

Developing Good Habits

"The spiritual life is not a life before, after, or beyond our every day existence. No, the spiritual life can only be real when it is lived in the midst of the pains and joys of here and now. Therefore, we need to begin with a careful look at the way we think, speak, feel and act from hour to hour, day to day, week to week, and year to year, in order to become more fully aware of our hunger for the Spirit. Henri J. Nouwen

One of the hardest disciplines to develop in our life is to stay in the moment. We all have inquisitive minds that turn us to what is going to happen, driven, usually, by fear and anxiety. When that happens, we begin to think negatively about the world, and even our life. The only way to come out from under the unpredictable nature of things is to embrace the moment, and allow the Spirit to plant us into this very place where we stand. But this is not easy. Jesus knew this as well. That is why he said the following after a long teaching segment on faith, "So do not be anxious about tomorrow; tomorrow will look after itself. Each day has trouble enough of its own." (Matthew 6:34) This, without question, is the truth; and cannot be altered. Therefore, embrace today; the here and now, **allowing your spirit to wander in God's playground of peace.**

Today is Sunday. I am finding it strange to embrace this day because I should be with all of you; worshiping and talking about the ministry and our lives. Like all of you I must develop new habits during this uncertain time of isolation. I have decided that to help me stay in the moment I am going to read, write and take walks with my wife and dog. To enjoy all this, is enough. It is hard to say that because I am use to working with others to get things done. I must confess, however, that it is hard for me to develop disciplined habits. My character pushes me to be obsessive more than disciplined. So, when I sit down to read, the stack of books by my side begins to get larger, until I just have to stop. My discipline is to just keep doing something, till I am exhausted and have to put it down. I have learned to live with this flaw because to depend upon time schedules and lists, when to do things and what to do, simply has not worked. Yet, I find myself strangely at peace today, embracing the moment. Letting tomorrow take care of itself, because there will be enough to deal with, when the time comes.

The trick in life is to find your own way, with God, through the everyday moments of your life. How you develop your way with God is singular. The fact that we develop a way of life with God is collective. Love what you find in the moment with God and you will find rest and refreshment. I find it in the tramping out of words on a page, trying to say to all of you something worthwhile. I will keep doing this every day, in the here and now, because it is also keeping me in the here and now with God.

I like to think when I do these things it brings me peace and happiness; they also spill over into my life of others. It is incumbent upon us to find that which gives us pleasure and feeds our spirit. We can only find this in the moment, in the day, this day that has everything in it to bring us closer to God. Don't worry about tomorrow, instead **allow your spirit to wander in God's playground of peace.** It is there our hunger for meaning, for God and for peace begins and ends.

Steve

Lisa, send this out tomorrow. With it send the following message.

Some of you are concerned that the homeless we service through the mail drop will stop. I can assure that it will not. We just needed time to figure out how to do, and still give honor to the recent mandates from City Hall and the Health Communities. By the time you get this email we will have worked this out.

Also, we did announce that the sanctuary was going to open on Sunday's. When we made that statement, we had not yet received the new regulations that are now in place. We will not be opening the sanctuary due to the possible spread of the virus. We are sorry if some of you showed up this morning for meditation and prayer.

Due to the fast-paced flow of information about the virus and our response we will be sending out email's every day. With these emails I will sending you during the week 2 or 3 devotions for the purpose of providing spiritual nourishment in a time of isolation. We will also be sending you toward the end of the week a sermon with readings and music. We are still planning to post these on youtube and possibly facebook. We will let you know the links in the following emails.

My thanks to Lisa, Martin Jordan, Esther Jordan, Grant Kay, Donna Pierce and others for keeping things moving ahead.