

The Restless Heart

The soul is not easily satisfied.

I was disappointed on my son's birthday. He received more gifts and toys from his friends in one day than I had obtained in my entire childhood. His mum and I bought him a large fire-truck that he desired for a long time. Yet at the end of the day he asked me why I did not also buy him the red car he had seen at the toy shop.

The boy's attitude is not unique. We all had similar feelings. We crave and covet some THING – an electronic gadget, a car, a house, a promotion – but as soon as we grab it in our hands its magic seems to vanish in thin air. Material things simply can't fill our soul.

The young daughter of my colleague has better sense. Her father, a medical doctor, was leaving home to go to his clinic. She asked him if he could stay with her.

'No dear,' he told her, 'I have to go to work to earn money so that I can buy you more toys.'

'But Dad I have enough toys,' she answered, 'It is better if you stay and play with me.'

She's right. Of course we need bread to live, but we can't live by bread alone. We were created to love and to be loved. Love alone can fill our heart.

I thank God for the love of my parents, my wife and children, and many other dear people, who had brought so much joy and happiness in my life. Even so, even the purest and dearest human relationships are but a faint reflection of the greatest love of all.

Augustine was right when he prayed, 'God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you.' We hurt ourselves if we seek life anywhere else.

There is a note of sad disappointment in the Lord's voice when he says, 'My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water' (Jer 2:13).

I pray that in the coming year we turn away from the futile pursuits of this world and come to the Lord Jesus to drink the water of life and satisfy our soul with his love.