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PIGS DON'T KNOW PIGS STINK

By Mark Gorman

A couple of days ago Coco and Tootie, our two dogs, had their monthly trip to the groomer. That afternoon they returned home, clean and fluffy, and very happy to have "escaped" that "terrible place". Tootie is a beautiful, blonde-colored Lhasa Apso, with a thick, long coat. Coco is the younger of the two. She's a Yorkshire Terrier, or "Yorkie", as most people say. She was a gift to our daughter, Sarah, in 2005, for Sarah's 18th birthday and high school graduation.

Some of you, who have known our family for several years, are already acquainted with these two special members of our family. And they are family members. Yes, I know, that means that we are some of those ridiculous "dog lovers", who treat their dogs like people. I only wish I could find people who would treat us as well as our dogs treat us.

Shortly after they got home from being groomed, I noticed Coco vigorously rubbing her head on a bathroom rug. When she raised her head to look at me, it was hilarious, to see how quickly she had gone from looking like a prim and proper Yorkshire Terrier, to an unkempt, scruffy mutt. Ha!

As she continued with the "attack of the rug", I realized that the removal of the red bow from her hair was only one of her goals. Even more than that, her primary focus was to change the way she smelled. She wanted to smell like anything and everything in our home. So, she quickly ran from one part of the house to another, rubbing all over anything which might contain any of the "smells of home".

Scientists tell us that dogs can sense odors at concentrations nearly 100 million times lower than we can. That's why, every time I fly home from speaking somewhere, I find Coco sniffing all my cases, and then rubbing on them. I guess she's either trying to get that smell on her, or to get her smell onto my case. So, I'm quite thankful that she only

rubs up against the case, instead of using a more specific form of applying her scent to it, as a male dog would do. Ha!

Anyway, all this reminded me of something I heard several years ago, which has stuck with me all these years. “PIGS DON’T KNOW PIGS STINK.” Have you ever heard that?

At first, it just sounds like a funny saying. But as you think about it, you start to realize the profound truth it brings to mind.

For the past several weeks, we’ve been discussing “THE 4 PHASES OF EXISTENCE”:

1. Self-Destruction
2. Survival
3. Success
4. Significance

As we look at these four phases, we realize that everyone on earth is presently in one of the four. No matter who they are, where they come from, or what their past may be, every person in the world is in one of these four phases, right now.

And obviously, we can see right away that we definitely don’t want to remain in the first one, and really, we don’t want to stay in the second one too long, once we realize that there are two more beyond it. And each phase is incrementally better than the one before.

But I want you to stop for a moment and ask yourself, how many people actually realize that the last two phases exist?

True, everyone knows that “Success” exists, but do they believe it is attainable for them, or just for someone else?

Because, if we don’t feel that it is even possible to attain success, then we tend to “resign” ourselves to accept “Survival”, assuming that it is the best we can do.

So, why do people remain in any of the first three of these four phases?

It really depends on several factors.

First, how many of these 4 Phases are they aware of?

Secondly, do they believe that they can choose the Phase Of Existence for themselves?

Third, do they actually know which Phase they’re in right now?

Think about that last question for a moment. Process it, and ask yourself if you can be objective enough with yourself, to truly know which Phase Of Existence you are in right

now.

If you know me very well, you know that I'm not satisfied to live with status quo. One of my mottos is, "If excellence is even one of the options, it's the only option."

So, for me, I have no desire to live in Self-Destruction or Survival. I am determined to not only Succeed, but also, to go beyond success, and to achieve Significance, by helping others to succeed.

But, what if you were surrounded by people who have no idea of what Success or Significance truly is? How would you know which of these 4 Phases you're in at the moment?

You see, it really all is relative.

And this brings us back to the title of this teaching, "Pigs Don't Know Pigs Stink".

I'm often amazed, when I think of how much stronger a dog's sense of smell is, than ours, and then to think of what they "sniff". Ha! You know what I mean. They don't sniff each other's breath! It's the other end. So, if their sense of smell is so strong, how in the world can they stand the smell of another dog's "hinder parts"? Amazing, huh?

But this reinforces one of my theories, that "Stink Is Relative".

What stinks to us, may not offend a dog's sense of smell.

Have you ever been near someone, and wondered if their sense of smell even worked? I've seen people who actually had no idea that their breath smelled like some animal had died in their mouth! Know what I mean?

I remember one time, flying from LA to Sydney, Australia. The flight was around 15 hours, and I was jammed up next to some woman who had NO IDEA that underarm deodorant had been invented! This woman was older than me. She and her husband were flying to visit family in Australia, and although she lived in a part of the world which is very highly advanced, she still had no idea that she was giving off a very offensive smell.

My obvious thought was, "How can she not know that she stinks?"

The fact is that, where she comes from, that smell isn't considered offensive.

Shocker!

But it's true. "Stink Is Relative". Don't your relatives stink? Ha!

But seriously, if everyone around you smells like that, then you don't feel odd. And actually, since you smell like everyone else around you, you don't even know that you

stink.

That's sort of what it means when we say that "Pigs Don't Know Pigs Stink."

To another pig, a pig doesn't stink. But to us, it does!

So, ask yourself, if you feel as though you are in "Success Mode", or "Significance Mode", to whom or what are you comparing yourself, to make that determination?

This brings us to the topic of "mentors".

The Bible says that there is great safety in the "multitude of counselors".

What is a counselor? It isn't someone who constantly tells you that you're ok, and you don't need to change.

A counselor is someone who can help you see where you need to improve – to grow and mature.

But, if you don't have true mentors – true counselors in your life, then how will you know which Phase you're in, "Self-Destruction", "Survival", "Success" or "Significance"?

One of my mentors says this, "Your friends love you the way you are. Your mentor loves you too much, to let you stay that way."

If everyone around you is constantly saying that you're doing great, and that you're a Success, or even that you've achieved Significance, you need to do a check, to see if they know what they're talking about.

Ask yourself this question, "How many of my friends are more accomplished than me?"

In other words, if you're always the most successful person in the room, then you need some more friends. (I'm not saying to "ditch" the friends you have now. But you DO need some "additional" friends, who "stretch" you – challenge you to grow.)

I try to spend time around people who have a stronger prayer life than mine, who are more disciplined than me, who have achieved more than me.

Now, I'm not saying that you should ONLY be with people who have achieved more than you. Because, I'm sure we all know that if you are ONLY with people who "outshine" you, it could eventually cause you to become depressed, or hopeless.

But, in the "mix", there should be those people in your life, who challenge you to be a "better you".

I remember the first time I met our financial planner, probably 5 or 6 years ago. He told me that he had recently decided not to accept any new clients who earned less than a certain amount of money, per year. When I asked why, he explained that, people at that income level, think differently than those who make significantly less money.

He went on to say that, it typically takes 2 or 3 times as long to convince someone to take certain steps in regard to their financial future, if they earn less money. But, his clients whose annual income was significantly higher, seemed to think differently about money and business, and therefore, required much less “coaxing” to convince them to take the same financial steps.

After hearing his explanation, I realized why it is so important for us to spend time with people who have achieved much more than us, in business, or in ministry, or any other area of life. When we purpose in our heart, to get near those people whose lives challenge us to do more, we are effectively ensuring that we won’t “deceive ourselves” into thinking that we’re in “Success Mode”, when we may actually be only in “Survival Mode” instead.

My suggestion to you is to take inventory of the influences in your life. Ask yourself, “Who are the people whose opinions of me matter most in my life?” Then look at those people to see if they are where you want to be.

Because that’s really the people who we should be spending time with, those who already have achieved what we hope to achieve. We need to spend time around people who challenge us to pray more, work harder, practice more discipline, plan better, and to become a better you or me.

Remember, there truly is safety in the multitude of counselors. But that only works if you have the “right counselors”.

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