

REMARKS, GOV. VIC ATIYEH
NORTH BEND KIWANIS CLUB
SECOND ANNUAL PRAYER BREAKFAST
PONY VILLAGE LODGE, NORTH BEND
MARCH 7, 1983 7:00 A.M.

PREPARED TEXT

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS VASTLY DISTURBED DURING THE CIVIL WAR BECAUSE HE WAS SO OFTEN DENOUNCED AND CRITICIZED BY PEOPLE WHO PRETENDED TO BE WISE ON A MINIMUM DIET OF FACTS AND INFORMATION. THEY OFFERED WISDOM THEY DID NOT POSSESS.

INSTEAD OF LASHING OUT ANGRILY, HOWEVER, LINCOLN TYPICALLY WOULD TELL A STORY. ONE STORY HE TOLD HAS MUCH TO SAY TO US ABOUT BOTH THE VALUE OF PRAYER AND THE CONDUCT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

IT SEEMS THERE WAS A BACKWOODS TRAVELER WHO BECAME LOST IN A TERRIFIC THUNDERSTORM. ON HORSEBACK, HE FLOUNDERED THROUGH THE MUD UNTIL HIS HORSE GAVE OUT. THEN HE STOOD ALONE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD WHILE LIGHTNING STREAKED ACROSS THE SKY AND THUNDER ROARED AROUND HIM. ONE CRASH SEEMED TO SHAKE THE EARTH UNDERNEATH, AND BROUGHT THE TRAVELER TO HIS KNEES.

HE WAS NOT A PRAYING MAN, BUT HE MADE HIS PETITION SHORT AND TO THE POINT, "O LORD, IF IT IS ALL THE SAME TO YOU, GIVE US A LITTLE MORE LIGHT AND A LITTLE LESS NOISE."

AS I RETURN TO SALEM TODAY AFTER A WEEK AWAY FROM THE OREGON LEGISLATURE, I AM REMINDED OF THE TRUTH OF THIS PRAYER.

THESE ARE DIFFICULT TIMES FOR STATE GOVERNMENTS AROUND THE NATION. THERE IS HARDLY A STATE AMONG 50 THAT IS NOT FACING ITS OWN BUDGET DIFFICULTIES. OREGON IS NO EXCEPTION.

BUT OREGON IS IN FAR BETTER FISCAL CONDITION TODAY THAN MOST OTHER STATES. WE ARE POISED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY WE SEE COMING DOWN THE TRACK, BECAUSE WE HAVE MADE THE HARD CHOICES, THE HARD DECISIONS FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS. OTHER STATES ARE NOT SO FORTUNATE. TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH OF US, WASHINGTON AND CALIFORNIA ARE EACH FACING UP TO SEVERE BUDGET DIFFICULTIES. CALIFORNIA WAS FORCED TO ISSUE IOU'S UNTIL ITS REVENUE CRISIS WAS RESOLVED.

THESE EVENTS REMIND US OF THE IMPORTANCE OF FACING UP TO HARD TRUTHS EARLY, AND THEN DOING WHAT IS NECESSARY TO WORK OUR WAY OUT.

HARD WORK ITSELF DOES NOT HAPPEN IN A VACUUM.

ANYONE CAN WORK HARD, EXERT SUPERHUMAN EFFORTS, AND YET STILL SEE HIS EFFORTS COME TO NAUGHT. I THINK THAT IN MANY CASES THIS CAN HAPPEN IF OUR WORK IS UNFOCUSED, IF IT IS UNTIMELY, OR -- MOST IMPORTANTLY -- IF IT IS NOT PERFORMED WITH ANY SENSE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION.

LET ME TELL YOU ANOTHER STORY TO ILLUSTRATE THIS.

THE HEAD OF A MONASTIC ORDER HEARD ONE DAY THAT ONE OF THE YOUNG MONKS WAS EXPRESSING DOUBT ABOUT THE ORDER'S TRADITIONAL MOTTO: "PRAY AND WORK." SO HE INVITED THE YOUNG MAN TO GO ROWING WITH HIM, BUT THE ELDER MAN TOOK THE OARS HIMSELF.

WHEN THEY REACHED THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE, THE OLDER MONK BEGAN PULLING STRENUOUSLY ON ONE OAR. AFTER A WHILE, THE YOUNG MONK SAID, "BUT IF YOU JUST USE ONE OAR, YOU'LL CONTINUE TO GO AROUND IN CIRCLES AND YOU WON'T GET ANYWHERE."

"THAT IS RIGHT, SON," REPLIED THE ELDER MAN. "ONE OAR IS CALLED WORK, BUT THE OTHER IS CALLED PRAYER. UNLESS YOU USE BOTH AT THE SAME TIME, YOU JUST GO IN CIRCLES AND DON'T GET ANYWHERE."

IT IS SO IMPORTANT -- SO VITAL -- FOR US TO ALWAYS KEEP ABREAST OF OUR SPIRITUAL BEARINGS. IN DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES, IT IS EASY TO LOSE TRACK OF OUR SPIRITUAL COMPASS. BUT THE POWER OF PRAYER CAN LIGHT THE ROAD.

THE INFLUENCE OF PRAYER ON THE HUMAN MIND AND BODY IS AS DEMONSTRABLE AS THAT OF MUSCLES OR GLANDS. WE CAN MEASURE IT IN TERMS OF INCREASED PHYSICAL BUOYANCY, GREATER INTELLECTUAL VIGOR, MORAL STAMINA, AND A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR WORK, OUR PRINCIPLES, AND OURSELVES.

THE FAMOUS NINETEENTH CENTURY PREACHER AND ABOLITIONIST HENRY WARD BEECHER SAID, "PRAYER COVERS THE WHOLE OF A MAN'S LIFE. THERE IS NO THOUGHT, FEELING, YEARNING, OR DESIRE, HOWEVER LOW, TRIFLING, OR VULGAR WE MAY DEEM IT, WHICH, IF IT AFFECTS OUR REAL INTEREST OR HAPPINESS, WE MAY NOT LAY BEFORE GOD AND BE SURE OF SYMPATHY. HIS NATURE IS SUCH THAT OUR OFTEN COMING DOES NOT TIRE HIM. THE WHOLE BURDEN OF THE WHOLE LIFE OF EVERY MAN MAY BE ROLLED ON TO GOD AND NOT WEARY HIM, THOUGH IT HAS WEARIED THE MAN."

WITH HARD WORK, PRAYER, A FIRM SENSE OF DIRECTION, AND A LACK OF CONCERN ABOUT WHO GETS THE CREDIT, THERE IS NO LIMIT TO WHAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH.

THESE ARE ATTITUDES I HAVE BROUGHT TO MY DUTIES AS GOVERNOR OF OREGON, AND THESE ARE ATTITUDES THAT CAN SERVE EACH OF US WELL IN OUR DAILY AFFAIRS.

I BELIEVE THAT ALL OF OUR EFFORTS SERVE A PURPOSE. IN THE CASE OF GOVERNMENT, WE EXIST TO SERVE PEOPLE. IT IS OUR JOB TO SERVE THEM WELL, AND TO SERVE THEM WITH COMMON SENSE, RESPECT, AND UNDERSTANDING.

IN YOUR WORK AND MINE, IT IS CRITICAL TO HAVE THE GOALS, THE PURPOSE, AND THE SENSE OF DIRECTION THAT ONLY EARNEST PRAYER CAN PROVIDE.

IN ALL OF OUR ENDEAVORS, IT IS OUR CLOSE ATTENTION TO OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE THAT WILL ALLOW THE GOALS OF OUR DAILY LIFE TO BE ACHIEVED.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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