

# MercEmail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

## Sidewalks

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A few weeks ago, a friend and brother, Jeff Smith, shared a devotional message with our church family. His message gave me the idea for this article.

I grew up on Virginia Avenue in Chester, WV. On both sides of Virginia Avenue we had a six foot wide sidewalk made out of bricks. I memorized every inch of that sidewalk. I can still tell you where the tree roots caused the bricks to create a "bump" in the sidewalk, and where certain bricks were broken on the sidewalk. One of the last times I went home, I walked down the street and showed my children how you would navigate this sidewalk so you could receive the smoothest ride. At one time, Virginia Avenue, itself was brick with trolley tracks running down the middle. But as time passed, the bricks and tracks were covered with asphalt.

One of the ways I earned money as a child was that I removed the grass and moss that would grow in between the bricks in the sidewalk. I would take a narrow knife and sometimes a screwdriver and meticulously prise up the grass and green moss that grew between the bricks. But before the Summer was over, the grass and moss would grow back and I would do it all over again. (Btw, I didn't do this job often. I decided that the work and time invested just wasn't worth the 50 cents the neighbors would pay).

But thinking back on this brick sidewalk brought a couple lessons to my mind that I would like for you to consider.

- First, don't underestimate the power of a seed. God's "seed" or "word" (Luke 8:11) is powerful like the grass and moss that grew in the most unlikely places between the bricks in the sidewalk. This truth serves to remind me that it's not our job to be selective as to where we sow the seed. We're simply told to sow it. Don't write people off because you decide the seed would never take root in their hearts. Seeds are resilient! They can grow and thrive in some of the most unlikely areas. Get busy sowing seed and be amazed by its power.
- Second, don't use your circumstances in life as an excuse for a lack of productivity in God's kingdom. The sidewalk on Virginia Avenue reminds me that you don't have to be "planted" in an ideal location to thrive. You may be "planted" among worldly co-workers, foul-mouthed neighbors, and unbelieving family members, but that's no excuse for you not to grow. The "seed" or "word of God" (Luke 8:11) is resilient. It can grow and thrive under some of the most extreme conditions. Don't use difficulty as an excuse not to grow.

Give is some thought!

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