

Risk in My Heart

Written by Chris Tiegreen

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One of my favorite board games used to be Risk because it involved a lot of big-picture strategy on a geopolitical map. I love both—maps and strategic thinking. But Risk took hours to play, which I guess makes sense, since world domination doesn't happen overnight.

I only have experience in the game, not actual world domination, and it's a drawn-out, back-and-forth power struggle. It only ends when someone takes all the territory there is.

I think that's what's going on inside every human being. Well, I can't speak for everyone, but it's true at least for me and quite a few other people I know. There are two opposing forces vying for territory, and neither one wins until the other is eliminated.

One force is a fundamental sense of wrongness: "I know I'm messed up." We call that shame.

The other is a fundamental sense of rightness: "I know there's more. I was made for something bigger than this." We call that glory.

Both are vying for the territory in our minds and hearts. And one, either shame or glory, will inevitably suffocate the other. But we get to choose which one.

The problem is that a lot of religious teaching maximizes shame and minimizes the potential for glory. But as image-bearers of God—the "icons" in the temple of his world—we were made to reflect and carry glory. That's where redemption takes us, from shame to glory. We really were designed for something bigger.

That thought needs to win the internal battle for domination. At some point, we need to stop focusing on what we were rescued *from* and start focusing on what we were rescued *for*. In the lengthy struggle for power, our longing for glory has to persevere relentlessly to take all of shame's territory and win this game. Because it doesn't happen overnight. And it isn't a game at all.

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