

Some Thoughts on Exponentially Celebrating Lent

A long time ago I preached a sermon using pennies. I used to have a gumball machine in my office and I saved most all of the pennies that I collected over the years (I used to go through them and look for the “wheat” pennies when I had the time). I had cans and cans of pennies, perhaps 20 or 30 pounds of pennies! One Sunday I chose my text from 2 Timothy 2:2 and wanted to teach my congregation the difference between linear thinking and exponential thinking. 2 Timothy 2:2 reads:

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

The idea that the apostle Paul is presenting in this discipleship oriented verse talks about the idea of multiplication. Paul taught Timothy the gospel and told Timothy to multiply. Once Timothy “get’s it,” Timothy is to pass the gospel on to others, who will in turn, be able to turn around and pass the gospel on to even others. It’s talking about multiplication... **but it’s multiplication that expands exponentially, not linearly.** If I tell two people the gospel and teach them how to share their faith, (after they know what they’re doing) then all of a sudden there will be three of us sharing our faith. If each of us continues to share our faith with others (let’s just say two more people each), now, all of a sudden, 9 people are out sharing their faith. So here is the old, old story that uses pennies to teach the principle.

The question is asked, **“Would you rather have a million dollars or a penny doubled every day for one month?”** Day one, 1 penny. Day two, 2 pennies. Day three, 4 pennies. Day four, 8 pennies. Day five, 16 pennies. A penny doubled every day for one month or a million dollars?

Here is how it worked with pennies. I asked Kyle Salek (the heavy weight wrestler on the wrestling team) to hold a huge bowl in front of the sanctuary and then had members of the congregation begin to drop pennies into the bowl Kyle was holding... Initially Kyle had stated he would much rather have a million dollars than have a penny doubled every day for one month (30 times). First person - 1 penny, second person - 2 pennies, third person - 4 pennies, fourth person - 8 pennies, fifth person - 16 pennies, sixth person - 32 pennies, seventh person - 64 pennies, eighth person - 128 pennies. At this point I gave Kyle the option of changing his mind but he was holding fast to his choice for a million dollars), ninth person - 256 pennies, tenth person - 512 pennies, eleventh person - 1024 pennies, twelfth person - 2048 pennies, thirteenth person - 4096 pennies, and by now the bowl was not only really heavy, it was soon to be overflowing.

Here is a fact and the truth, If we were able to continue doubling that single penny for the rest of the 30 days, it would well exceed 10 million dollars. It’s exponential multiplication, not linear multiplication. Well recently I was reintroduced to this same concept using a slightly different illustration. The question was asked this time, if you could fold a piece of paper in half, 40 times, how thick would the paper become? The answer? It would reach from your hand to the moon that circles the earth!

The point that was being made with this different illustration was not how the Bible teaches us to share our faith so that very quickly the whole world could learn about Jesus, rather the point of this recent article was simply to state that in the last 20 years, we have moved into a time unlike any other time in history of mankind ever before where everything is changing at an exponential rate and no longer changing at a linear rate. I have always been one who wanted to keep up and the fact is I no longer can... and you should not be surprised that you can't either!

So we are celebrating Lent and being asked to slow down, give something up, take time to reflect and while the outer person hears those words and says, "Ya that would be great!" all the time the inner person is screaming, "You have got to be kidding!" So during Lent, here is the one place you can still keep up... it's in your relationship with God. You can offer your relationship to God, over the period of these 40 days, as a sacrifice of praise and give God some time, and ask Him to take care of the rest. The rest being your giving up the idea of keeping up with everything else... And God's promise is that it will be worth it and that you will be blessed because of that decision. It's not my promise... it's God's! Looking forward to Easter together!

With hearts aflame,

H. Dick

Worship Assistants

USHERS:

- 1- Greg, Chantel & Kaden Warren
- 8- Greg, Chantel & Kaden Warren
- 15- Jay Herren, Myron Hoover
- 22- Jay Herren, Myron Hoover

CHANCEL FLOWERS & FELLOWSHIP HOST

Please consider signing the form in the Fellowship Hallway, for flowers or fellowship Sunday mornings.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Gannon, Dale Ladd, Ediger, Mills

Women's Evening & Morning Circle

Morning Circle meets every 3rd Thursday at 10:00 am in Fellowship Hall. Evening Circle meets every 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 pm in Adult Sunday School room. Any questions contact Crystal Warren.

Evening Circle

March 18th
April 15th
May 20th

Morning Circle

March 19th
April 16th
May 21st

Pastor Dick is in the church office Monday through Thursday. Cindy Miller is in on Monday and Wednesday. Gabby Fischer is on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

NEWS

Kum-Joy-Nus will be meeting here at the First Presbyterian Church on Friday, March 27th at 10:00 a.m. They will meet on the north end of Fellowship Hall.

It's that time of the year again for the Chili Feed. Wednesday, March 25, at 6:00 p.m. we will be having a chili supper. Membership Ministry Team is asking for members to volunteer to bring a crock pot of chili or relishes & or desserts to go along with it. Beverages will be provided. Sterling College will also be here along with 2 youth groups from two local churches. There will be a signup sheet located on Sundays in the Narthex & hallway at other times.

If you have not signed up for the Dillons Community Rewards program, please do so. Enroll your Dillons Plus Card online then connect to our church. This is a wonderful opportunity to give back to the church. Our church code is 10156. If you have any questions or need help getting set up, contact the church office.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for the four tables you donated to the food bank. We really were in need. Very kind of you. Come visit us when we're open. Tuesday morning 10-1 or Friday 2-5.
-McPherson County Food Bank.

Dear Women's Circle,

Thank you for sharing your blessings with your gift to Fellowship of the Least Coin. The church deeply appreciates your support of the ministry and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Because of your generous gift, lives are being saved, wells are being dug, God's word is being preached and hope is shared with people in need around the world. Presbyterians truly are transforming lives in the name of Christ! Please continue to support PC(USA) ministry and mission with your contributions and with prayers.

- Presbyterians Church (U.S.A.)

Dear Friends in McPherson,

Thank you for your gift through Allegro Solutions. John hopes to return to Ethiopia in March with Allan Sents to finish the house in Moja they started last August. I will stay here for further surgeries. Thank you also for all your prayers for us.

- John & Gwen Haspels

Thank you very much for the flowers & balloon arrangement delivered to our home on my 80th birthday and thanks for the unique card. This was far above and beyond the expected "name on the-wall" birthday recognition. MP 1st Presbyterian is a church of friendly Christian people. We are blessed.

Love,
Carolyn Hansen

I wanted to say thank you for the card and ice cream cone! Thank you for always being there for me!

-Breckyn Martens

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE FOR APRIL NEWSLETTER IS

MARCH 27TH

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

MARCH 2015

BIRTHDAYS

2- Don Burgett, Rita Perrin, Margaret Warren

4- Greg Warren

7- Rhonda Martin

9- Shirley Reese

10- Helen Moennich

13- Margaret Davidson

17- Larry Helms, Loraine Unruh

21- Hayden Eveland

26- Kailey Cordell

27- Taylor Boesker

ANNIVERSARY

2- Bob & Judy Carson