

## “Back To Basics”

Seems those words are the theme words to just about any team or military or business when their purpose is to move from being disastrously pitiful to being immensely viable or from being just good enough to being really great. In fact, someone said some years ago, that “good is the enemy of great”...weren't me cause I'm not smart enough to think up really smart stuff like that. And indeed, perhaps it's true that good is the enemy of great, especially when people settle for being good at what they do rather than being great at what they do. To move the needle from being bad to good or from being good to great, some fundamental things must occur. And that is true in nearly every sphere of life.

Including, taking an old rust bucket of a truck and turning it into a really nice, road worthy driving machine again. Those who read this article month to month, yep, both of ya'll, are aware of the “free” pickup truck that Randy Day gave me about two years ago. It was his grandfather's truck, which he bought from Ballentine Ford, brand spank'n new in 1972. And brand spank'n new that '72 step side cost a whopping \$2600.00...I know guys that spend that much on their tires and rims these days. I know the original purchase price of the truck because I actually have the original sales receipt. And all it came with was a motor and transmission, a body and four tires...and oh yeah, an ash tray as well. It did not even have a radio...but that will change soon...cause I just gotta have some kountry music going ever now and again whilst driving down some old dusty backwoods gravel road, which is what I love to do.

Now that truck is kinda special because of a couple of things. One, it is rare to find a one owner, forty year old vehicle these days. Secondly, it is rare to have the original sales receipt, all of which helps you know where that truck has been since day one. In fact, for the first 21,000 miles, Randy's granddad used that truck right here in Greenwood as a farm truck. After he could no longer drive, Randy's Mom used it as a grocery-getter for the next 22,000 miles. After which, it was parked in a shed for the next twenty-one years till I dragged it out from underneath that fallen down rotten shed with only 43,000 actual miles on it. And finally, it is special cause I am friends with the person whose family owned it all through the years. Well, after some initial things were done to it by another friend, Tim Hall, it actually was on the road again back in June of 2015. I drove it to Greenwood and man did it feel like a million dollar ride. Randy and Wilma took it for a spin and then Zack drove it...and then, well, it sorta blew out the engine and it's been sitting on my carport for the last year and a half.

Now, I could just put my rebuilt 300 motor back in it, but then it would still be just a rusted out old beater that would have a fairly short shelf life...or I could take it back down to the chassis and basically start from scratch and make it great again (geez...that sounds vaguely familiar). And so, me being me (which is why my wife says that with me nothing's free), I decided to go back to the basics and bring that old truck back up to not just being able to go down the road on occasion and hope it makes it home, but back to making that old truck road worthy, something truly useful and something that Randy would be proud of again as it reflects on his growing up years with his grandfather.

So please feel free to feel sympathetic to Kim since that truck has not left the carport for nearly two years and now is in parts in her carport....literally in parts...no bed, no fenders...basically no front end or rear end to the truck...and no motor. I know wives all over the Lakelands are at this moment sighing and saying, “Yep Kim, I feel your pain!” Now, will that truck ever see the road again? I have no idea since I am the one tearing it apart and have no idea what I'm doing, but I do know that if it's ever going to be road worthy and functional again, then going back to the basics of stripping the old truck down and restoring it is not optional.

The same goes for our spiritual lives if we have any hope of moving from being carnal Christians to spiritual beings who can move mountains with our prayers through faith. Maybe too many of us...and our churches, are satisfied to be just nominal at best, rather than great churches full of great spiritually minded men and women of God. Recently I held a conference at the Amish Oven in Greenwood. It was by reservation only and we reached our max capacity relatively quickly. The title of the gathering was, “Back to Spiritual Basics.” And that title sums up what I am feeling more and more these days. It seems when a sports team is struggling or trying to move from being good to being great, the coaches always stress doing the basics well. The same is true with armies, with businesses, and I believe it is especially true in the Christian life and in churches.

One of my points in the conference was trying to get folks to move from being bed-wetters to bed-makers. And in my presentation, I showed a video clip of a Five-Star General who was the leader of Naval Special Forces...the most feared fighting men on the planet. As this general addressed a college graduating class, he recalled how in order to turn ordinary men into great fighting men, the very first day of basic training, they learned how to make their bed. Now that seems small and insignificant, but the lesson of course is that before you can be great at something, one must first master the fundamentals, the everyday disciplines of life that make

one awaken with a sense of purpose and willingness to do the little things day in and day out so that there will be the discipline of life to accomplish greater things.

Sounds vaguely Biblical...“He who is faithful with a few things, to him will I entrust with many things.” Maybe what we need most in our individual lives and churches is to simply get back to the fundamentals of the Word of God. We don’t need another program or another study or another book or another building or another emphasis...maybe what we simply need to do is to get back to basics and, “Be still and know that {He} is God.”