

February 2009

Dear Friends of City In Focus – Asian Ministries:

As I write this newsletter, I am recovering from my ablation procedure that took place on January 27<sup>th</sup> at the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria. My heart has been experiencing irregular rhythms and rates over the past few years. Although, the condition is not bothersome to me symptomatically, I have had to take medications to control the rate and to prevent any risk of a stroke. The ablation procedure is a minimally invasive procedure intended to correct this condition and take me off the medications. Why Victoria? Well, I was referred by my cardiologist at St. Paul's Hospital to go to Victoria because the wait list is much shorter (8 months there vs. 12-14 months here) and the sooner I get the procedure done, the higher the success rate, which is generally about 70%.

First of all, I want to give God all the praise and honour! According to the electro-physiologist (EP) that performed the procedure, the ablation procedure went well. He was able to map out the circuits in my heart that were causing the irregular rhythms/rates and ablated them. In fact, as he was finishing up, a flutter flared up and he was able to track it down and correct that as well. If he had not caught this, I may have to go back for a second procedure later. God is good! The EP felt quite confident that my condition has been corrected and I should be able to maintain normal sinus rhythm when my heart heals during the next few months. I want to thank you for your thoughts and prayers during this time. It's an uplifting experience to know so many of you are praying for me.

***Reflections of a Christian in the Marketplace:***

Periodically I think it's important for us to stop long enough to measure where we are in life and to assess the true significance of what we are devoting our time and attention to. And it's often during times when we're facing life or health issues that we somehow find the time to do it. Although the risks involved with the ablation procedure are small (2% chance of life-threatening complications), they are real. It's during the days prior to my ablation procedure that I found myself reflecting on my own life and how I want to reduce the regrets of life and to envision myself standing before Jesus with as much in my hands for Him as possible. While we often think of regrets in terms of the sinful things in our lives, it's important to remember that many regrets can be directly attributed to things that are good but may have no lasting value.

At the end of our earthly life, I'm sure we don't want the inevitable regrets of striving for power, possessions, prestige and position to haunt our memories. The world defines greatness in terms of these things, but they really offer us nothing more than the empty shell of things that don't last and can't satisfy. It's also important to keep our self-centredness in check, because preoccupation with our personal advancement and gains will evaporate in the all-consuming celebration of God's pre-eminent presence in heaven.

Imagine yourself stepping onto the shore on the other side and realizing that you've brought nothing of eternal worth with you. Imagine looking into the face of our eternal God and realizing that our lives reflect only the wood, hay and straw of earthly stuff but little for the Kingdom (1 Corinthians 3:10-15). If we're not careful, life can be poured into the bottomless bucket of all this world offers, and after all is said and done, the bucket will still be empty.

So, how do we avoid getting into this situation? The key will be to live this life with eternity as the driving force of our decisions and desires. While it's easy to think of "life here on earth now and heaven later," as authentic followers, we need to see all of life in the long-range view, and to do things *here* in the light of *there*.

May I suggest making the switch and refusing to sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the temporary? And in case you think that you just might become so heavenly-minded that you will not do any earthly good – think again. You'll be surprised at how much "earthly good" you'll do when heaven is on your mind.

Blessings and shalom,

Bill Wong

Upcoming events to mark on your calendar:

**Wednesday, Feb 25<sup>th</sup>** – **The Annual Vancouver Lunch** at the Four Seasons Hotel at 12:00 noon. Speaker: **Leonard Buhler**, President of Power to Change – "*Leading in Tough Times.*" RSVP to [events@cityinfofocus.ca](mailto:events@cityinfofocus.ca) or call 604-687-7292.

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