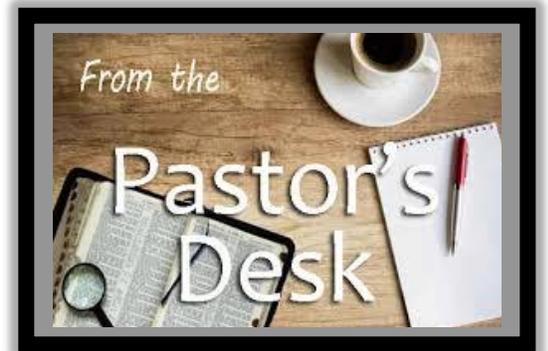


June 2024 Newsletter

*The only true limitation is the one you set for yourself.*  
– Unknown

It has been said by numerous psychologists, sociologists, and self-help gurus that we as humans are *creatures of habit*. Think about your patterns for a moment: 1) You probably wake up around the same time every morning; 2) You probably brush your teeth with the same hand and the same toothpaste every morning; 3) You probably go to the same supermarket to buy your groceries every week; and 4) If you look at the transactions in your checkbook (or, online statements) over the past 12 months, you will probably notice a pattern of spending.



Routines and habits are not always a bad thing. They help us to stay on track. They help us to feel safe and secure—especially in an ever-changing 21<sup>st</sup> Century technologically-driven nation.

However, creating new patterns and new routines is not a bad thing either. It is vitally important for us to constantly be on a journey of expanding our horizons, learning new skills, exploring new hobbies, visiting new countries (if economically feasible), and maybe even learning new languages.

Learning new skills and exploring new ventures have a way of keeping us young; keeping our brains sharp; and challenging us to grow in areas that we did not even know we could grow in.

When I went off to seminary, a part of the requirement course work for me to earn a Master of Divinity, was for me to take a full year of Koine Greek and a full year of Hebrew. Because I was so afraid of delving into those ancient languages, I put those courses off until after I had already completed a full year of seminary. I entered my Hebrew class with great trepidation.

But I must tell you—learning Koine Greek and Hebrew was one of the best things that I could have ever done, especially the latter. By learning and studying Hebrew, I learned more about the ancient Jewish culture, their thought patterns, and their way of writing, than I ever dreamed of.

Most imperatively, my mind had been stretched and expanded far beyond a place that I could have ever even imagined.

Furthermore, while it is okay for us to be creatures of habit, it is equally okay for us to be challenged; to learn new skills, new hobbies, new languages, new recipes, etc.

I want to challenge you: Over the summer, think about one skill or hobby that you would like to explore. Once you have decided which skill or hobby you'd like to explore, find someone who is an expert in that particular area or find a short course you can take to begin delving into that new skill or that new hobby. Once you make your decision, whatever you do, don't change your mind and stick with it for 3-6 months. After 3-6 months of exploring that new skill or that new hobby, you will be amazed at how much you have grown and how much your mind has been stretched and expanded.

Finally, by doing this you will prove millions of people around the world wrong. You will prove to them that you can actually *teach an old dog new tricks*.

Pastor Michael