

Pastor's Blog No. 21 for Monday, May, 20, 2024

Making Progress

Sometimes prayer and waiting are hard for me. No, I take that back—it's always been hard for me. I want to be involved. I want to be doing something—anything! Even this morning before prayer I was cleaning out the second floor in anticipation of the city providing free dumpsters for our construction debris in end of May. For year's there has always been a pile of trash beside our back door at the church, while we look for a place to dump it.

The last time it was hauled off by the wonderful people of Freedom Life Church in Winchester as they volunteered throughout Randolph County to help people clean up their property. That was over a year ago and they hauled off several trailers full. We are in the same situation now and I can't pass up the opportunity to remove more of the debris from our church.

It seems like every time I'm trying to accomplish something towards our overall renovation, I have to move another pile to begin my next project. Some of it we need, but a lot gets piled outside.

As you can see, it's hard for me to focus on prayer and waiting on the Lord when there is always something I could be doing. I kind of feel like the Apostle Paul when he said"

*"But by the grace of God I am what I am,
and his grace to me was not without effect.
No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I,
but the grace of God that was with me."*

1st Corinthians 15:10 (NIV)

I've never shied away from hard work. I love the feeling of accomplishment. However, in prayer, I struggle to feel like I'm accomplishing anything at all. That is, except for the times when God begins to speak to me in the Prayer Tower. I can't write it down fast enough. I don't want to forget a thing.

Other times I feel like I'm agitating the Lord with my constant drifting in and out of prayer. I'll be praying, then I'll start thinking about something. Then I'll say, "Sorry, Lord," and go back to praying.

I often feel that if it was anyone but the Lord, they'd be pretty upset with how I spend time with them. Have you ever been with someone and gotten the feeling that they would rather be somewhere else? As you are talking to them they drift off to another place and leave you hanging.

Don't get me wrong, there are days when my heart is heavy for others and intercession fills both my heart and mind. There are times when I feel dry and alone and I need the nearness of God's presence. Then there are times when I am afraid and I need his strong assurance that he will "never

leave me nor forsake me." I guess after all this time in the tower I thought I would have made more progress by now.

By the way, how do you measure progress in prayer? Is it by the answers you see? Is it by a feeling you get? Is it by the confidence that you are "prayed up." I'm not sure how you arrive at that place where you feel like your prayer life is as it ought to be. Maybe I don't want to know. Maybe pursuit is possession. Maybe I'm seeking a passion that does not fit my personality. Like Paul said, *"I am what I am."*

Maybe God knows that. Maybe he appreciates the effort. I know I appreciate the effort people in our church show towards Susan and I. Every little act of kindness, compassion, and attention does not go unnoticed by us.

Maybe God sees more in all this than I am seeing right now. Yes, there are a lot of maybes, but let me add just one more—maybe I am making progress.

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
present your requests to God."*

Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

Until next Monday, may the Lord bless you! Pray for us!

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