

Slowing Our Spiritual Heartrate

The other day I was playing tennis with a good friend who was really running me around the court. The more winded I became the more unforced errors I found myself committing. After the contest, I was reminded of an experiment that I had performed in the 90's over the course of 40 tennis matches with capable opponents. I wore a heart rate monitor in each match and watched carefully to see at what heart rate I began to make careless errors. I found that, if I could keep my heart rate under 160 beats per minute for most of a match (this was often accomplished by moving slowly between points, taking the full allowable time at the change-over, and by tying my shoes frequently), it was very difficult to defeat me; if, however, a clever and or skilled opponent could move me enough to cause my heart rate to exceed that magic 160 mark, he would generally prevail.

It struck me yesterday that Satan understands this very principle, and has often used it against me. If he can keep me busy and disconnected from my power source, he can generally defeat me at will. He understands that by moving me from side to side (enticing me with *good* things) that he can eventually run me out of breath. My own devotional life, including prayer, study, and meditation, are the ways that I slow my spiritual heart rate. My adversary will do most anything to rob me of that precious time.

Luke 5:15-16 NIV

Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.