

Thrive not Survive

Deuteronomy 34:1a, 4-5 & Isaiah 40:4-5

1/19/25

One of the reasons I follow Jesus Christ is because Jesus inspired Ghandi and Rev. King to make the largest societal changes in the last 100 years without violence but a demonstration of love.

God is always trying to give good things to us, but our hands are too full to receive them. - Augustine - Sometimes we are holding on to our old ways that prevent us from seeing exciting new ministry that God has for us! The Lord wants you to thrive, what are you holding onto for fear if you let go you will not survive? Have faith to thrive, not fear to survive.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. knew his people would survive, they always had. But Rev. King trusted the Lord that survival is not the plan of Jesus Christ. Thriving is the plan. The Civil Rights movement is so all folks can thrive. Rev. King read God's Word about Moses leadership and understood that the Israelites were surviving in slavery under Egypt, but the Lord doesn't want us to survive in fear and slavery, the Lord desires for us to thrive into faith and freedom!

Matthew 10:37-39

One of the reasons I follow Jesus Christ is because Jesus inspired Ghandi and Rev. King to make the largest societal changes in the last 100 years without violence but a demonstration of love. Ghandi studied Jesus Christ to implement non-violent resistance. Rev. King studied Ghandi in India who dismantled the English Empire through non-violent resistance. Rev. King always knew that he might lose his life so that others could thrive.

Rev. King also studied Moses' leadership. In his final speech, on the night before his assassination in Memphis, TN, he quoted Deuteronomy 34 describing how far the Civil Rights movement had come, but he also realized that there is always work to be done to dismantle systemic poverty and to eradicate structural racism. Moses teaches us that we may not see our work complete. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. knew that. Rev. King knew Jesus' Gospel of Freedom is to always work for a better future. That through social action Christ is calling us to bring Heaven to Earth. As leaders, we may not see our work complete. And every Christian in this room is a leader. Moses stood on the mountain top, but he did not enter the promised land. Rev. King stood on the mountain top, but he did not enter the promised land.

For our own mental and spiritual health, I highly recommend having a hobby that has a sense of completion. Before I went back to school, many of you know I spent my days off cutting, splitting and stacking firewood. As I continue to read self-help articles and self-care articles, one of the most common pieces of advice is to have a hobby that can be completed. Its healthy to see something come to an end. But Moses, Jesus, and Rev. King teaches that many times when we work for Jesus' Gospel of Freedom, we may not see the end of our hard work.

Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church

WORSHIP • SERVE • GROW

Our sons had an in-home instructional learning day on Thursday due to the snow. They noticed that I was reading and studying most of the day. Instead of firewood I told them, when they are in school on my day off, I do my schoolwork. I graduate on May 17th with a Master of Science in Church Management. Completion. Mental health. Spiritual health.

Then continue to apply what I learned to work with you to build church vitality for the future. Those who generously give are giving and building for Christians we may never meet! God is always trying to give good things to us, but our hands are too full to receive them. – Augustine Sometimes we are holding on to our old ways that prevent us from seeing exciting new ministry that God has for us! The Lord wants us to ***Thrive in faith not Survive in fear!***

Remember a few weeks back when I was asked the question, “Why do so few people believe in God?” And I replied because I believe they want God to show up the way they want God to show up and that’s not the way God shows up. If we were to ask Rev. King, He would point us to the Isaiah passage: “Prepare a way for the Lord...Every valley shall be lifted up and hill be made low...Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.” We will most clearly see God when society is equitable!

We will most clearly see God when society is equitable! We Christians will most convincingly show people who God is when we work to make society equitable!

This very moment God calls us to prepare the way for Jesus. Our sons have chores each day afterschool: vacuum, clean bathrooms, collect garbage and recycling, practice their instrument, push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, read Scripture. They might quote the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in response, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere!” These habits are preparing the way for the Lord. These habits are to thrive. What habits are you practicing that prepare the Way for Jesus?

To thrive, love of Jesus Christ must be the priority. Jesus clearly says that today. We will not know what love is until we love Jesus. We all might be pursuing happiness, but happiness is just to survive. We won’t know what true happiness is, otherwise known as joy, without Jesus.

Happiness happens to us: joy is what we bring to the world! We won’t know what life is without Jesus. What are you trying to pursue? Jesus teaches us to evaluate our lives. We will have to get rid of old ways and old things to thrive. God is always trying to give good things to us, but our hands are too full to receive them.

Jesus shows us the way to Thrive. Jesus shows us the way to Joy. Jesus shows us the way to be great! Rev. King famously said, “Anyone can be great, because anyone can serve!”

One of the reasons I follow Jesus Christ is because Jesus inspired Ghandi and Rev. King to make the largest societal changes in the last 100 years without violence but a demonstration of love.

The Lord wants us to thrive so we can enable others to thrive. The Lord wants you to thrive, what are you holding onto for fear if you let go you will not survive? Love Christ first to let go.

Love,
Pastor Curtis

The Lord wants us to ***Thrive not Survive!***

1. The Lord wants us to thrive so others can thrive! – Deuteronomy 34:1, 4-5
 - A. We may not see our work complete.
 - B. Create a hobby with completion. For me going back to school. Firewood.
 - C. We are building church vitality for the future.
 - D. God is always trying to give good things to us, but our hands are too full to receive them. -Augustine Sometimes we are holding on to our old ways that prevent us from seeing exciting new ministry that God has for us!
2. We will most clearly see God when society is equitable. – Isaiah 40:4-5
 - A. God is calling us to prepare the way for Jesus.
 - B. Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:2-3, Luke 3:4-6, John 1:23
 - C. Israel is exiled in Babylon when 2nd Isaiah preaches these words approximately 540BC
3. To thrive, love of Jesus Christ must be the priority.
 - A. What does love of Jesus look like?
 - B. Can we know love without first knowing Christ?
 - C. Anyone can thrive (be great) because anyone can serve.