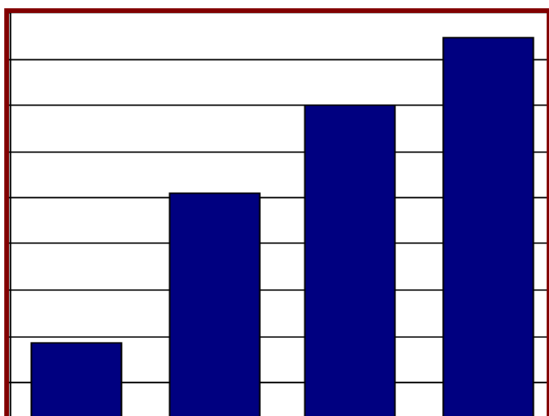


Melva's Corner



Ready To Grow?

Tapping the Source of Power

Central Truth: God is already where you are going.

I think we know that everyone who wants to grow has to learn to change. But what are those things that motivate people to change? Is it status, or money? Is it power?

One bit of research done by Harris Poll found that people who changed said it wasn't status, it wasn't money, it wasn't power that made them want to change — it was self-respect, affection, and acceptance. Those three were more important than the ones listed before.

You do know where you get those, don't you? You get your self-respect from being respectable; you get your affection by being affectionate; you get acceptance by giving acceptance.

The principles taught in the Bible by the Lord 'way back yonder' still work today. Jesus said it very plainly. We call what He said the Golden Rule.

The biblical story of ancient Israel's 40-year pilgrimage from Egypt through desert territory to the Promised Land becomes a metaphor for all of life to those who know it at all. We are all caught up in the story. We are all on a journey.

Most of us, however, seem to prefer a life with minimal change. We don't like to be disturbed. So we carve out routines. The early-in-life spectacular discoveries become customary and ordinary. What once made us feel the flush of excitement comes to be seen as normal and expected. And life becomes dreary.

You know that dull man or woman who hasn't entertained a new thought in a decade, don't you? She is critical of practically all that is for the simple reason that things are not as they used to be. He doesn't just reminisce but positively pines for the past. No, he lets his memory make the past far more glamorous than it ever was and lets it be known that he resents that things have changed.

It may be as trivial as technology or as monumental as the nature of morality. When people long for the "good old days" of their youth, I sometimes ask — depending on their generation — if they would really prefer life before penicillin or power steering, telephones or computers, air conditioning or coronary bypass surgery. More seriously, I may ask if they truly want to return to a time when women couldn't vote, segregation kept schools and churches monolithic, and children had precious few legal protections against abuse.

Change is always a challenge and can be positively unsettling. But it is also opportunity. It offers the chance to learn new things. It introduces us to new people. It forces us to make decisions and choices at a conscious level.

Whether individuals or families, corporations or churches, people who set their feet (or minds) in concrete are hiding from reality. They are even being untrue to their divine calling. God calls us to live in confidence and hope, not fear. He asks us to believe — as did Abraham and Sarah, Moses and the Israelites, Paul and Barnabas — that He is already present in the places that are new and untested for us. He is faithful to His people. We are on a journey with God.

You get an unwelcome diagnosis. The company transfers you. Some key person to your life dies (transitions). A dream fails to come true. Someone disappoints you terribly. The temporary and passing nature of reality confronts you directly.

Imagine you are in camp with Moses. The call to strike the tents has been given. It is time to move ahead with joy in faith that God is already where you are going.

Scriptural References:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within

**us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout
all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21
NIV)**