

REFLECTIONS

April 23, 2006

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you — unless, of course, you fail the test?

2 Corinthians 13:5

Check Engine

For several years my work has been so invigorating that I have had the energy to work tirelessly at it. My work is a ministry for me and doing God's work is the most energizing endeavor I have found in life. Recently though I found that my work was taking energy from me instead of producing it. At first I chose to deny that anything was awry. Then I felt a bit of fear, and finally disgust that I had allowed my work to get into this state.

The sequence reminded me of one of the small irritations of life that we encounter from time to time. It is the appearance of that ominous little light on the dash of the car that reads *Check Engine*. Now when I see that light come on, my first reaction is denial that anything is wrong. Then I fear the cost of repairs or fear the consequences for not tending to the matter. Finally I feel disgust for allowing matters to reach that state at all.

One of the best teachers of life for me over the years has been the game of golf; and one of the many life lessons I learned from it is that a *Check Engine* light comes on in other parts of life too. Usually golf invigorates me, but when the ball is not being struck solidly, the ball flight is off target, or my emotions are elsewhere, the game takes energy from me instead of providing it.

When my golf game is in that state there are some basics to review—grip, posture, alignment, and my interest level in the game. In golf, the ball will not be consistently struck well unless the club is held properly; correct posture allows the club to swing freely; and the setup must be aligned with the target. And no matter how well these are working, I generally play poorly when my interest lies elsewhere.

God provides us energy to do his will. If our endeavors in life are not energizing, the *Check Engine* light may be on. That is what I discovered about my work. I am excited about what I am doing; I have a grip on where I am going, and I am postured to execute well, but I found that my aim was off. Without realizing it, what I was doing did not align with my target. Simply identifying the problem has helped my energy return.

When we find our activities taking energy, it's time to assess if we are playing the right game; then check the grip, posture and alignment. When all is right we will find Christ is in us. And we will also have the energy to do the work He has planned.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +