

KIRBSTONES

ALONG THE NARROW WAY

curb-stone (kûrb'stôn') - *noun* - one of the stones or a range of stones forming a curb, as along a sidewalk or roadway. Historically, the curbstones were placed vertically along the edges of the roadbed, and the paving material was backfilled against the row of curbstones. The curbstones served ^{to}to hold the material in the roadbed, ^{to}to prevent the scattering of the material along the edges, and ^{to}to define the road itself from all the adjoining areas.

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¹³ "ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE. FOR WIDE IS THE GATE AND BROAD IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY ENTER THROUGH IT. ¹⁴ BUT SMALL IS THE GATE AND NARROW THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO LIFE, AND ONLY A FEW FIND IT." - MATTHEW 7:13-14 - NIV



Every building rests upon a foundation. Remove the foundation, and eventually the structure begins to crack and weaken. The same is true in the Christian life. Our individual walks with Christ do not flourish by accident. Healthy, growing believers intentionally cultivate habits that strengthen their relationships with the Lord and prepare them to influence the world for his kingdom.

While there are many spiritual disciplines, these three pillars support a healthy and vibrant Christian life: (1) *Stewardship* through prayer, (2) *Discipleship* through God's Word, and (3) *Evangelism* through bringing others to Christ. When these three are growing together, our faith becomes strong, purposeful, and contagious.

The first pillar is *Stewardship*—our faithful stewardship of the relationship God has given us through prayer. Prayer is more than asking God for help when life becomes difficult. Prayer is communion with our heavenly Father.

Jesus reminded his disciples, "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen" (Matthew 6:6, NIV).

Paul urged believers to "pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17, NIV).

Peter encouraged us to "cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7, NIV).

Prayer aligns our hearts with God's will, strengthens our trust in his provision, and reminds us that we were not intended to live the Christian life in our own strength.

The second pillar is *Discipleship*—our commitment to be in God's Word every day. Spiritual maturity cannot occur apart from Scripture.

The psalmist declared, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105, NIV).

Paul reminded Timothy that "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16, NIV).

Joshua received this instruction from the Lord: "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night" (Joshua 1:8, NIV).

God's Word shapes our thinking, corrects our priorities, comforts us in difficult days, and equips us to live faithfully in an increasingly challenging world. We cannot follow Christ well if we seldom listen to what he has already spoken.

The third pillar is *Evangelism*—the privilege and responsibility of introducing others to Jesus Christ. Christianity has never been intended to be lived privately.

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus commanded, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19, NIV).

Just before his ascension, he promised, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8, NIV).

Peter added, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15, NIV).

Evangelism is not reserved for pastors or missionaries. It is the joyful privilege of every believer who has experienced the transforming grace of Jesus Christ. Sometimes it begins with a conversation, an invitation to worship, a caring act of kindness, or simply sharing how Christ has changed our own lives.

These three pillars are inseparable. *Prayer* prepares our hearts to hear God's voice. *God's Word* teaches us how to live faithfully. *Sharing the Word* becomes the natural overflow of a life that has been transformed by both prayer and Scripture.

When one pillar weakens, the others eventually suffer as well. However, when all three pillars are growing together, we become the people God has called us to be. This is the essence of following Christ. It really is that simple. We have grossly overcomplicated both the message and the mission of Christianity.

As we look toward the days ahead, I encourage each of us to examine our own spiritual lives for these essential pieces.

- Are we spending meaningful time in prayer?
- Are we opening God's Word every day?
- Are we intentionally looking for opportunities to introduce others to Jesus Christ?

The world does not need Christians who simply attend church. It needs disciples whose lives have been shaped by prayer, grounded in Scripture, and committed to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. May each of us recommit ourselves to these three pillars, trusting that as we do, God will strengthen our faith, deepen our walk with him, and use us to build his kingdom—one faithful life at a time.

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Robert Wingfield Kirby III, D.Min.