



September 6th, 2007

On a Personal Note . . .

This past Saturday, a friend and I went to A&M's season opening football game. I never tire of the game day experience at Kyle Field. Each year it is rated by national sports pundits as one of the top 10 college football experiences in the country. From the jam-packed three-tier student section on the east side of the stadium where the 12th man never sits down during the game and screams the Aggie "yells" in perfect unison, to the length of the field digital screens on both of the long sides of the field, to the humongous jumbotron on the south side of the field, to the aesthetically pleasing Zone seating on the north side of the field, a college football game at Kyle Field is nothing short of sensory overload. When 86,000 people put their arms around each other and saw varsity's horns off, or sway back and forth for you non-Aggies, it looks like the entire stadium is swaying back and forth. To this day it humors me that in a stadium that big, A&M designates one tiny section at the south end of the huge student section for fans of the visiting team. From where they sit, they can't see the jumbotron nor very much of the field. They experience relentless harassing from the A&M student section for the duration of the game.

Every time I go to a game at Kyle Field, for a just a fleeting moment I am a 17-year-old Aggie freshman again going to my first game. It is an understatement to say I was a rabid fan during my time there. I have so many memories at Kyle Field and I always enjoy the opportunity to make new ones. Each fall, Nicole and I pick a conference game and we take the kids to Kyle Field to experience game day. Of course, it has nothing to do with wanting them to decide early on that they want to go to A&M themselves. ;) Then again, neither did Colton coming home from the hospital wearing a yell leader uniform with Fightin' Texas Aggie Class of 2027 written on it! One of our dreams is to one day have season tickets. Lord willing, if I make to my 77th birthday, I'll have 50 years of football memories at Kyle Field. I'll have taken Nicole to games when we were dating, gone to games with her as husband and wife, taken my kids to games as they were growing up, and taken my grandkids to games there as well. When I get to the end of my life, I hope one of my Aggie football memories is a national championship. It isn't likely any time soon, but I will never lose hope. Gig 'em.

Fleeting Lives and the Responsibility of the Local Church

Two Sundays ago, my family was having lunch at the new Mexican food place across the street from the church, when I noticed numerous people sitting along the windows suddenly jump up and go outside. Clearly, something had happened so I went outside to look. I looked down at West Lake Houston Pkwy

and the first thing I saw was a motorcycle laying on its side, torn up, with the engine smoking. The next thing I saw was a person, I couldn't tell if it was a man or woman, laying in the road covered in blood. The third thing I noticed was that an SUV had pulled broadside across both south bound lanes to ensure no traffic bearing down on would literally drive into the accident scene and make it worse. As we waited for the ambulance to arrive, three people, including a lady who belongs to our church, were trying to convince the motorcycle rider not to move, yet he fought his way into a sitting position. Though I am largely ignorant of medical situations, I assumed it was a good sign that though he was covered in large amounts of blood, he had the mental determination and the strength to sit himself up. No doubt, he should have lain still for the sake of his spine and neck, but I was relieved to see he was not going to die. From what I was told, the young man on the motorcycle had come up quickly behind a pick up truck and swerved to the side to avoid making contact. He hit the curb and bounced back into the truck and I don't have to describe to you what happened next. He is blessed by God to still be alive and to walk away with so little apparent damage.

That same Sunday afternoon, I was watching football in my recliner and contemplating the accident scene. Two thoughts came to mind. The first thought that flashed through my mind did so as a result of picturing that bleeding body lying in the street. Life truly is fleeting. That young man his early 20's could have very easily died. A car bearing down on him could have run over his body lying in the street, he could have had a brain aneurysm, the bike could have flipped and landed on top of him, or he could have hit the pavement in a way that killed him. I wonder how long he had been riding that afternoon when he found himself bleeding from head to toe, in terrible agony, laying prostrate on West Lake Houston Pkwy? I wonder if the thought crossed his mind as he started his motorcycle that day that he was minutes away from barely escaping the tentacles of death? I doubt it crossed his mind, because the possibility of dying rarely crosses our minds every day. And yet, we are always one heartbeat away from death, one car accident, one fall, one poor decision, and I could go on and on. The truth is, we live every day with the possibility of death. If you have never trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you ought to give it serious consideration. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Without a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, you are one heartbeat away from spending eternity perishing in Hell. But, with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, you are always one heartbeat away from eternity in Heaven, Paradise, with God Himself. Living everyday so close to death, it seems so unwise to go day after day without making sure of one's destination on the other side of death.

The second thought that flashed through my mind came as a result of the scene of the accident. From my vantage point, I was standing on the west side of West Lake Houston Parkway looking down a bit at the bloodied body in the street with an ambulance, fire truck, and police cars littering the scene. The background was the building and property that is the physical site of Northeast Houston Baptist Church. The accident literally happened right in front of our church property. That man could have died within feet of our church and possibly could have entered Hell for all of eternity. I can't help but wonder, are we as a church family doing everything we can to win the lost? Am I, Nathan Lino, doing everything I can to win the lost? Am I looking for opportunities every single day to tell people about Jesus Christ? Am I making every effort to invite people to church where we know they will receive the opportunity to trust Christ? Am I serious about handing out the wallet size invite cards? Am I serious about putting out fliers when we do our periodic blitzes? Am I praying for my neighbors and friends to be saved? Am I earnestly praying for the three names on my 2007 prayer card to be saved? Or am I just giving evangelism lip service? It was so startling to see someone barely evade death right in front of our church. Would you pray and ask the Lord to give me a bigger heart for evangelism? Would you pray and ask the Lord to give you a bigger heart for evangelism? Would you pray that the Lord would give us, as an entire church family, a bigger heart for evangelism?

A word About The Word

This past Sunday I preached 1 Corinthians 12:8-9 on the topic of spiritual gifts in general and knowledge, wisdom, faith, and healing in particular. My prayer is that as we explore the spiritual gifts, that the Holy Spirit would impress upon you your spiritual giftedness and that you would be compelled to use it at NEHBC “for the common good” (1 Cor. 12:7). Over the next few weeks, we will continue to explore the 21 spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament. I want to encourage you to come to worship on Sunday so that you don’t miss this important study (1 Cor. 12:1).

Last night I preached 1 Samuel 20 about the issue of personal character. How does David’s moral character fall so far between the condition of his heart in 1 Samuel 20 and 2 Samuel 11? David, shocked at the murder attempts on his life in 1 Samuel 20, becomes a murderer himself by 2 Samuel 11. In 1 Samuel 20, David was concerned with biblical standards of morality and covenants made before God over personal talent, ability, and fame. By 2 Samuel 11, David has decided that his talent and fame give him license to sin. When we believe that talent and ability outweigh personal character, we begin a freefall down the slippery slope of morality. Today’s American culture is marred by this very issue. A local high school quarterback is a community celebrity even if he is promiscuous because the community believes talent matters more than character. The President of the United States had oral sex with an intern in the Oval Office and the majority of Americans didn’t care because “he was a good President”. Ie: “If he performs well as the President, it isn’t anybody’s business what he does in his personal life.” I encourage you to take the time to grab your Bible and listen to this sermon.

Sermons are available on cd for purchase at the sermon booth in the church lobby. You can also find them in MP3 format on our church website [here](#) or via podcast at www.itunes.com. Simply search for “Nathan Lino” in the search box of the iTunes store.

Cleaning Up the Parking Lot

No doubt you have noticed the dirt in the parking lot over the past few weeks. Some of you have asked if the dirt is runoff from the rain falling on the “field”. The answer is no. It is dirt that fell from the dirt trucks as the 400 loads of dirt were delivered to our property. The parking lot will actually be cleaned this coming Saturday by some folks in our church. The cleaning of the dirt from the parking lot was left until now because we didn’t know if we would need to bring in more dirt until we saw how the “field” did after we received a lot of rain. If we had already cleaned up the parking lot and many more loads of dirt had to be brought in, we would have had to have the parking lot cleaned a second time. Now that we have had a lot of rain and we have seen we don’t need much more dirt, we are going to go ahead and clean the parking lot.

Surrendering to Ministry

I have exciting news to report. Last week, a local college student who comes to our 10am service, asked me to have lunch with him. Over burgers he informed me that he is ready to surrender to full-time ministry. He has been wrestling with this for some time and recently bowed to the will of the Lord Jesus. He and I had good conversation as I grilled him about his call. I sense in this young man that he truly believes this is God’s will. His story is a reminder that one can rebel against the compulsion of the Holy Spirit, but you will be miserable doing so. There is only true joy in the midst of obedience to Jesus

Christ.

Contact has already been made with Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, and I am taking him there for a campus visit on September 14. Please pray for this young man as he heads down the path of ministry preparation. Please pray for his spiritual protection, wisdom from the Lord, and the faith to continue to follow the Lord's call on his life. As of right now, only his parents and a few close friends know. When he is ready, I'll reveal his identity.

On another note, a couple of weeks ago I wrote about a couple in our church who has surrendered to full-time ministry that I took to visit Southwestern Seminary. They are no longer keeping it confidential. Please be in prayer for Chris and Wynette Taylor as they prepare to pursue God's call on their lives to full-time ministry. They have two daughters: Kara is 4 and Avery is 2.

The Sovereignty of God, Estonia, and NEHBC

Does the Lord want to use NEHBC to reach Estonians or what? In February, Chris Taylor and Wes Orton went to Estonia. Yesterday, they and their wives embarked on a week long cruise. Last night they went to their assigned table for dinner in the dining hall where they have to sit every night to eat. Guess what country their assigned dinner waitress for the week is from? ESTONIA!!!! She can't believe Wes and Chris have been there and that they went this calendar year. Please pray all this week. The Taylor's and Orton's have six more dinners with the Estonian lady. Please pray that she will be open to the Gospel as the Orton's and Taylor's share with her.

The Lord continues to connect NEHBC folks with Estonians. It certainly appears that in His sovereignty He has decided He wants NEHBC to influence Estonians for Jesus Christ. First, He laid on my heart in the Spring of '04 for NEHBC to raise money to buy Estonian Bibles. By the grace of God, you gave so generously that we had enough money to buy thousands of Bibles. Then, in the fall of 2005, NEHBC took her first mission trip to Estonia. Then in 2006, Tom and Jennifer Thompson, IMB missionaries to Estonia, felt led by the Lord to become members of NEHBC. Then NEHBC took another mission trip to Estonia in the late winter of 2007. Then in the summer of 2007, a children's book company hired two college students from Estonia to go door-to-door selling books in the Kingwood-Humble-Atascocita community. Over the course of the summer, they knocked on the doors of so many of our members. Then in the fall of 2007, an Estonian lady is working on a cruise ship as a waitress in the evening dining hall and the Orton's and Taylor's, who both went to Estonia earlier this year, book her cruise ship and get assigned to her evening dinner table.

God is leading us to influence Estonia for Jesus Christ. Are you willing to play a part? The next Estonian mission trip is May, 2008. Make the sacrifices necessary to save the money to go with me. I promise you that you will never regret it.

IMB Meeting

In the Summer of 2006, the Lord gave me the honor of being elected by our Southern Baptist Convention to serve a four-year term on the Board of Trustees (Directors) of the [International Mission Board \(IMB\)](#), the biggest missionary sending agency in the world. We have over 5,500 missionaries around the world and over 300 employees at our headquarters in Richmond, VA, and at our missionary training school in rural Virginia. Our board functions just as any company's board functions—the

President and his staff oversee the day-to-day operations of the IMB while we provide doctrinal, vision, and ultimately fiscal oversight. We are the board to whom the President reports.

We have board meetings six times a year, and typically I fly out on a Sunday afternoon and return on Tuesday night. We spend two long days approving missionary candidates, making large financial and real estate decisions, and meeting with the President and his executive staff. Each of the 89 board members serve on an administrative committee (I serve on the Missionary Personnel Committee), a regional committee (I serve on the North Africa-Middle East Committee) and on the at large board itself. It is not uncommon for work to begin at 7am and last until 9:30-10pm.

Our next board meeting is scheduled to start this coming Monday in Asheville, NC. I will fly out immediately after the third service on Sunday. Please pray that the Lord will give me wisdom and discernment for my meetings on Monday and Tuesday. Please pray for the will of the Lord Jesus to prevail in the decision making processes of our board. Please pray for the Lord to continue to have His hand of blessing upon the IMB.