

March 15, 2009

--I feel the Lord is saying that a lot of people during Lent try to – to bite off more than they can chew, quite frankly. They try to be holy all at once. And holiness is not an all-at-once kind of thing. It's a step-by-step thing. And if we try to make it an all-at-once sort of thing we get very very frustrated because we're not holy; we're not even particularly good a lot of the time. But I believe the Lord is saying, "Take a step." That's all He's asking. What's your step? And sometimes the step you have to take is just to drop all the baggage you're carrying so that you can take the step. So the Lord is just saying, "Don't try... Don't be frustrated if you're not where you want to be. You'll get there, but you have to take a step." It feels weird to quote Confucius in a church, but I will anyway, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." So, start with a step and then the next step and then the next step. And then you'll be amazed where you'll be. You'll look back and realize you're up. It's like when you're hiking up a mountain. You don't realize how high you are sometimes until you've looked around, and all you've done is take a bunch of steps. And then suddenly you wonder, "Wow! How did I get all the way up here? I didn't even realize it." So, the Lord is saying, "Just take a step." Whatever the next step is for you; and He'll reveal that to you. Just – Just try. And if you stumble and if you fail, get up and do it again. Try again. He's not going to – He's not impatient with you. He's not unhappy with where you are. He knows where you are, but He wants you to take another step. He wants you to try again. Thank you, Lord.

--Maybe the first step is just to remember that we are His. Just as the song we sang, "This is Your house, Lord. We welcome You." ... Each one of us is His house. We're a body that His Spirit may dwell inside if we have accepted Him as our Lord and Savior. And sometimes we forget that – that He lives inside of us. And we just – maybe that first step is that realization so that before we do anything we remember that. He's living in us, and we're an example of His love to others and allow that to guide our – our next step or our next words that come out of our mouths or the thoughts that enter our brains. Just to remember that He should come first and lay aside our selfish thoughts and desires and just remember that He's living inside of us, and we are to be His love and light to those around us.

--As Christopher was sharing that, what came into my heart is the things that God has been showing me lately and, I think, all of the body of Christ is that He is our righteousness. That our righteousness is as filthy rags and that it's a divine exchange. That step-by-step – Paul said, "I die daily." You know, that the life of Christ could actually take up residence. And when you think of a dead man, you know, he has no feelings. He doesn't get hurt. He doesn't get angry or offended at – at someone. He's dead. That body is dead. But if we die like that being ... if we die to ourselves, our selfish desires, our purposes, our plans, our way, and – and – and ask God to come alive in us every day, we'll be able to take that step. And we will be amazed.

--This is Your home. We're singing that not just about this building but about ourselves. And we welcome You in, into our hearts. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

--But the Lord is pleased with us today for coming to His home here and worshipping Him in His courts.