



MONDAY, May 4, 2009: “If you cut the head off a cricket, it keeps on chirping. Some people are like that. Their brains are disengaged, but they keep talking.”

—Leonard Sweet, *Out of the Question, Into the Mystery*, p. 182

- ☐ Lamentations 5:7 **Our fathers sined and are no more, but we bear their iniquities.**

Today’s verse is a sobering way to start the week, but it is a good reminder – we leave a legacy. Our lives are not just about this moment, this day, or this week. The decisions you make and the actions you take today and this week will be like stones tossed in a pond – they will create ripples that will wash up on distant shores.

I am counting the days until June 27<sup>th</sup> – that is the day my grandson, David Lee, is due to be born. But in some ways, even through he is not born yet, the decisions I am making today will affect him.

For example, each day that I drive up on our church campus I make it a point to see what is going on at our construction site. It is so exciting and rewarding to see the steel go up! But I remind myself, that the building is not really about me; it’s about little children that can’t contribute a penny towards its construction. Matter of fact, it is being built for children that have not even been born yet – my grandson included!

My dear friend, we can’t allow ourselves to get so caught up in the moment that we forget the future! Let’s not only leave this world a better place, but let’s plant seeds that bring a better harvest. Now that’s a legacy to be proud of and that is a motivation that should cause us to give our best.  
**SCRIPTURE:** Hebrews 11:20

TUESDAY, May 5, 2009: “Self-change is the key to organizational change. The real issues in any organization are not the problems in the systems and processes. The real problem is human commitment and courage.”

—Robert E. Quinn, *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It*, p. 200

- ☐ Ezra 9:3 **So when I heard this thing, I tore my garment and my robe, and plucked out some of the hair of my head and beard, and sat down astonished.**

This verse describes two of the greatest management principles in the world –

- ☐ *First: “What you promote becomes a priority.”*

This is true if you are raising children or trying to raise the profits of your company.

*Second: “When you have skin in the game, people will follow.”*

In other words, like Ezra, when you are willing to take extreme measures that will cost you something, it adds the weight of moral authority that will get people’s attention and cooperation.

Let me ask you, “What are you passionate about?” What are you doing that is costing you? You will never inspire people to excel unless you are first inspired yourself.

My assignment for you today is to look until you find a reason beyond a paycheck, duty or a “to do” list, as a motivation for living. It will change everything.

**SCRIPTURE:** Mark 12:29

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WEDNESDAY, May 6, 2009: “Fasting is meant to starve sin, not us.”

—John Piper, *A Hunger for God*

- ☐ Nehemiah 1:4 **So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.**

Recently we had an extra good service and I felt that God had used me in a special way as a catalyst. In reflecting on the service later, I was prayerfully asking God what made the difference. It came back to me that one of the reasons God was able to use me was that there was less of me to use. What I mean by that is that since this year’s 40-day season of prayer and fasting I have made the commitment to live a lifestyle of fasting. It has become a regular discipline in my life.

I hesitate to share this, but do so as reminder to you that prayer and fasting makes a difference. Just like with Nehemiah in our bible verse for the day. There must come a time in our lives that we get so passionate and involved in things that matter to God that we commit to many days of fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

What I am discovering is that the accumulative power of that sort of commitment begins to make a difference – in your life first, and then in others.

**SCRIPTURE:** Ezra 8:23

THURSDAY: May 7, 2009: “One of the highest forms of responsibility is the responsibility to be free.

*One of the highest forms of freedom is the freedom to be responsible.”* —Robert E. Quinn, *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It*, p. 179

- ☐ Psalm 116:3 **I found trouble and sorrow**

One of the realities of life is that sometimes we find things that we wish we had not! It may be a person, as the old saying goes, whose middle name is “Trouble!” Or, it may be an event or some news; and now that you’ve discovered it, you know you have to do something about it. We can complain about it, become a victim or we can call upon the Lord and allow Him to help us make good of it.

I sense that I am writing to someone today that is in the midst of a big struggle. It is a struggle that you were not looking or asking for, and it is a situation that is not even of your own making. What to do? Stay steady; do your best. Do what you do for love and for the honor of God. And if you do, you can be assured that God will bring you through and He will bring good from it.

And let me remind you just as you can find trouble and sorrow, you can also discover joy and happiness!

Bottom line, be patient – better days are ahead.

**SCRIPTURE:** Psalm 116