calm, quiet, and still waters. But when we learn to walk in grace, and the reviving that God brings, we still have a tendency to twist it. We are so lost that we are even blind to our own blindness.

When Jesus described life with God He said it is like a man who found a treasure buried in the field and joyfully sold everything he owned because he had to have it. It is like a merchant who found a pearl he had been dreaming of his whole life. When people hear Jesus' calls we have this desire awakened. We see how Jesus lived His life, we become drawn to His peace, His courage, and His wisdom. Sooner or later the thought goes off that we must have what He has.

God made you with desires, and He wants you to desire Him most of all. God gave you desires so certain activities, sensations, people, and thoughts will wake up your soul. Those desires are God's gift to you. When people enjoy what God has created, His heart is pleased. God is a desire-creating and desire-satisfying God. He made birds with the impulse to fly and to Dolphins to swim, God doesn't plant wrong desires in his creatures.

Nothing makes a human being more vulnerable to temptation than a not being restored by God. God's plan is that every time we experience an authentic desire, a God-implanted desire in us, we come to understand more deeply what a good God He is. We learn how God has wired us and what He wants us to do. As a result, we find ourselves loving this great God more and more. This is how we “taste and see” that the Lord is good, and our desire can be part of this river of life that flows in us with power and energy.

• Material Desires

All stuff, ultimately, is part of God's creation, and therefore it is all good. And therefore it is desirable.

• Achievement Desires

Use your ability to accomplish good for others. And when you are doing it you will know it is more than just you.

• Relational Desires

The joy you feel when people are gathering and talk is flowing and laughter is resounding and new friendships are being forged comes from God.

• Physical Desires

Because your body was made by God, you also have appetites for things to eat, drink, touch, and see—physical desires.

Learn to connect the gift—which you already love—with the Giver, whom you want to love more. You start with what you already like and work your way back to its source, to God. You taste and see that the Lord is good.