THE DAILY BREAD

The Fiat of the Beloved



Naming What Your Heart Is Seeking

A FORMATION BOOK BY

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The Everyday Apostle

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Naming What Your Heart Is Seeking

The Honest Work of Knowing Your Own Desires

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INTRODUCTION

Do You Know What You Want?

It is a simpler question than it sounds, and most women cannot answer it honestly: what do you actually want? Not what you are supposed to want, not what you tell yourself you want, not the acceptable answer you would give aloud, but the real thing, the desire that actually drives your days, the satisfaction you are actually chasing beneath all your activity. Most women move through their lives pursuing something without ever stopping to name it, driven by desires they have never examined, chasing a satisfaction they could not describe if asked, and so they cannot understand why they are restless, because they have never looked honestly at what they are really seeking.

This book is about that honest looking. It is the practical companion to the recognition that the human heart is restless because it is made for God, and it asks the personal, searching question that recognition raises: in your particular life, what are you actually seeking, and where have you been looking for it? For the longing that is universal takes a particular shape in each woman's life, attaching itself to particular things, driving particular pursuits, and a woman cannot turn her longing toward God until she has honestly named what it has been attached to instead. The work of this book is the work of self-knowledge, the honest examination of your own desires, so that you can name what your heart is really seeking and begin to seek it where it can actually be found.

Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me. — Psalm 139:23-24

We will begin with the honest examination of your own heart, the looking at what you actually pursue. We will follow the trail of your time, money, and attention to the treasure they reveal. We will take up the order of your loves, and how good things become disordered. We will dig beneath the surface wants to the deeper hunger they are really chasing. We will take up the practical work of putting first things first, of seeking God before all. We will face the letting go of the counterfeits you have trusted. And we will see how, with God first, you are freed to enjoy the good gifts rightly, without asking them to be what only He can be.

CHAPTER ONE

Looking Honestly at Your Heart

The Examination You Have Avoided

The first and hardest step in naming what your heart is seeking is simply to look, to examine your own desires honestly, which is something most women have never really done, preferring to move through life without inspecting the wants that drive them. This honest looking is uncomfortable, for it may reveal that a woman has been chasing things she would not want to admit, but it is the necessary beginning, for a woman cannot redirect a longing she has never examined. Understanding the need for and the practice of honest self-examination, the looking at your own heart you have avoided, is where the work begins.

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. — Proverbs 4:23

The Unexamined Heart

Most women live with an unexamined heart, pursuing their desires without ever inspecting them, driven by wants they have never named, and this unexamined pursuit is precisely why they remain confused about their own restlessness. A woman can spend years, even a lifetime, chasing satisfaction without once stopping to ask what she is really chasing, operating on desires absorbed from her culture, her upbringing, her wounds, her fears, never examined or chosen, simply followed. The unexamined heart drives a woman's life from below the level of awareness, shaping her pursuits, her anxieties, her disappointments, without her ever understanding what is driving her, so that she cannot make sense of her own restlessness because she has never looked at what she is pursuing. Scripture counsels keeping the heart with vigilance, watching over it, precisely because it is the source of everything, and the unexamined heart is a heart left unwatched, driving a life no one is steering. The unexamined heart, pursuing desires it has never inspected, is why most women remain confused about their own restlessness, driven by wants they have never named, and the honest examination of the heart is the necessary beginning of understanding what one is really seeking.

Why We Avoid Looking

There are reasons women avoid examining their own hearts, and naming them helps a woman overcome them, for the examination is avoided not by accident but because it is uncomfortable, threatening to reveal things a woman would rather not see. To look honestly at her own desires, a woman may have to admit that she has been chasing approval, or control, or image, or comfort, that her real treasure is not what she claims, that she has been seeking her satisfaction in things she knows cannot give it, and these admissions are uncomfortable, even painful. And so the heart is left unexamined, protected from a scrutiny that might disturb the comfortable story a woman tells about

herself, and the avoidance feels like peace but is really evasion, a refusal to see what honest looking would reveal. Recognizing why she avoids the examination, the discomfort of what it might reveal, helps a woman push through the avoidance to the honest looking that alone can free her. Why we avoid looking, the discomfort of what honest examination might reveal about our real desires, keeps the heart unexamined, and recognizing this avoidance for what it is, an evasion that feels like peace, helps a woman push through to the honest looking that alone can free her.

The Freedom of Honest Looking

Though the honest examination of the heart is uncomfortable, it is finally freeing, for only the desires a woman has honestly named can be redirected, and the looking she has avoided is the door to the freedom she longs for. The discomfort of honest looking is the discomfort of truth, and truth, however uncomfortable, sets free, for a woman who has honestly named what she has been seeking can at last seek it rightly, redirect the longing she has examined, and stop the unconscious pursuit that kept her restless. The unexamined heart is not free but driven, pursuing desires it cannot see and cannot change; the examined heart, having looked honestly at its desires, can begin to order them, to redirect them, to seek rightly what it was seeking blindly. The honest looking a woman avoided is therefore the beginning of her freedom, the door through which she passes from blind pursuit to conscious choice, from driven restlessness to directed desire. The freedom of honest looking is that only the desires a woman has named can be redirected, so that the uncomfortable examination she avoided is in fact the door to freedom, the passage from blind pursuit to conscious choice, and the beginning of being able to seek rightly what she was seeking blindly.

CHAPTER TWO

Follow the Trail to Your Treasure

What Your Life Reveals About Your Heart

If a woman wants to know what her heart is really seeking, she need not only introspect but can read the evidence of her own life, for where she spends her time, her money, her thought, and her anxiety reveals her real treasure far more honestly than what she claims to value. Jesus said that where your treasure is, there your heart will be, and the principle can be run in reverse: follow the trail of your heart, your attention and worry and resources, and it will lead you to your real treasure, whatever you tell yourself you value.

Learning to follow this trail to the treasure it reveals gives a woman an honest picture of what she is actually seeking.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. — Matthew 6:21

Your Calendar and Your Checkbook

The most honest evidence of what a woman truly values is not her stated priorities but her actual choices, revealed in where her time and money go, for a woman spends her time and money on what she really treasures, whatever she claims to value most. A woman may say that God, or her family, or her soul is her priority, but her calendar and her checkbook tell the real story, revealing where her time and resources actually go, what she actually invests in, what she really treasures enough to spend herself on. This evidence is uncomfortable but honest, for it cannot be fooled by the stories a woman tells herself; the actual expenditure of her time and money reveals her actual treasure, and a woman who wants to know what she is really seeking can read it there. If her time and money go overwhelmingly to her appearance, her achievement, her comfort, or the approval of others, these are her real treasures, whatever she claims, and the trail of her calendar and checkbook leads honestly to the heart. Your calendar and your checkbook reveal your real treasure more honestly than your stated priorities, for a woman spends her time and money on what she truly values, and reading where her time and resources actually go gives an honest picture of what her heart is really seeking.

What You Think About and Worry About

Beyond time and money, a woman's thoughts and anxieties reveal her treasure, for the mind returns of its own accord to what it most values, and the things that fill a woman's thinking and drive her worry are the things her heart is most attached to. What does a woman think about in her free moments, when her mind wanders? What does she worry about, lie awake over, feel anxious to protect? These involuntary movements of the mind reveal the heart's real treasures more honestly than deliberate reflection, for the mind dwells on and the heart fears for what it most values. A woman anxious about her image treasures her image; a woman whose thoughts return constantly to her achievements treasures her achievements; a woman whose worry centers on control treasures control. Following the trail of her thoughts and anxieties, a woman finds her treasure, the thing her heart is really attached to and really seeking. What you think about and worry about reveals your treasure, for the mind returns to and the heart fears for what it most values, and following the trail of a woman's involuntary thoughts and anxieties leads honestly to the thing her heart is really seeking.

Name the Treasure

Having followed the trail of her time, money, thought, and worry, a woman can name her real treasure, can say honestly what she has actually been seeking, and this naming, however uncomfortable, is the fruit of the examination and the beginning of change. The point of following the trail is to arrive at a name, to be able to say plainly what her heart has really been treasuring and seeking, whether approval, control, achievement, comfort, image, or security, no longer hiding behind the acceptable answer but naming the real treasure the evidence reveals. This naming is uncomfortable, for the real treasure is often not the one a woman would choose to claim, but it is honest, and only the named treasure can be examined, weighed, and if necessary dethroned. A woman who has followed the trail and named her real treasure has done the hard work of honest self-knowledge, and she can now ask the deeper questions: is this treasure worthy of my heart, and is it what I really want to be seeking? Name the treasure, saying honestly what the trail of your time, money, thought, and worry reveals you have really been seeking, and a woman completes the honest examination, for only the named treasure can be weighed and, if it is unworthy of her heart, dethroned.

CHAPTER THREE

The Order of Your Loves

Good Things in the Wrong Place

The problem with a woman's desires is usually not that she loves bad things but that she loves good things in the wrong order, giving to lesser goods the place that belongs to the greatest, so that her loves are disordered rather than evil. This is a crucial and freeing insight, for it means the solution is not usually to stop loving the things she loves but to reorder her loves, to put them in their right places, with God first and all else in its proper rank beneath Him. Understanding the order of your loves, and how good things become disordered by being loved out of order, reveals the real nature of the problem and its solution.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. — Matthew 22:37-38

The Problem Is Order, Not Object

The disorder in a woman's loves is usually a matter of order rather than object, of loving good things too much or in the wrong place rather than loving bad things, so that the

problem is not what she loves but how she has ranked her loves. A woman's family, her work, her security, her relationships are genuine goods, rightly loved, and the problem is not that she loves them but that she may love them more than God, give them the place that belongs to Him, make them the treasure that only He should be, so that her loves are out of order, the lesser goods ranked above the greatest. This reframes the problem helpfully, for it means a woman need not stop loving the good things in her life, need not see her desires as simply evil, but must reorder them, put them in their right places, with God in the first place and all the good things beneath Him in their proper rank. The problem is order, not object, and the solution is reordering, not renunciation. The problem is order, not object, for a woman's disordered loves are usually good things loved out of order rather than evil things loved, and this means the solution is to reorder her loves, putting God first and all the good things in their proper place beneath Him, rather than ceasing to love them.

The First Place Belongs to God

The right order of loves has God in the first place, loved above all else, with every other good loved in its proper rank beneath Him, for He is the greatest good and the source of all the others, and to love anything more than God is to put it out of its place. The great commandment is to love God with all the heart, soul, and mind, with the whole of oneself, giving Him the first and highest place, and this is not an arbitrary demand but the right order of reality, for God is the greatest good and the source of every lesser good, and to love Him first is simply to love rightly. When a woman loves anything more than God, a person, a pursuit, a security, she has put a lesser good in the highest place, disordered her loves, and made an idol of a good thing, and this disorder is the root of much of her restlessness, for the lesser good cannot bear the weight of the highest place. The first place belongs to God, and the ordering of a woman's loves begins with restoring Him to it, loving Him above all and letting every other good fall into its proper rank beneath Him. The first place belongs to God, who is the greatest good and the source of all others, so that the right order of loves has Him loved above all with every lesser good in its proper rank beneath Him, and the disorder of a woman's loves is healed by restoring God to the first place that is rightly His.

Rightly Ordered Love Loves More, Not Less

A beautiful truth about rightly ordered love is that it loves the lesser goods not less but more, for when God is in the first place, the other goods are freed to be loved rightly, enjoyed as the gifts they are without the distorting weight of being made into gods. It might seem that putting God first means loving everything else less, but the opposite is true, for when a woman loves God first, she is freed to love her family, her work, her life

as the genuine goods they are, no longer burdening them with the impossible demand of being her ultimate satisfaction, no longer idolizing or clinging to them in a way that distorts the love. Disordered love actually loves the lesser goods badly, grasping at them, demanding too much of them, ruining them by making them into idols; rightly ordered love, with God first, loves them well, holding them rightly, enjoying them as gifts, loving them more truly because it does not ask them to be God. Rightly ordered love therefore loves the good things more, not less, freeing them to be loved as they should be by putting God first. Rightly ordered love loves the lesser goods more, not less, for when God is in the first place the other goods are freed to be loved rightly, enjoyed as gifts without the distorting weight of being made into idols, so that ordering a woman's loves does not diminish her love for the good things but frees her to love them truly.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Hunger Beneath the Hunger

What You Are Really Seeking

Beneath the surface things a woman thinks she wants lies a deeper hunger, the real thing she is seeking through the surface wants, and naming this hunger beneath the hunger is the key to understanding what her heart is actually after. When a woman craves approval, achievement, or control, she is not really after those things for their own sake but after something deeper they promise, and until she names that deeper hunger she will keep chasing the surface wants that cannot satisfy it. Learning to dig beneath the surface wants to the deeper hunger they are chasing reveals what a woman is really seeking and why the surface things never satisfy.

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? — Isaiah 55:2

The Want Beneath the Want

Every surface want points to a deeper want, so that when a woman craves something, she is usually seeking through it something deeper that it seems to promise, and the surface craving is a clue to the real hunger beneath it. The woman who craves approval is usually seeking, beneath it, to feel worthy, loved, enough; the woman who craves achievement is usually seeking to matter, to prove herself, to feel significant; the woman who craves control is usually seeking security, safety, the assurance that she will be all right. These deeper wants, worthiness, significance, security, love, are the real hungers, and the surface cravings are the strategies the heart has adopted to try to satisfy them. To

understand what she is really seeking, a woman must look beneath the surface want to the deeper want it serves, asking not only what she craves but what she is really after through the craving, what deeper hunger the surface want is trying to feed. The want beneath the want, the deeper hunger that the surface craving is trying to satisfy, is the real thing a woman is seeking, and looking beneath the surface want to the deeper want it serves reveals what her heart is actually after.

Why the Surface Things Never Satisfy

Understanding the hunger beneath the hunger explains why the surface things never satisfy, for the surface want was only ever a strategy to feed a deeper hunger, and even when the surface want is obtained, the deeper hunger remains, because the surface thing could never really feed it. When a woman gets the approval she craved, the achievement she pursued, the control she sought, she finds that the deeper hunger, to be worthy, to matter, to be secure, is still not satisfied, for the surface thing could never truly feed the deeper want, and so she reaches for more, caught in the endless pursuit of surface things that cannot satisfy the hunger beneath them. This is why Isaiah asks why a woman spends her money on what is not bread and her labor on what does not satisfy, for the surface things she pursues are not the bread her deeper hunger needs, and no amount of them will feed it. The surface things never satisfy because they were never the real food, only a strategy to feed a deeper hunger they cannot reach. Why the surface things never satisfy is that they were only strategies to feed a deeper hunger they cannot actually reach, so that even when obtained they leave the deeper want unsatisfied, which is why a woman spends her labor on what does not satisfy and must keep reaching for more.

Only God Feeds the Deepest Hunger

When a woman digs all the way down to the deepest hunger beneath all her surface wants, she finds a hunger that only God can feed, for the deepest want, to be fully loved, fully worthy, fully secure, fully significant, is a hunger for God Himself, who alone can give what the deepest hunger seeks. Beneath the want for approval is the want to be loved, and beneath that the want for the perfect love only God gives; beneath the want for achievement is the want to matter, and beneath that the want for the significance only God confers; beneath the want for control is the want for security, and beneath that the want for the ultimate safety only God provides. The deepest hunger, in every case, is a hunger for God, who alone can give the perfect love, the ultimate significance, the final security that the deepest want seeks, and this is why only God feeds the deepest hunger and why all the surface things fail. To name the hunger beneath the hunger is finally to discover that the deepest thing a woman seeks is God, and that she has been seeking Him, all along, through all the surface wants that could never reach Him. Only God feeds

the deepest hunger, for beneath all the surface wants lies a hunger for the perfect love, significance, and security that God alone can give, so that naming the hunger beneath the hunger reveals that a woman has been seeking God all along through surface wants that could never reach Him.

CHAPTER FIVE

Putting First Things First

Seeking God Before All

Having named what her heart is really seeking, a woman faces the practical task of reordering her pursuit, of putting first things first, of actually seeking God before all the other things she has been chasing, so that her life comes to match the right order of her loves. It is one thing to see that God should be first and another to actually put Him there in the concrete choices of a real life, and this chapter is about that practical reordering. Understanding how to put first things first, to seek God before all in practice, translates the insight about ordered loves into a reordered life.

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. — Matthew 6:33

Seek First

Jesus gives the practical principle for ordering a life rightly in two words: seek first, directing that a woman seek first the kingdom of God, putting Him before all the other things she is tempted to chase, trusting that the rest will fall into place when He is first. The command is not to seek God only, abandoning all other goods, but to seek Him first, to give Him the first place in her actual pursuit, to order her seeking so that God comes before achievement, approval, security, and all the rest. This seeking first is practical, shaping the concrete choices of a woman's life, her priorities, her time, her decisions, so that God is genuinely put first rather than merely affirmed as first in theory. And it comes with a promise, that when God is sought first, the other things will be added, falling into their proper place, so that seeking God first does not mean losing the other goods but receiving them rightly. Seek first, giving God the first place in your actual pursuit before all the other things you are tempted to chase, and a woman orders her life rightly, putting God first in the concrete choices that reveal her real priorities, with the promise that the other goods will be added in their proper place.

What Putting God First Actually Looks Like

Putting God first is not an abstraction but takes concrete form in the practical choices of a woman's life, in how she orders her time, her priorities, her decisions, so that God genuinely comes first rather than being merely affirmed. In practice, seeking God first means giving Him the first of her time, not the leftover scraps, through daily prayer that is protected and prioritized; it means letting Him shape her decisions, bringing her choices to Him and ordering them by His will rather than by her other treasures; it means refusing to let lesser goods crowd Him out, guarding His place against the pressures that would dethrone Him. These concrete practices are what putting God first actually looks like, the translation of the principle into the real choices of a life, and without them the affirmation that God is first remains theoretical. A woman puts God first not by feeling that He is first but by ordering her actual life so that He is, in her time, her decisions, her priorities. What putting God first actually looks like is the concrete ordering of a woman's time, priorities, and decisions so that God genuinely comes first, through protected daily prayer, through letting Him shape her choices, through guarding His place against lesser goods, which translates the principle into the real choices that order a life.

Trusting the Promise

Putting God first requires trusting the promise attached to it, that when He is sought first the other things will be added, for a woman will only give God the first place if she trusts that doing so will not cost her the good things she fears to lose. The great obstacle to putting God first is the fear that doing so will mean losing the other goods, that if she does not put her security, her relationships, her achievements first, she will lose them, and this fear keeps the lesser goods in the first place. But Jesus attaches a promise to seeking first the kingdom, that all these things will be added, meaning that when God is genuinely first, the other goods are not lost but received rightly, provided in their proper place, so that putting God first is not a loss but a gain. Trusting this promise, believing that God's provision follows the right ordering of loves, frees a woman to put Him first without the fear that she is sacrificing the good things, for the promise is that she will receive them better by seeking Him first than by seeking them first. Trusting the promise that when God is sought first the other things will be added frees a woman to put Him first without fear of losing the good things, for the promise is that she receives them rightly by seeking God first, provided in their proper place, so that putting God first is not a loss but a gain.

CHAPTER SIX

Letting Go of the Counterfeit

Releasing What Cannot Satisfy

Reordering her loves and putting God first requires a woman to let go of the counterfeits she has clung to, to release her grip on the false saviors she has trusted to satisfy her, and this letting go is often the hardest and most costly part of the whole work. The surface treasures a woman has made into idols do not release their hold easily, and loosening her grip on them, surrendering the counterfeits she has trusted, involves a real cost and a real struggle. Understanding the letting go of the counterfeits, the release of what cannot satisfy, equips a woman for the hardest part of reordering her heart.

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? — Mark 8:36

The Grip of the Counterfeit

The counterfeits a woman has trusted to satisfy her, the approval, control, achievement, or image she has made into idols, grip the heart and do not release easily, so that letting go of them is a real struggle against a genuine attachment. A false savior a woman has long trusted becomes woven into her sense of security and identity, gripping her heart so that the thought of releasing it feels like losing something essential, and the counterfeit does not loosen its hold merely because a woman recognizes it as false. This grip explains why reordering the loves is hard, why a woman may see clearly that her treasure should be God and yet find herself unable to release the counterfeit she has clung to, held by an attachment stronger than her insight. Recognizing the grip of the counterfeit, the genuine strength of the attachment, prepares a woman for the real struggle of letting go, so that she does not expect it to be easy or give up when it proves hard. The grip of the counterfeit, the genuine strength with which a false savior holds the heart, explains why letting go is a real struggle, for the counterfeit a woman has trusted becomes woven into her security and identity and does not release merely because she recognizes it as false.

Counting the Cost of Keeping It

What helps a woman release the counterfeit is counting the true cost of keeping it, recognizing that clinging to the false savior costs her far more than letting it go, for it keeps her restless, enslaved, and ultimately empty, gaining the counterfeit at the cost of her deeper satisfaction. The counterfeit seems costly to release, but it is far more costly to keep, for clinging to it keeps a woman in the endless striving it demands, enslaved to an idol that can never satisfy, forfeiting the deeper satisfaction only God can give for the

sake of a false savior that leaves her empty. Jesus asks what it profits a woman to gain the whole world and forfeit her soul, and the same logic applies to every counterfeit: what does it profit her to keep her idol and forfeit the satisfaction of God, to gain the approval or control she clings to and lose the deeper joy she was made for? Counting this true cost, seeing that keeping the counterfeit costs her more than releasing it, helps a woman loosen her grip, for the attachment weakens when she sees clearly what it is costing her. Counting the cost of keeping it, recognizing that clinging to the counterfeit costs a woman far more than releasing it by keeping her restless and enslaved, helps her loosen her grip, for the attachment weakens when she sees that she is forfeiting the deeper satisfaction of God for a false savior that leaves her empty.

Releasing Into His Hands

The letting go of the counterfeit is finally made possible not by willpower alone but by releasing it into God's hands, by trusting Him enough to let go of the false savior because she has found the true one, so that the release is not a grim loss but a trusting exchange. A woman cannot usually pry her own fingers off the counterfeit by sheer effort, for the grip is too strong, but she can release it into God's hands as she comes to trust Him, letting go of the false savior because she has found the true God who satisfies, exchanging the counterfeit for the real thing. This releasing into His hands transforms the letting go from a grim renunciation into a trusting exchange, for a woman does not let go of the counterfeit into empty-handed loss but into the hands of the God who gives her Himself, the satisfaction the counterfeit only counterfeited. The release is made possible by trust, by coming to trust God enough to let go of the false savior, and it is completed not in loss but in exchange, the counterfeit released into His hands and the true God received in its place. Releasing into His hands, letting go of the counterfeit by trusting God enough to exchange the false savior for the true one, transforms the letting go from a grim loss into a trusting exchange, for a woman releases the counterfeit not into empty loss but into the hands of the God who gives her the satisfaction it only imitated.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Enjoying the Gifts Rightly

Good Things in Their Proper Place

When God is finally in the first place and the counterfeits are released, a woman is freed not to despise the good things of her life but to enjoy them rightly, as the gifts they are, in their proper place beneath God, without the distortion of asking them to be what only He

can be. The reordering of her loves does not end in a joyless renunciation of good things but in their right enjoyment, received as gifts from God and loved in their proper rank. Understanding how to enjoy the gifts rightly, good things in their proper place, reveals the happy fruit of the whole reordering.

God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. — 1 Timothy 6:17

Not Renunciation but Right Enjoyment

The goal of ordering a woman's loves is not the renunciation of good things but their right enjoyment, for when God is first, the good things are freed to be enjoyed as the gifts they are, so that the reordering ends in richer enjoyment, not grim denial. It might be feared that putting God first and releasing the counterfeits means giving up the good things of life, embracing a joyless austerity, but this is not the goal, for Scripture says God richly provides everything for us to enjoy, and the right ordering of loves frees a woman to enjoy His gifts rightly rather than renouncing them. With God first, a woman can enjoy her family, her work, her pleasures, the good things of her life, not less but more, receiving them as gifts from the God she loves first, enjoying them in their proper place without the burden of making them ultimate. The reordering ends not in renunciation but in right enjoyment, the free and grateful enjoyment of good things loved in their proper rank beneath the God who gives them. Not renunciation but right enjoyment is the goal of ordering a woman's loves, for when God is first the good things are freed to be enjoyed as the gifts they are, so that the reordering ends in richer enjoyment of good things received gratefully in their proper place, not in grim denial.

Gifts, Not Gods

The key to enjoying the good things rightly is to receive them as gifts rather than gods, to enjoy them gratefully as blessings from God without making them into idols, which both frees the enjoyment and protects the woman from the disorder of idolatry. A good thing enjoyed as a gift from God is enjoyed rightly, received with gratitude, held with an open hand, loved in its proper place; the same good thing made into a god is loved wrongly, grasped at, demanded of, worshiped in the place that belongs to God alone. The difference between gift and god is the difference between right and disordered enjoyment, and a woman keeps her enjoyment of good things rightly ordered by always receiving them as gifts, grateful to the Giver, holding them loosely, never letting them become the idols that distort both the enjoyment and the heart. To enjoy the good things as gifts and not gods is to enjoy them in their proper place, gratefully and freely, without the disorder of making them ultimate. Gifts, not gods, is the key to enjoying good things rightly, for a good thing received as a gift from God is enjoyed gratefully and held loosely

in its proper place, while the same thing made into a god is grasped and worshiped wrongly, so that receiving the good things as gifts keeps the enjoyment rightly ordered and protects the heart from idolatry.

The Satisfied Heart

The final fruit of naming what her heart is seeking and seeking it rightly is a satisfied heart, a woman whose restlessness has begun to rest because she is seeking her satisfaction in God and receiving the good things as gifts, no longer driven by the endless chase but settled in a rightly ordered love. When a woman has named her real desires, dethroned the counterfeits, put God first, and learned to enjoy the good things as gifts, her heart begins to find the rest that the restless chase never gave, satisfied in God and grateful for His gifts, no longer driven to seek in finite things the satisfaction only He can give. This is the satisfied heart, not a heart that has stopped loving or enjoying but a heart whose loves are rightly ordered, that seeks its deepest satisfaction in God and receives the good things as His gifts, and so is at rest. The whole work of naming what the heart is seeking leads here, to the satisfied heart that has found its true treasure and enjoys the lesser treasures rightly, the heart at rest in a rightly ordered love. The satisfied heart is the final fruit of naming what the heart is seeking and seeking it rightly, a woman whose restlessness has begun to rest because she seeks her satisfaction in God and receives the good things as gifts, no longer driven by the endless chase but settled in a rightly ordered love that has found its true treasure.

CONCLUSION

Name It, and Turn

Most women cannot honestly say what they really want, and this book has been about the honest work of finding out and reordering the answer. We have seen the need to examine the heart a woman has avoided looking at; to follow the trail of her time, money, thought, and worry to the treasure it reveals; to recognize that her loves are disordered, good things in the wrong order, rather than simply evil; to dig beneath the surface wants to the deeper hunger only God can feed; to put first things first by seeking God before all; to let go of the counterfeits she has clung to; and to enjoy the good things rightly, as gifts and not gods, with a satisfied heart.

The whole of it is a work of self-knowledge in the service of love, the honest naming of what the heart is seeking so that it can be redirected toward the God who alone can satisfy it. A woman cannot turn her longing toward God until she has honestly named

what it has been turned toward instead, and so the uncomfortable examination is the necessary beginning of the turning, the self-knowledge that makes reordering possible.

So name it, and turn. Look honestly at your own heart and name what you have really been seeking. Follow the trail of your life to your actual treasure and call it by its name. Recognize the disorder in your loves and the deeper hunger beneath your surface wants. Put God first in the concrete choices of your days, trusting that the good things will be added in their place. Let go of the counterfeits you have clung to, releasing them into the hands of the God who satisfies. And learn to enjoy the good things rightly, as gifts and not gods, with a heart at last at rest. Name what your heart is seeking, and turn it toward the One for whom it was made, and the restless chase will give way, at last, to the satisfied heart.

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