

The Road Less Traveled – August 4, 2017

I am a huge Star Trek fan. I loved the shows, loved the movies and have even read a few of the spin-off novels. Never has the genre of science fiction been used so well to comment on the complicated nature of contemporary life. I recently started watching the most recent of the television series – *Enterprise* – on Netflix. It is great to lose myself in the 22nd century and watch as new characters are developed. But I admit I miss the old gang. One of my favorite characters in the original series and movies was Montgomery Scott. The crusty Scottish engineer was the one who kept the lights on – literally. Whenever the ship's crew would find themselves in battle, the captain stayed in constant contact with Mr. Scott. Why? Because he was the man in charge of the power. He could reroute main power to the weapons when it was time to attack, to the shields when it was time to play defense, and to the engines when it was time to flee. Without that power, the ship was dead in space. And that made Mr. Scott the most important person on the ship.

I found myself thinking about Mr. Scott the other day as my morning devotional directed me to the book of Proverbs. I think the author of Proverbs knew something about power. Maybe not electrical power or nuclear power, but the power of the spirit. “Guard your heart,” he says, “for it is the wellspring of life.” Meaning it all starts there. Physically that is certainly true, but spiritually it rings true as well. You can talk about behavior all day long. But life ultimately comes down to what is in your heart. If your heart is pure, so will be your life. If your heart is void of the love of God, then eventually your life will bear evidence of that as well. It's inescapable.

I think Christians forget that inescapable fact sometimes. We get so wrapped up in doing the “work of the Kingdom” that we forget to tend to our own hearts. We forget to feed our hearts with regular Bible study and prayer. We forget to open our hearts to the movement of the Spirit in worship. And we neglect to wrap our hearts around to the evidence of God all around us. At least I know I am guilty of all of those things. And you know what? When I look back to rough patches in my work and relationships, they tend to be times when I was neglecting my spiritual life.

Guard your heart, the author of Proverbs says. It is the fountainhead of your spiritual life. It also is the part of our spiritual life of which we have ultimate control. Do we close off the faucet? Or do we open it wide and let the Spirit flow freely into our lives?

See you Sunday.