

## Fourth Quarter Strategies - Saturday, October 10, 2015

"My name is Jim and I'm a workaholic" would be an appropriate statement if I were to attend a WA meeting. Yes, there's actually a Workaholics Anonymous World Service Organization and it's quite simple to find a local group to help these addicts on their road to recovery. My recovery started 22 years ago after a dramatic four days flat on my back at Cottage Hospital in late December. The road to the hospital was certainly paved with good intentions.

Twenty months before that eventful hospital stay we adopted our newborn daughter. A few months later, I decided to leave management at New York Life and once again enter the field as an insurance agent. And then our church decided to merge with another local church and I was deeply involved in the merger process. My average work day consisted of nearly a dozen hours in the office, a few hours here and there devoted to church work and then to home in the evening to spend time with my wife and little girl.

Fortunately, my doctor diagnosed the double pneumonia before it was too late. He got my attention when he explained my situation was almost identical to MUPPETEER Jim Henson's condition. He did not take his doctor's advice and it was his demise! Those four days in the hospital turned me into a recovering workaholic. I actually consider that experience as a blessing from above. God has often had to take drastic measures to get my attention. I left the hospital with a whole new outlook on life.

Let's talk about the disease and how one might contract it. In retrospect, I believe mine started at a very young age. When I was three my Dad started grooming me to become a Major League baseball player. We put in countless hours working on fielding, throwing, running bases and taking batting practice from both sides of the plate. Without batting gloves in those days I often left practice with blood blisters after taking hundreds of swings.

Eighteen months in Vietnam added fuel to the fire and I found myself caught up in a work ethic that demanded my devotion to feeding my addiction. Two marriages later, I was still caught up in the lie that life was all about working hard whatever the cost. The recognition of bosses and peers helped me justify my actions. My superiors appreciated my work ethic and I was young and caught up in the game of moving up the corporate ladder. After accepting Christ and marrying one final time I was still caught up in a super busy lifestyle even though my focus had changed dramatically.

In my study of the bible, I can easily relate to Paul who was first known as Saul of Tarsus. Saul was a fanatic who made it his mission to persecute those that had left the Jewish faith of his fathers to follow Christ. His Damascus Road experience certainly changed his direction, but he remained in my estimation a workaholic only now tirelessly serving his Lord Jesus! I've come to understand that we can certainly find strength in Christ, but we also need to pace ourselves. After all Jesus, our greatest example, knew when He needed to rest and spend time with His Father to recharge His batteries. Do take a hard look at your life. Ask your spouse and others about your work ethic and possible misplaced priorities. If it was important to Christ, I'd say it should be even more important to us. Don't get caught up in the workaholic's snare!

Here to serve,

Jim Langley, CLU

Passages to Ponder: Genesis 2:1-3; Ecclesiastes 6:1-4; 12:6-8; Matthew 11:28-30

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### **Genesis 2:1-3 New King James Version (NKJV)**

2 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. <sup>2</sup> And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. <sup>3</sup> Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

### **Ecclesiastes 6:1-4 New King James Version (NKJV)**

6 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men: <sup>2</sup> A man to whom God has given riches and wealth and honor, so that he lacks nothing for himself of all he desires; yet God does not give him power to eat of it, but a foreigner consumes it. This *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil affliction.

<sup>3</sup> If a man begets a hundred *children* and lives many years, so that the days of his years are many, but his soul is not satisfied with goodness, or indeed he has no burial, I say *that* a stillborn child *is* better than he— <sup>4</sup> for it comes in vanity and departs in darkness, and its name is covered with darkness.

### **Ecclesiastes 12:6-8 New King James Version (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> *Remember your Creator* before the silver cord is loosed,  
Or the golden bowl is broken,  
Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain,  
Or the wheel broken at the well.

<sup>7</sup> Then the dust will return to the earth as it was,  
And the spirit will return to God who gave it.

<sup>8</sup> “Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher,  
“All *is* vanity.”

### **Matthew 11:28-30 New King James Version (NKJV)**

<sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”