

# Steward Life

## LESSON 43



### STORY

Farmers long ago discovered a way to protect a plow from bending or breaking in rocky ground. An adjustable spring-latch device releases the plow from its frame when it hit an object of sufficient size and drag. The farmer could stop, address the situation, and either remove the rock from the field or mark it and plow around it from now on. He then could quickly re-attach the plow and be on his way down the furrow.

### STORY

John was out in the garage “reorganizing.” At least that’s what his wife, Sue, called it. John liked to think of it as “cleaning out the garage.” Similar—but not the same. Anyway, after lifting two of the big boxes in one corner, John felt a twinge of pain in his lower back. “Now what?” John mused. “If I let a little pain bother me I’ll never get done.” So John took an early break and went into the house to take a couple of pain pills. A little while later he was back at it—lifting those heavy boxes.

Later that afternoon the pain killers wore off. John could hardly straighten up. Each movement caused such sharp pain his breath went out of him. Sue convinced him to go—and drove him—to the emergency treatment center. X-rays showed he had a damaged vertebrae. The attendant

questioned John and concluded that if he had stopped when he felt the pain the damage would not have been as severe.

## INSIGHT OUT

Did you ever consider pain as a blessing from God? Humans can invent devices that break or disconnect when continued use could cause damage. Motors have thermal switches that turn them off if they get so hot their coils could be damaged. Electrical circuits have fuses that blow. Automobile starters have shunts that melt to protect the starter motor from overheating. Plows have spring releases that disconnect the plow when it hits a rock. God has built into the human being devices that warn of dangerous physical activity—whether it is lifting, eating or drinking. In Christians, God also builds in warnings of dangerous *spiritual* activity. But humans sometimes pay more attention to warning devices for their environment than they do for themselves. God blesses us with warnings to “take a break” from questionable or dangerous activity. Paying attention is good. It is interesting that the Hebrew word we translate as “wilderness” means “the place where God speaks” or “the listening place.” When Jesus went out into the wilderness (or Paul, or the Israelites, or others in Scripture) they went out to “take a break” and listen to God.

## EXERCISE

Let the pain you experience re-direct your activity. Stop—take a break—and get into a place where you can hear what God is trying to tell you. Whatever happens in your StewardLife as a Christian that serves as a warning is a blessing from God to reshape you. Use it as an opportunity for growth *before* the plow disconnects, the fuse blows or the switch shuts off the motor.



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