

Sunday Morning Starters:

Practical Pointers From Proverbs

“Do not hastily bring into court, for what will you do in the end, when your neighbor puts you to shame? Argue your case with your neighbor himself, and do not reveal another's secret, lest he who hears you bring shame upon you, and your ill repute have no end. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.”

(Proverbs 25:8-11)

The wise man reminds us that we can't be right with God when we're wrong with our neighbor. Go to your brother before you bring your offering.

“Go not forth hastily to strive.” (KJV) Don't be so quick to go to war with your brother. Why not rather be defrauded?

“Argue your case with your neighbor himself.” Keep it between you and him. Don't make it public until you've first met in private with your brother.

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold.” Say it carefully. Say it kindly. Say it to God first, then you'll say it better.

Get Wisdom. She'll protect you from yourself.

- Jason Moore

The Citizen of Zion

So much is said in the Psalms about the blessings and privileges that are granted to the righteous man. Psalm 15 describes and defines who the righteous man is.

David begins with a question, “who may abide in Thy tent” and “dwell on Thy holy hill?” *Abide* and *dwell* suggest that he is not interested in just passing through. He is looking for permanent residence in the presence of God, citizenship in Zion. Several characteristics are listed, but they all stem from the three qualities in verse 2.

What a man is. He who “walks with integrity.” Walking is stable, consistent, constant; it is running neither behind nor ahead. To walk with integrity (like the word *integer*) is to go through life as a whole, complete person, without any artificial parts or components.

What a man does. He who “works righteousness.” Because of his inward desire for integrity, his outward deeds follow suit. “There is a way which seems right” (Prov. 14:12) to many men. But the citizen of Zion is not interested in doing what *seems* right, he’s interested in doing what *is* right.

What a man says. He who “speaks the truth in his heart.” It is no coincidence that proper use of the tongue is required to be at home with God. His heart is true to his words; he does not say one thing and mean another.

“He who does these things will never be shaken” (vs. 5). That promise is as sure as the throne of God.

- Bubba Garner

The New Birth

Wouldn't it be great if you could undo your past? Not the good, but the bad. Wouldn't it be grand if you could remove your mistakes from your record? The truth is that you can. That's what the new birth is all about.

Unbelievable, isn't it? Incomprehensible! How can a man start again when he is old? The secret is not to live life over. That would just mean making the same or similar mistakes all over again. The point of the new birth is to make the man over again – not the outside of the man but the inside.

“The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” The changes indicative of the new birth pertain to a man's spirit rather than his body so that this birth is not perceived in the same way as the birth of a child. We don't see the wind. We see the evidences of its movements in the stirring of the leaves or the waving of a flag.

The spiritual newborn does not necessarily experience any changes in his physical constitution to indicate that the birth has occurred. But there are signs in the conduct and direction of the spiritual newborn that betray the change that has taken place within. There are new habits, a new diet, a new vocabulary, a new outlook – all products of the new birth. Folks say to him, “You've really changed!” Have they seen the change in you?

- Jason Moore

Keys To Conversion

We call this account the “Conversion of Cornelius.” But after reading the first couple of verses, many might wonder, “what does this man need to be converted from?” The world looks and concludes, “this man’s gotta be heaven-bound.”

He was a devout man. Not only was he a Roman soldier, he was an officer, a Centurion, a commander of 100 men. To earn such rank he must have been responsible, diligent, an honorable man. He was even “well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews” (vs. 22). Not bad for a Gentile.

He was a God-fearing man. He was not an idolater or a worshiper of the Roman gods. He believed in the true God of heaven and feared Him. That’s not an emotion, that’s an attitude. And he shared this conviction with all his household.

He was a generous man. He gave many alms to Jewish people, seeing a need and doing what he could to satisfy it. Such charity expects nothing in return.

He was a praying man. He prayed to God continually and with great devotion. Matthew Henry observes, “wherever the fear of God rules in the heart, it will appear both in works of charity and piety, and neither will excuse us from the other.”

Cornelius was all of these things, but he was not a Christian. He was religious, but he was not right with God. He was ready to hear all that had been commanded by the Lord (vs. 33), but he was not saved until he obeyed it (vs. 48).

- Bubba Garner

Warning Message From Zephaniah

The book of Zephaniah is a book about judgment. While the judgment he describes is warning against disaster for the children of Israel, it also has the effect of warning against the final accountings of things, that final judgment at the end of time.

As you think about these warnings, think about the final judgment as well.

“The great day of the Lord is near.” It was near for the nations in Zephaniah’s time and it is near for all people today. “It is appointed to man once to die and after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). Even the “might men will cry there.”

“That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress.” As it was in Zephaniah’s day, so it will be for those who have not revered and obeyed God at the final judgment.

“I will bring distress on men.” What a horrible thought that “their blood shall be poured out as dust, their flesh made as dung.” It should cause even the most confident to think.

“Their silver and gold shall not be able to deliver them.” “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?” never had more meaning than it will have at the judgment.

These are warnings intended to prevent the horrible fate Zechariah describes. We need to get as close as we can to God so that when that day comes we need not be afraid.

- Dee Bowman

Repent: The Hard Command

Repentance may be the hardest commandment of all. It requires the very best in a man. Many a person will be lost, not because he didn't have faith, not because he denied the historicity of Jesus, but because he never repented.

“Godly sorrow works repentance,” Paul declares. Notice, he said, *godly* sorrow works repentance. Sometimes folks are sorry for their sin, but only because they got caught. Godly sorrow is the kind that comes of the realization that you have offended God. But look at godly sorrow and its accompanying repentance and see what it accomplishes:

Carefulness. Once a man realizes he is in a undone condition he is more apt to be careful about how he walks, where he goes, what he does.

Clearing. The conscience cannot be relieved by any means other than the obedience wrought by repentance. This “seasons of refreshing,” as Peter calls it, comes out of repentance and obedience (Acts 3:19).

Indignation. Once a man has repented of his sin and taken a stand for truth and piety, he has a disdain for his former life. That helps to insure his continued faithfulness.

Good attitudes. What strong desire is brought by repentance, what zeal for goodness, what revenge is gained against evil! These are attitudes of the righteous. They insulate against worldliness and its allurements.

Repentance is truly hard; but when the time comes that it is needed, it is the most logical thing in the world.

- Dee Bowman

The Family Together: Five Reasons

1. Encourage spiritual headship among fathers. Many fathers are providers and decision makers but not spiritual leaders in their households. *The Family Together* equips fathers for daily conversations with their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

2. Promote together time within families. Household habits like television, little league, overtime, tee time, and many more leisure time activities pull families apart. *The Family Together* builds the daily habit of uninterrupted family time to draw the family closer together.

3. Restore living room religion. Congregational bible classes supplement but cannot – and should not – supplant the biblical and moral instruction provided by parents, especially fathers, in the home. *The Family Together* encourages a return to the old path of teaching the Bible “diligently unto they children...when thou sittest in thine house.”

4. Inspire hearth and home worship to God. According to Jesus, the habit of “closet” prayer and worship in “secret” cures hypocrisy and vain religion. *The Family Together* encourages private, daily devotion in the home which prepares true worshippers for public, weekly worship in the assembly.

5. Kindle homespun Bible instruction. *The Family Together* is not a children’s book, but a family workbook. It’s *home* work for the family *together*. It serves as a practical companion, but not a substitute, for the spontaneous, interactive guidance of the parent. It creates a natural context for such guidance.

Get your family together today and every day. It just makes sense.

Sunday Morning Starters:

It's not just another day.
It's the Lord's Day

It's not just another week.
It's a new week.

It's not just another Sunday.
It's the first day.

It's not just another morning.
It's the resurrection morning.

It's not just a matter of perspective.
It's a matter of attitude.

Attitudes And The Beatitudes

The *Sermon on the Mount* is without doubt the most famous of all Jesus’ sayings; it is quoted around the world. It is quoted by folks who don’t even believe in Jesus. And all with good reason, for it is the most perfect piece of information ever presented.

The sermon begins with Jesus pronouncing a blessing on those who adopt and maintain a good attitude. There is no etymological connection between the word *attitude* and *beatitude*, they merely sound alike. But there is a connection between the beatitudes and the attitudes that are produced by it.

“Blessed” is that man who has a right attitude. First, *toward himself*. He must be humble, seeing himself as having little value when divorced from his relationship to Jesus. He is to be meek, gentle and under control. He is to have a right attitude *toward God* by having a thirst for spiritual things, seeking to find and sustain a pure heart. He is to have a right attitude *toward his fellows*, being merciful, a seeker of peace. And he is to have a right attitude *toward persecution* if, of course, it comes because of who he is – a Christian.

When these attitudes are present he is called “salt,” that which flavors and preserves the world, and “light” that by which others see the Savior. Try today to reflect the Great Light. Light up the little corner of the world where you are.

- Dee Bowman

Importance Of Good Judgment

I made a mistake. It was just a foolish error, one common to young people. “You just used foolish judgment,” my dad said, “you need to stop and think about what you’re doing.”

Life is full of opportunities for judgments of various sorts – some are little, seemingly insignificant, some are very important and may have long lasting results. Every decision is important, none ever easy.

Judgments follow us wherever we go. The wise man urges us that we pay careful attention to judgments and he says the book of Proverbs is given in order that justice, judgment, equity, knowledge and discretion might prevail in all areas of life, no matter your age. This revelation can make the young man wise, even though he may not yet have much experience with living life.

Your decisions are important. The word of God makes it possible for you to make good decisions, not foolish ones. But in order to do so, you will have to develop a familiarity with it. Make the word of God part of who you are and what you decide and you will not render foolish judgments.

As you go about your activities today, look for ways to implement God’s word; it will help you judge which way to go.

- Dee Bowman

Power of Jesus To Command

Jesus' very first miracle was the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee. John 2:11 says, “this beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.”

Miracles are signs. They are suspensions of nature, in this case, a sign of great power. Throughout the personal ministry of Jesus He showed people He was the Messiah by doing the great signs only a Messiah could have done. And yet some still rejected Him, just as they do today.

There is an interesting little side note in this narrative. In verse five, Mary, the mother of Jesus, said, “Whatever He says to you, do it.” Since Jesus is the Messiah and since it is to Him we owe our thanksgiving for coming and providing for the remission of sins, we should certainly listen to the advice of His mother, “Whatever He says to you, do it.” He Himself said, “Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven” (Matt. 7:21).

Jesus did many signs, all of which are recorded to make sure we know of His “eternal power and Godhood” (see John 20:30-31) and if we truly believe Him to be the Son of God, we will do all that He says – even today.

- Dee Bowman

A Model Prayer

The sermon on the mount preserves Jesus’ model prayer. But the Scriptures are replete with other prayers worthy of our imitation such as that of Nehemiah in today’s reading. Look at it again.

It is the widow’s prayer. Jesus told the parable of the widow who pleaded with the unjust judge to avenge her of her adversary. Nehemiah prayed with such persistency “day and night” (vs. 6). The Lord’s answer to his plight is a demonstration that God shall indeed “avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him” (Luke 18:7).

It is the sinner’s prayer. “God be merciful to me a sinner!” was Nehemiah’s petition as he mourned the sins of his people and his times. The man who regularly speaks to God and reflects on His law feels the same as God about sin. Nehemiah went down to his house justified for “he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Luke 18:14).

It is the participant’s prayer. Nehemiah didn’t just pray for the Lord to do. He prayed for the Lord to help *him* do: “Let your servant prosper this day” (vs. 11). This is the prayer of faith – the prayer uttered by a man marching off to do the Lord’s bidding. If there is any prayer God will answer, it is the volunteer’s prayer: “Here am I, send me.”

If you wish to offer a prayer that you know will be heard, imitate this model prayer of Nehemiah. It was written for our learning.

- Jason Moore

A Sign For All Seasons

“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues...” (Acts 2:4). As with all God’s wonders, there is in the sign of tongues a message in the miracle.

“God unto all the world.” Salvation is for all. Packaging the message in the languages of many peoples communicated the universal scope of the redemptive plan. “For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are afar off...” (vs. 39).

“Preach the word.” The good news *is* news. News is meant to be broadcasted, especially good news. This news is not just good, but the best news. It deserves the best advertising – word of mouth.

“All Scripture is inspired of God.” The men of Pentecost spoke not by their own genius but “as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Peoples then and now were assured that this was heaven’s message.

“That they all may be one.” At the Tower of Babel God scattered mankind by confusing his speech. At the cross He reconciled all nations to Himself. The miraculous tongues signified the gospel’s power to reverse the curses brought by sin.

“God has made this Jesus Lord and Christ.” The miracle of tongues said that Jesus lives and reigns. “Being exalted to the right hand of God...He poured out this which you now see and hear” (vs. 33).

The miracle of tongue-speaking still has a message for us. Hear it. Live it. Pass it on.

- Jason Moore

It's A Small World After All

I stopped to watch a crew of ants working to move a little piece of potato chip. It struck me how very small they were next to me and how vulnerable. I can blow – not very hard – and accomplish what it takes the whole colony of them to do. I can take a twig and with a couple of sweeps bring havoc to their miniature world. A carelessly placed footstep and the entire project is brought to naught.

What's amazing is that they seem not to notice me unless I get in their way. They go about their business unaware that I'm watching and ignorant of the amusement they give me. They scurry along oblivious to the giant hovering over their world.

I looked away from the ants securing their daily bread and up at the clouds traversing a pale blue sky. Somewhere beyond the clouds the Father and His Son look down on our blue-green orb. Like tiny ants occupied with tiny projects that seem so big and important in our tiny world, we've not time to look up. How little thought is given to the Gentle Giant of the Heavens who holds our world in His hands. How silly for me to look down and see the ant and then look up and not see Him, and not fear.

“Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?” Like little ants, we're all so busy getting our little piece of the potato chip we've not seen just little it all really is.

- Jason Moore

Sunday Morning Starters:

Sing and you'll be happy.

Pray and you'll be content.

Read and you'll be edified.

Commune and you'll be humbled.

Encourage and you'll be motivated.

Listen and you'll be challenged.

Try and you'll be better.

Proper Concern For Influence

The public acknowledgment of sin I’ve heard more than any other is, “I’ve been a bad example.” I would not discourage the penitent man seeking forgiveness, but I have at times been concerned for some who’ve made such a confession.

I fear that some concern themselves with influence only after they’ve been caught. It may be that they’ve been “a bad example” for a long time, but only lately were seen by someone who cared about their conduct. If your light is only turned on when somebody who stands for righteousness is watching, God receives no glory in that.

The “bad example” confession may also be used to avoid the shame of admitting your real sin. We don’t need a public confessional nor to make the preacher an intermediary for the penitent saint. But if you’ve been drinking with the boys and it’s known abroad at work or school, the church ought to know to what extent you’ve hurt their influence.

More than anything else, I fear that we’re not shining our light. I fear the Christians influenced by worldly peers partake of worldly pleasures. They repent for having partaken and join their associates once again, resolving within themselves to avoid their past mistakes, but never openly, unashamedly shining their light before their friends. Their light is hidden, as Jesus pointed out, under the bushel.

Shine your light. I mean *really* shine it. You can see the difference can’t you?

- Jason Moore

The Chastening Of The Lord

The chastening of the Lord comes in a variety of forms as the Scriptures themselves illustrate.

Punishment. The child conceived by David’s adultery died as punishment for David’s crime. The penalty invoked shows the distinction between the guilt and the consequences of sin. God forgave but still ordained that David suffer consequences for his sin because he had “given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme” (2 Sam. 12:14). “Be sure your sin will find you out” (Num. 32:23).

Preventative. Were we privy to the counsel of God we might find that some of life’s difficulties were intended for our own safety. Paul was privileged to learn that the reason for his “thorn in the flesh” was to prevent him from being “exalted above measure” (2 Cor. 12:7). The Lord at times may build a fence to keep us within safe bounds.

Pruning. “Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:2). Sometimes our good deeds, kind words, and godly conduct will be rewarded with evil. Take courage. Such is evidence of your fruitfulness. The Lord may be trimming some of the dead wood so that your harvest will be sweeter and more abundant still.

Don’t despise the chastening of the Lord in whatever form it comes. In fact, pray that it comes for it’s a sign of the Father’s love for His children.

- Jason Moore

Healing Of The Nobleman’s Son

The power of Jesus was not bound by time and space. As the crow flies, Capernaum was 17 miles from Cana. Yet the nobleman’s servants confirmed that at the same hour Jesus said, “Your son lives,” the fever left the deathly ill boy.

It’s a marvel to contemplate that there was such power in Jesus’ word. Without seeing the boy, without inquiring for his address or the nature of his ailment, Jesus spoke and that one boy out of all the world’s boys received the blessing of His power.

Trust Jesus’ power. Is Jesus less capable or less willing to answer our pleas now that He is in heaven? If He was not bound by time and space while dwelling below, He surely is not bound while reigning above. Trust Him. Ask Him. Wait on Him.

Trust Jesus’ word. The same tongue which said, “Your son lives,” also said, “Seek first the kingdom...and all these things will be added to you” (Matt. 6:33). We may not see the provisions Jesus has made when we are called upon to act on our faith. But when we, like the nobleman, are walking by faith, news may come sooner than we expected that God has done what He promised.

Grow your faith. Jesus responded to the cry of a man with imperfect faith. That gives me courage. But that’s not excuse to stay where I am. “Go your way,” He said. “Go” we must if we’re to grow.

- Jason Moore

He Did It Anyway

The story of the rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem is one of the most stirring in the Old Testament. It is a story of determination and courage.

It took courage for Nehemiah to set his proposal before the King. In fact, it took courage for Nehemiah to be sad in the presence of the king, for to appear before him unhappy might have sent him into rage with dire consequences for the young cup-bearer. But he did it anyway.

It took courage for Nehemiah to ask for the king’s help for the mission. After all, the King had no feelings for Jerusalem, no particular interest in her restoration. As long as she paid her tribute, he was satisfied. But Nehemiah asked anyway.

It took courage for Nehemiah to deal with his detractors, Sanballat and Tobiah. They had no pleasure in his mission. They opposed him at every turn. But he did it anyway.

It took courage to gather the men for the rebuilding of the walls. The survey by night took courage. The recommendations took courage. The work itself was so dangerous that each man did his work with his instrument of war at his side. They did it anyway.

It takes courage today to do what God says, to be what God wants you to be. You may face many battles if you try to do it. But be like Nehemiah. He did it anyway. So can you.

- Dee Bowman

The Joy Of The Resurrection

The resurrection is the central theme of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Without it, there would be no gospel, no “good news.” Actually, the good news is that since He was resurrected from the dead, He secured the possibility of our being resurrected also.

In our reading today, Peter told the lame man who asked alms, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give to you.” There are things that are worth more than silver and gold, and good health is one of them. But there are things worth even more than good health, and that’s a hope of the resurrection and the eternal life that accompanies it.

The resurrection is the theme of Paul’s preaching. He always refers to it as paramount (see Romans 1:1-5 as an example). In I Cor. 15, he tells the Corinthians that “if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men the most pitiable” (vs. 19). If this life is all there is, we spend our time in an endless exercise which is doomed to failure.

But “this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality,” then “Death will be swallowed up in victory.”

Physical health is one of the choicest and richest blessings, but it is nothing to compare with the blessings of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus.

- Dee Bowman

Consider The God We Serve

The excellencies of God! What an inexhaustible subject. How wonderful are His blessings, how genuine His love, how marvelous His grace, and how wonderful just to say all that!

In the Psalm we read today, David pours out the most intense feelings of his heart in an effort to praise Jehovah.

He praises His creation. God made the earth and the heavens before He ever put man in and under them. They were made for man. What a glorious God we serve!

And when you observe His great creative power, you, like David, are constrained to ask, “What is man that you are mindful of him?” And yet Jesus was “found in fashion as a man,” came and lived and died as a man so that we might entertain the hope of life eternal. What a glorious God we serve!

God never gives up on man. He is mindful of him even when he is in sin. Man has rejected Him as His provisions again and again. Yet He still is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9).

Take a few minutes sometime today and reflect on the goodness of God, on His blessings. It will lead you to sing, with David,

“Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!”

- Dee Bowman

Sunday Morning Starters:

What really matters?

Is it what you get, or what you give?

Is it how you feel, or how you are?

Is it how you are helped, or how you help?

Is it how it is said, or how you hear?

Is it why they came, or why you came?

Does what really matters start with others,
or does it start with you?

A Plea For Higher Thinking

The wise man said, “As he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7). That principle is true for every man. You do what you do because you have been thinking to do it. You may say when you have made some mistake or some bad judgment, “I just wasn’t thinking.” Yes, you were. You may not have thought long nor well, but you thought.

This section of the *Sermon on the Mount* deals with right thinking. Jesus begins by saying that killing is the result of being angry. If a man controls his anger, he will not kill. He further alleges that a man will not commit adultery who does not first lust in his heart. If a man controls his desires and brings them into line with what he knows is right, he will not commit sexual immorality. In the same way, he says a true believer need not confirm his affirmations with an oath; he just needs to tell the truth and there will be no need for such. He decries the idea of retaliation, saying that a good man will go as far as he possibly can with those who have done him misery. He concludes the section with a warning about the highest thinking of all – love. He says if you would be perfect like your Father, you must do more than others – in this case, love your enemies.

Right thinking always precedes right actions. Wrong actions are always the result of wrong thinking. Make this day one where you engage in good, wholesome, and edifying thinking and you will have a good day.

- Dee Bowman

You Are What You Hear

Solomon was the wisest man on the earth. His sayings penetrate to the very heart of who we are and they are practical to meet our needs. A wise man will heed them and not forget to use them in his life.

“Hearken unto me” is another way of saying “Sit up and listen.” We are, to a large extent, what we hear. To pay attention is to be wise, it lessens the possibility of trouble in your life. And to listen to God is the best listening you can do. It means that you will be hearing the wisest, more useful information there is.

“Blessed is the man that hears me, watching daily at my gates...” Every one of us would do well to practice vigilance, and listening is part of that watching out for evil. The devil is always around and if we don’t watch out, he will come and devour us. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” (I Pet. 5:8).

“For whoever finds me, finds life.” To find God is to find salvation, to find forgiveness, to insure eternal life. Without Him there is nothing left but destruction and punishment. If you sin against Him, you “wrong your own soul;” you separate yourself from Him and from all that is good.

Listen for God today. What is He saying about what you are doing, where you are going, what you are saying? Make Him part of your life and you will be happy and at peace.

- Dee Bowman

Watching Faith Grow

The faith of the Apostle Peter is at once astounding and puzzling. At times he was a strong disciple, seemingly undaunted by opposition of any kind; but when he denied the Lord we see a side of him that is weak and faithless.

In this little story, he shows an immense amount of faith in Jesus. The men had fished all night and caught nothing, but when Jesus told Peter to cast out nets, he launched out on his faith. The result was a net full of fish.

Faith is not a one-time thing that never changes. It has to be constantly built up, regularly reinforced. We need a constant association with the Savior in order to do that. Peter’s faith was not always as fervent as it ought to be, but he never gave up on making it better. He worked at the job.

When he saw the power of Jesus, he said, “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” Peter saw Jesus for what He was, but he also saw himself for what he was. Humility is the basis on which faith rests and by which faith grows. Peter worked at the job.

Peter’s affirmation is an indication of the growth of his faith. In the same manner, we must make our faith grow by being close to Jesus, by listening to His commands, and, after having seen how they are representative of His power, to believe Him all the more. We must work at the job.

Work on your faith today. Make it stronger. Trust Him who leads you and He will take you where you ought to go. Work at the job.

- Dee Bowman

A Mind To Work

When you have a mind to work, you make enemies. Productive workers by their diligence call attention to the idleness of others. In the kingdom, that translates into the wicked hurling sticks and stones at workers who are doing the building of God. Work anyway. The insults of the Sanballats of our day are just as harmless as they were in Nehemiah’s time.

When you have a mind to work, you invite criticism. There’s always somebody who could have done it better, faster, or cheaper. Mind your work. There are plenty of critics in our day who say concerning marriages, families and children, “It won’t last. You can’t do it.” Just mind your work.

When you have a mind to work, you need to mind your prayers. Prayer will keep you focused. Prayer will check your motives. Prayer will bring you new opportunities. If you have something to say about your enemies and your critics, say it to God in prayer. It’s hard to gossip when you tell Him.

When you have a mind to work, you fuel the enthusiasm of fellow workers. When you mind your work, others get to work. That’s how all work, even the Lord’s work, gets done. The builders of Jerusalem’s wall completed the task because the *people* had a mind to work. But the work started with Nehemiah.

Start a work today and watch it grow.

- Jason Moore

The Nobleman’s Quest

A good question is the beginning place for all learning. Learning after all is a *quest* for knowledge, a search for the answers to your *questions*. Four pivotal questions are found in the story before us.

“Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip is trying the door. A question is the perfect way to launch a quest for Bible study. His simple query found the door ajar. The eunuch himself was on a quest and eager to learn as Philip soon found.

“How can I, unless someone guides me?” Here is the quest for help. It takes a humble man to make this request, to admit he doesn’t know. The man who approaches the word of God assuming that he already has all the answers won’t learn. He can’t learn. He’s not on a quest. He’s on a mission.

“Of whom does the prophet say this?” This is the quest for context. It is an indication that the Bible is an ordinary book to be understood by ordinary means. The key to reading the Bible effectively is to ask questions of it all the while. Questions like *Who? What? Where? When? Why?*

“What hinders me from being baptized?” Here is the application question. Every disciple should ask and answer – this question. The eunuch is really asking, “So what?” He wants to know how this information about Jesus applies to him.

Try one or more of these questions out today. They’re sure to help you on your quest to serve God.

- Jason Moore

Walking With God Today

Dwelling with God in eternity begins by walking with God today. Here's how:

“Walk uprightly” – Don't slouch today. Don't even lean. Stand tall. The man who does right has no reason to be ashamed.

“Speak the truth in your heart” – Speak the truth in your home, on your job, on the playground, at the school. Don't lie today. Be honest.

“Don't backbite” – Build somebody or somebodies up today. Don't put anyone down. Encourage. Don't discourage. Don't gossip. Don't listen to gossip. Choose your words carefully.

“Despise vileness” – Don't give consent to evil today. Don't be silent when you need to speak. Don't stay when you need to leave. Don't laugh when you need to censure. Stand up for what's right and who's right.

“Swear...and do not change.” – Do what you say you'll do today. Don't make commitments that you can't or won't keep. Be a man of your word.

“Don't put out your money” – Spend wisely. Use your time, your talents, your money as if you were borrowing them. They are, after all, on loan to you from God. Make Him a profit today.

“He who does these things shall never be moved” – That's a promise. And God keeps His promises.

- Jason Moore