

Why God Wants Christians to Live in the Moment

I love it when a child teaches me a lesson. This morning, I had the opportunity to sit with one of the young boys from our synagogue, while his mother went to an appointment. We had a great time as he showed me how he could play “Old School” PacMan and how cool his remote-control cars were. In between watching him and answering his questions, I tried to get some things done on my phone to get a little ahead for this afternoon and tomorrow. When the woman arrived who was relieving me to begin the next shift of watching this amazing young man, I heard her say to him, “Hey, isn’t tomorrow your birthday?”

The boy replied “Is it? Is today Monday?”

She told him yes, and he said, “Well then, I guess tomorrow is my birthday” and went right back to what he was doing.

I stopped what I was doing and thought, *When was the last time I was so into the moment I was living that tomorrow wasn’t even on my mind?* He was so into spending time with me that he wasn’t even a little concerned with tomorrow, even though it was his birthday.

As a husband, father, grandfather and rabbi, I spend so much time planning and preparing for what’s next that I often miss out on what I am doing in the moment. I began to think about my time with this young boy. How many times would I be able to spend time like that with him? How often will I have to influence him by speaking into his life face to face, one on one?

I honestly became ashamed that while he was so into spending his time with me and showing me the best of his world. I was slipping out of his world and into mine as often as I could.

The more I thought about the time I wasted doing things in my world, when I could have been devoting all of my time to entering his world, the more I thought about a verse of Scripture: "Then Adonai said to Moses, 'Come up to Me on the mountain and stay there, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the Torah and the mitzvot, which I have written so that you may instruct them'" (Ex. 24:12, TLV).

Notice the words "stay there." In Hebrew, these words are more accurately translated "be there." In this verse G-D was inviting Moses into His world. G-D was about to give Moses the tablets containing the Ten Commandments. G-D knew how significant and overwhelming the experience of receiving the tablets of stone would be, and how they could have taken Moses' attention away from the relational moments that were about to take place. It wasn't enough for Moses to just come up and get the Tablets. G-D wanted Moses to "be there" with Him.

As I left that young boy's home this afternoon, I thought about the fun we had, but I also thought how I had robbed myself and him of my full presence. My heart was heavy, because although I had spent several hours with him, he had invited me join him in his unique world. I was there, but I wasn't there. {eo}

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