

When You Don't Feel Like It, Take Heart

November 12, 2009 | By: [Jon Bloom](#) | Category: [Commentary](#)

Did you wake up not feeling like reading your Bible and praying? How many times today have you had to battle not feeling like doing things you know would be good for you?

While it's true that this is our indwelling sin that we must repent of and fight against, there's more going on.

Think about this strange pattern that occurs over and over in just about every area of life:

Good food requires discipline to prepare and eat while junk food tends to be the most tasty, addictive, and convenient.

Keeping the body healthy and strong requires frequent deliberate discomfort while it only takes constant comfort to go to pot.

You have to make yourself pick up that nourishing theological book while watching a movie can feel so inviting.

You frequently have to force yourself to get to devotions and prayer while sleeping, reading the sports, and checking Facebook seems effortless.

To play beautiful music requires thousands of hours of tedious practice.

To excel in sports requires monotonous drills and nausea.

It takes years and years of schooling just to make certain opportunities possible.

This goes on and on.

The pattern is this: the greater joys are obtained through struggle and pain, while brief, unsatisfying, and often destructive joys are right at our fingertips. Why is this?

Because, in great mercy, God is showing us everywhere, in things that are just shadows of heavenly things, that there is a great reward for those who struggle through (Hebrews 10:32-35). He is reminding us repeatedly each day to walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Each struggle is an invitation by God to follow in the footsteps of his Son, "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

Those who are spiritually blind only see futility in these things. But for those who have eyes to see, God has woven hope (faith in future grace) right into the futility of creation (Romans 8:20-21). Each struggle is a pointer saying, "Look! Look to the real Joy set before you!"

So when you don't feel like doing what you know is best for you, take heart and don't give in. Your Father is pointing you to the reward he has planned for all who endure to the end (Matthew 24:13).

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)