

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:43 NIV

“Life Challenges Prevention”

One of the interesting facts in a fire prevention article I once read, was the statement that if people did some simple things the fires could be avoided, or at the very least have a less devastating effect.

The same can be said when we approach the challenges of life. If we had some simple things to fall back on, perhaps the challenge with all the things that can sometimes wear us down, physically or most especially mentally they might not have as great an impact on us.

In those kinds of situations many of us have a label in which we “call” ourselves (i.e., Lutheran, Methodist, Catholic, etc), but sadly “labels” cannot provide what we need when the challenges of life come. What we speak of here is not difficult things, but simple, basic things (much like what was alluded to in the fire prevention article). Notice it was the simple, basic things that got the early church off to a good start in Acts 2:42.

In doing these things it is not expected that all will become “experts”, but rather have a basic “storehouse” for your soul. Do you know exactly what it means to be a Christian, a follower of Jesus? Do you meet with God in worship each week? Do you take time to pray? Have you ever read one of the gospels, or the psalms? Do you know any hymns that can serve you well in times of stress?

I remember once going through a really difficult time, and I was listening to a choir sing the hymn “Lead Kindly Light” and it centered me back on God’s care and direction during that time.

It is always a special moment at homebound visits when I recite the 23rd Psalm, and the person I’m with recites it with me. Knowing that familiar psalm really makes a difference to many people. In fact I read somewhere that if you have trouble falling asleep, you should recite the 23rd psalm slowly and it will help.

When I first entered the Lutheran church as a pastor, I noted how many meetings ended with the Lord’s Prayer. Coming from a different tradition I wondered about this, but in the simple saying of the Lord’s Prayer, it seems to bring us together and focus on our Lord as we close a meeting.

One pastor even told me the story of how he found himself in a very dangerous, life-threatening situation, and all he could do was to recite the Lord’s Prayer when he needed help.

Worship is another part of that “prevention” for our lives. By regular attendance, even if the pastor has an off week, we will certainly meet with God in the sacrament of his body and blood.

Even the celebration of Thanksgiving can be helpful as we take the time to focus on how we are blessed.

Take the time to attend to these small things, “preventative” things, best as you are able, you will be surprised how much God will give back to you.

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