

Treasuring His Word . . .

From the Pastor's Heart:

“Be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18b).

A few weeks ago, during a trip to Birmingham, Kay and I noticed that her van's “low-fuel” dot-light came on next to the “E” on her gas gauge. But we were just 8 miles from our next exit, and I knew we had more than enough gas to get there, and we did. Two weeks ago, on my way to care for my father during his heart ablation and subsequent recovery, I stopped at the rest area just below Evergreen. Pulling back onto the interstate, I knew I was pretty low on fuel, but was hoping to make it all the way to Exit 19 before Mobile, where I wanted to get some coffee. I could have easily stopped 40 miles before that for gas, but no “low fuel” light had come on by my “E” (for EMPTY) so I kept going.

The sun was coming up in the East, and since I was traveling Southwest, it resulted in a glare on the glass of my instrument panel (speedometer, gauges, etc.). So I simply began to put my hand up to create a shadow on the panel so that it would illuminate any lights, especially the little dot by the “E” on my Gas Gauge. So every couple of miles I would put my hand up, and there was no light on, so I was not worried. For I was certain I could go at least 30 to 40 miles after the light came on. I repeated this several times over the next 15 minutes or so. When I was about 12 miles from my exit, I thought, “I got this made!” But one more time, I thought, surely it's on by now because the gas gauge indicator-hand itself was right on EMPTY. So I looked down before I got my hand up, and there was another light on in the upper left-hand of the Instrument Panel. It was in a place that my hand had been previously covering, so I had not seen it at all. It read, **“LOW FUEL!”**

I had forgotten that my car did not have a little dot-light that came on by the “E” for EMPTY. It has a light that is 10 times as big as Kay's van's little dot, but it is NOT by the “E”! It is in the upper left hand of the Instrument Panel. It had been on, but I had never seen it! All of a sudden I had a little panic, “How long has that light been on?” Then, of course, I prayed, “Lord, please...” By the grace of God, I made it to the gas station. I was so relieved to get the place where I could fill up!

How often do we wait to get filled up spiritually? Then, how relieved and glad we are when we get to that place where we fuel up on the Holy Spirit of Jesus! I might would have said my mistake was covering part of the entire warning and information indicators, when I needed to be concerned about all of them. But there was something much more foundational to my mistake. I should have filled my car up with gas before ever leaving town. We should fuel up spiritually before leaving the house each day. In the case of my earthly travels, it was not just a case of missing the WARNING signal, otherwise having been fine had I seen it. No! There is an entire portion of my normal instrument panel dedicated to the Gas Tank, the Gas Gauge itself. It lets me know how I am doing all along the way. I knew I only had a half of a tank when I left home. I knew I had very little fuel when I left the rest area. The Holy Spirit convicts us very clearly when we are not under His full influence. We should never chance life with a spiritual tank that is not full. Don't wait until the last minute to get filled up with the Holy Spirit, because you are so preoccupied with getting somewhere else first!