

Things to Know



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Musings from the Word

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I am absolutely encouraged by the words of Nehemiah in the midst of an incredible building project: "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?" (Neh 6.3) I am sure these words

are known by most reading this reflection today. Those of us living on this side of the narrative know there are unseen forces at work. The writer of the book declines to bring into the story a simple "YHWH versus Satan" byline. He attributes this distraction to people. And this is what resonates so much in my walk with Jesus these days: the question of distractions. This increasingly jumps up on my radar. Read the story again and you'll discover Nehemiah has been wrestling with a number of "distractions" in the process of pursuing the project. Relentless and nonstop, these distractions continually show up at his doorstep. They demand his attention. Difficult decisions had to be made in the pursuit of a "great work." Hmm. "Great work." What is our "great work" today? Do we have a "great work?" I also wonder, "To what degree is that 'great work' brick and mortar (as it was in Nehemiah's day) and to what degree is that 'great work' not brick and mortar?" Our spiritually instinctive response may be, "The great work of redemption." Again, I wonder, "What is that 'great work of redemption?" How can we break down a well-worn cliché into a way that captures the imagination of generations? Continuing to read Nehemiah's account, I discover that tasks were assigned within the vested interests of the people. What are our "vested interests?" And, "How do our 'vested interests' align themselves with the 'interests' of heaven?" And there may be many rings (of influence) that can apply to this quest. What are the ecclesiastical "great works" and how are they aligned with the "great works" of heaven? What are the congregational "great works" and how are they aligned? What are the person "great works" and how are my own "great works" aligned? And is it possible that in the process of considering these things and then pursuing those "great works of interest" I can become distracted by so many offerings of life? Is there a way, I wonder, is there a way that my roles can become my spiritual pathways to greater connectivity with the kingdom of heaven? In other words, can the role of parenting become a spiritual pathway? Can a med tech be a spiritual pathway? Can an Uber driver as a role become a spiritual pathway? Can all those "distractions" somehow become pathways? Perhaps, right now, in this moment, my "great work" will be to creatively follow the path of the roles as a way to enter "the straight and narrow." Talk about focus!

Musings from the Field



Constitution & Bylaws Update

Last night, the next phase of our journey into and through our Constituency Session occurred with the meeting of our Sitting Constitution & Bylaws Committee. Arguably, the two grounding documents related to ecclesiastical governance are The Church Manual and the Illinois Conference Constitution and Bylaws. While this committee has no jurisdiction over the former, we did have an opportunity to explore the latter. A good, healthy discussion occurred and the recommendations from this committee will go to our Executive Committee for their feedback. Delegates, in the coming days, you will receive access to those recommendations (and more). Stay tuned. And yes, please continue to keep our upcoming Nominating Committee and the Session in your prayers.

dyk

In 1820, the state capitol was moved from Kaskaskia to Vandalia.

Present the truth to the people in its true importance and sacredness, and be careful not to give them too large a portion in one discourse. It will be lost upon them if you do. Lengthy speeches detract from the efficiency of your labors. To those who are ignorant of the truth, your teaching is new and strange, and they do not readily apprehend it. There is danger of pouring into their minds a mass of matter which they cannot possibly digest.

(Special Testimonies, Volume A, p. 6)