

CRIBB<S> NOTE – August 2, 2009

How seriously do you take your faith? Is it a casual part of your life? Do you prioritize your life based on your faith? Is your faith placed in a compartment that is opened on occasion and returned to its place? Have you ever thought about your faith and the ways it influences your life?

A few years ago, a major television network promoted itself with the slogan, “There’s more to life than news, weather, and sports.” The catchy phrase was intended to capture viewers and steer them to shows that aired during prime time. Quite interestingly, the promos ran throughout the newscasts, one of the most popular fares on the network. People who watched television news were targeted to stay with the network for its other programs.

Of course, you don’t have to be a couch potato glued to a television set to know there is much more to life than filtered perspectives on the world. Life is vast and brings a range of experiences. It is full of laughs and tears. Our emotions can soar in the heat of exuberance and drain to the lowest depths when we are hurt. Life is without a formula and many things we do often happen by trial and error. We seek to navigate our way by observing others and testing our own efforts.

One day a young woman walked into a Sunday school class. It was her first time at that particular church. The following Sunday she returned and again arrived early enough to attend the adult Sunday school class. For several Sundays she came to church and went to Sunday school class. One day the teacher asked the young woman why she started coming to church and Sunday school class. Without hesitation, the young woman answered, “Life. Life got me here.”

Although she did not explain any further, her response was sufficient as other members of the class just nodded in affirmation of her statement: “Life got me here.”

Things can happen to us that push us into places we may never consider. Faith is like that as well. There is a driving force within us that can push us in directions where we may never think about going. Our faith requires attention. What is the basis of faith? What do we really believe? How deeply do we sense our faith? How far will our faith take us?

There is a song, “We’ve Come This Far by Faith,” that is sung in African American churches. Often, choirs in Black churches march into the sanctuary singing that song to begin worship:

“We’ve come this far by faith  
Leaning on the Lord;  
Trusting in God’s Holy Word;  
God has never failed me yet.  
Oh, can’t turn around;  
We’ve come this far by faith.”

The entire congregation joins in singing that familiar hymn because it has deep meaning for people who struggle week to week with the knowledge that they make it every day only because God carries them on. That is a statement of faith. It is not a mere notion that maybe there is something greater than themselves. It is an absolute belief that life is possible because of the loving-kindness of the Creator. Faith is life that drives everything we do.

-Pastor Art Cribbs