

COMMENTARY

March 2023

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Renew a right spirit

Greetings from a little slice of heaven, Vermont.

I've had some time to myself lately - it has done wonders for my walk with the Lord! Many times we get so caught up in "doing life," that we aren't paying attention to the details, and the details are what make up a story.

My father, Pastor Bob, used to talk to me about money a lot, business actually. He was a businessman at heart, and I tend to have a bit of that in me. He would always say to me "Aaron, if you take care of the pennies, the dollars will take care of themselves," meaning keep watch on the small things and the big things will be taken care of as well.

Jesus taught that, also: "Whoever can be trusted with small things can also be trusted with big things. Whoever is dishonest in little things will be dishonest in big things, too. If you cannot be trusted with worldly riches, you will not be trusted with the true riches. And if you cannot be trusted with the things that belong to someone else, you will not be given anything of your own." (Luke 16:10-12)

That is a great lesson for anyone: we must mind the details - if not, the big picture will never be realized.

You know the old saying, "Don't put the cart before the horse." If you say that someone is putting the cart before the horse, you mean that they are doing things in the wrong order, or maybe making plans on how to spend money before we are even certain that

the money will be available. This is how a fool would act and yet I find myself doing this often.

As followers of Christ, we have invited Him into our hearts to be our Lord and Savior. Having a Savior is easy - we find ourselves in trouble, we need help, and we cry out, "Lord, help me, I can't do this life on my own anymore. Come and save me!"

He is faithful and does so, but there are two parts, not just the Savior: we are to make Jesus our Lord. What does that mean? We submit to Him, trust

Him, lean on Him and not on our own understanding, for each situation we find ourselves in.

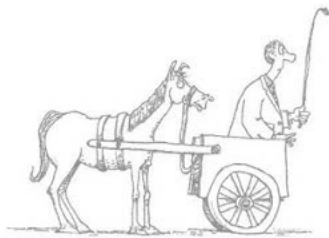
For Jesus to be Lord of your life, it means that He is the ruler, the boss, the master of your whole life. He's not after being Lord of a part - He must be given control of the entire life - the whole life.

Doing something in our own power would be like putting the cart before the horse; He so very much wants us to choose to work with Him, with His way and power!

Visualize two people in a small rowboat on a river. To go upstream there must be an exertion of energy in order to move against the current.

But just to stay put, to simply stay right where they are, the two people in the boat must exert some effort as well.

This means we can make an effort but only stay right where we are! It's the same with our diets: keeping the status quo will keep you at your present weight and strength. It takes an



The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide that you are not going to stay where you are.

J. Pierpont Morgan

We may ignore, but we can nowhere evade the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him. He walks everywhere incognito.

C.S. Lewis

Belief is a wise wager.

Granted that faith cannot be proved, what harm will come to you if you gamble on its truth and it proves false?

If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation, that He exists.

Blaise Pascal

There are some things one can only achieve by a deliberate leap in the opposite direction.

Franz Kafka

When someone asks you, A penny for your thoughts, and you put your two cents in, what happens to the other penny?

George Carlin

Politeness and consideration for others is like investing pennies and getting dollars back.

Thomas Sowell

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Ps 51:10

exertion of energy in order to go beyond the present circumstances.

Our walk with Christ is much the same way: following Jesus requires you to engage your mind in thinking, and your whole body in following Him. It means giving up yourself and your desires, and instead following Jesus wherever He may lead, even to a cross.

One who truly believes Jesus is the Son of God, Lord of all, will go wherever He leads, and do whatever He commands, and not be simply waiting on the Day of the Lord, for Him to come back and bring us to Heaven.

That's why I write to you today about "Renew a Right Spirit Within Me." I find the body of Christ, and even myself sometimes, in a circle of apathy. Apathy, meaning lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern in doing ALL that Father God has called us to.

Over and over in the Old Testament we see Israel turn towards God, He saves them, blesses them and then they walk away from Him in the next generation. We can see this, read this, and actually experience it but how do we get out of this terrible cycle?

First we must come to our senses, not human senses but spiritual senses.

It starts with realizing that we aren't in the fullness of a relationship with God. Remember, you can be rowing upstream, and still stay in the same place while rowing! We must exert ourselves with more effort in order to make any movement upstream.

Say to God today, "Renew a right spirit within me, so that I may accomplish what You set out before me!"

The greatest two things we can do to pursue this is read the Bible and pray.

We can also follow Proverbs 3:9, "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops."

Let's not speak about money here, but about time. How many hours we are awake? Let's say 16 hours. A tithe (10%) would be 1.6 hours to be set aside for God's work in your daily life (and you might consider that as a minimum.) This time could be praying, reading your Bible, Christian service to others, listening to worship, going to church, listening to Godly podcasts, etc.

In Malachi 3:10 God talks about the tithe. "Test Me now in this ... see if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."

Back to what my father said, "Take care of the pennies and the dollars will take care of themselves," - do the Father's will and stop worrying about your kingdom and instead focus on God's Kingdom.

Put your efforts there and God is faithful to fulfill all those things that you desire in your heart.

God wants to partner with you in what He has called you to. Each of us has a specific role in the Body, and we'd best first focus on His Lordship of our lives. Put Him first, accept His renewing a right spirit in you, so that at the day of Judgement you can walk boldly into His throne room and hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matt. 25:23)

This is what making Jesus Lord over our lives looks like.

I love you, this ministry loves you,
I'll speak with you again soon,

Aaron

Death is the golden key
that opens the palace of eternity.

John Milton

Listen to the word of the Lord,
O sons of Israel,
for the Lord has a case against
the inhabitants of the land,
because there is no faithfulness
or kindness or knowledge
of God in the land.

Hosea 4:1

But now Christ
has been raised from the dead,
the first fruits of those who are asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:20

No man is excluded
from calling upon God,
the gate of salvation
is set open unto all men:
neither is there any other thing
which keepeth us back from entering in,
save only our own unbelief.

John Calvin

Every man must do two things alone;
he must do his own believing
and his own dying.

Martin Luther

Sir, my concern is not
whether God is on our side;
my greatest concern
is to be on God's side,
for God is always right.

Abraham Lincoln

Faith is like a seed;
plant it in your heart.
God gives the harvest
at the appointed time.

Mark 4:26-27, 28-29

Take the first step in faith.
You don't have to see
the whole staircase,
just take the first step.

Martin Luther King, Jr.