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My doctors were caught a bit off guard.

In early January, I had a few doctor's visits, 2 at a cardiologist and 1 at my primary care physician. This brief update is not so much about my health, but about the reaction the doctors had to things I told them. However, I can report one item about my general health. My Medicare insurance requests that the primary care physician perform an annual cognitive/memory evaluation/test. Though some people who read my articles might assume I have lost my mind, it turns out that it is still intact. I scored the highest possible score. It is comforting to know that though my physical health is diminishing, my mental health is doing just fine. Now, when people start to look at me as if I am just an old geezer that should be ignored, I can at least know for myself that I am of sound mind.

Now concerning the reaction of the doctors to things I told them. The primary care people and the cardiologist people all had a similar reaction. But I will mention the cardiologist people to get the point across.

I waited two hours in the cardiologist's waiting room. While I sat there, one elderly couple started getting impatient about the long wait. They were new to this cardiologist's tendency to talk at length with each patient. The other patients in the room began assuring them that it was worth waiting, because this doctor is the best cardiologist alive (in their opinion). Having already been to this doctor on one prior occasion, I marveled at the overwhelming adoration of his patients. It seems to me that these patients depend upon this doctor as if he is their only hope of living. I do not want to come off here as merciless. The other patients in the room seem to be experiencing more pain and suffering from their conditions than I do from mine. (I feel uncomfortable often with significant palpitations, but I don't have any chest pain like many of those other patients seem to experience.) Perhaps if I was suffering as much as them, I would be just as desperate for relief.

The other patients had a look of desperation in their eyes. If they are unbelievers (which most people seem to be), I suspect that they are heavily burdened with the fear of death which for many of them, might be right around the corner. If this is a valid sampling of the patients this doctor sees regularly, he is most likely accustomed to observe desperation and fear of death. I get the impression talking with him that he expects that his patients to hang on his advice and gladly comply with whatever he tells them to do.

He spent about ½ hour with me. During the visit, his assistant sat about 10 feet from me facing away from me as she took notes on her laptop. After about 20 minutes, the doctor began suggesting that I begin taking a low dose of a certain high blood pressure medicine even though I do not have high blood pressure (which he knew). I told him that I am leery of taking drugs because of their side effects. I mentioned one experience Linda had taking a drug prescribed by her cardiologist. The doctor tried to calm my fears about these drugs. But I kept questioning and pushing back. (Based upon the waiting room experience, I wonder if he sees many patients who push back on his advice.)

At one point, he said he understands that I feel so strongly because of Linda's experience with one of these drugs. That is when I told him that though her experience is one factor, it is by no means the reason for my push back. He perked up and listened as I told him the real reason for my pushback. I said that the real reason for my hesitancy about these drugs is that I am completely ready to die right now. At this point, the girl taking notes who had been facing away from me, turned 180 degrees around and stared at me in utter shock with her mouth open. I will never forget the look on her face. She stared at me as I told them that I am a Christian and I would rather depart so I can be with my Lord Jesus. I told them that the main reason for living (in my mind) is to take care of my wife. I don't want her to face life's struggles alone. I also assured them that I did not have a death wish and as proof, I told them that I paid nearly \$ 3000 in the past two weeks for long overdue dental work. I am eating right and exercising. I am not living in a way that is detrimental to my heart's health. I told them that my main reason for pushing back on his advice to take drugs is simply a lack of motivation on my part. I don't mind the suffering I experience. If God wants me kept alive, He is fully able to do that without drugs. And if He chooses not to do so, that is just fine with me.

From the reaction of both this cardiologist, his assistant and my primary care physician, I get the impression that they don't run into people like me every day. During both visits, I had the opportunity to convey significant elements of the gospel and its promise of eternal life to all who believe into Jesus. This experience of mine suggests that we have an opportunity as Christians to testify for Jesus to our doctors in such a way that they might seriously ponder eternity. Before leaving the cardiologist, he did say that he considers the peace I possess as very special. It almost seems like he wished that he also possessed it. May God help us be on the lookout for opportunities to testify about Jesus.