

pray . fast . give.



Living Lent | Day 29

Sacrifice as Fasting

“Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.”

I Chronicles 29: 12-14 ESV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

My dad, Wells Kilgore, was a long-time administrator at Morningstar until he became too ill after a terminal cancer diagnosis in 2017. If you knew my dad, which I hope you did, you know that he found value and beauty in things other people discarded. There are still plants around today that he took as clippings before I was born. He loved to collect odd shells, driftwood, and other people's lost golf balls. What you may not know (I didn't until after his passing) is that my dad's career in mental health started with a great sacrifice. He briefly worked in another industry and had a job opportunity that would have made him quite wealthy, but his heart called him back to Georgia Regional Hospital in Atlanta. He chose people on the fringes of society, those in mental anguish, those who were abused -- he chose driftwood instead of a beachside condo.

Later, after his cancer diagnosis, my dad looked me in the eye and said, “I don't know what's going to happen, but I know I'm right with God.” I was never more in awe of him than at that moment. I was suddenly flooded with memories of Wednesday nights in soup kitchens, Christmas mornings at Morningstar, endless meetings at church, and emergency work calls in the

middle of the night about kids melting down. My dad wasn't perfect by any means, but to borrow a phrase from my favorite soccer player, Abby Wambach, he "left it all on the field." Jesus left it all on the field, too, when he endured 40 days and 40 nights of temptation while fasting. He became closer to God and gained clarity, leading him to the cross to make the ultimate sacrifice.

This Lent season, how can you grow closer to God? What can you sacrifice to make the world a better, more Godly, place? This year I'm taking a plant clipping and tending to it each day. I'll take the time to meditate on the abundance God has provided me and try to discern the best way to use it. I'm also going to give a little bit past my comfort level to Morningstar so they can nurture and grow the children there that my dad loved so much. I hope you do the same.

Challenge to Prayer and the Exercise of the Privilege of Generosity

As you pray and sacrifice through fasting throughout this Lenten Journey, will you take this opportunity to pay forward in generosity a gift of at least \$1 per day throughout the 40 days for the Children? It is a privilege and a blessing to give as we all look forward to Easter and the Resurrection.

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Contributor

Mary Kilgore Bryson, St. Simons Island, Georgia, a former Middle School Teacher at Glynn Middle School in Brunswick, is now on break from teaching to be home with her daughter. Mary and her family are members at St. Simons Presbyterian Church, and she has such deep roots at Morningstar Children's Home, having spent many Christmas mornings accompanying her Dad and family to enjoy Christmas with the kids there. Since Wells' passing, she and her Mother and siblings have continued the tradition by providing breakfast for the staff at Morningstar on Christmas morning.

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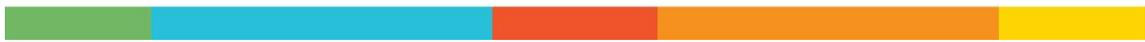
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