

During Lent, we have an opportunity to *live our dash* through a process of examining our lives for a little spring cleaning and spiritual practice.

***Live Your Dash
Inside Out***

by Linda Ellis

Does your inside match your outside?
Does your outside match your in?
Do the kind deeds you envision
stay confined with your skin?

Your thoughts and your life's actions—
are they close...or far apart?
Is the way in which you live your life
what you believe deep in your heart?

Are you the same person on the inside
people meet on the out,
or do the two clash and differ
leaving your conscience full of doubt?

Do you change to fit each circumstance
like a chameleon changes hues
or honestly communicate
your true beliefs and views?

Do you turn your back on your ideals
when it seems they're not in vogue
and follow the path of least resistance
instead of boldly going rogue?

Have you learned from all the lessons
life has taught you as you've grown?
Do you respect the person you are with
when you are all alone?

Do you praise yourself for goodwill
that is only in your head?
Can you replace “do as I say, not as I do”
with “do as I do,” instead?

Are you a different person
than the person people see?
Are you a different person
than the one you’d like to be?

In you, can others place their trust
and never be deceived
and see you as you really are,
not how you wish to be perceived?

Would they not see a difference,
or would they grieve in sorrow,
if your inside today
became your outside tomorrow?

Second Week of Lent: *Renewed Trust*

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, God showed up and said to him, “I am The Strong God, live entirely before me, live to the hilt! I’ll make a covenant between us and I’ll give you a huge family.”

Overwhelmed, Abram fell flat on his face.

Then God said to him, “This is my covenant with you: You’ll be the father of many nations. Your name will no longer be Abram, but Abraham, meaning that ‘I’m making you the father of many nations.’ I’ll make you a father of fathers—I’ll make nations from you, kings will issue from you. I’m establishing my covenant between me and you, a covenant that includes your descendants, a covenant that goes on and on and on, a covenant that commits me to be your God and the God of your descendants. And I’m giving you and your descendants this land where you’re now just camping, this whole country of Canaan, to own forever. And I’ll be their God.”

God continued speaking to Abraham, “And Sarai your wife: Don’t call her Sarai any longer; call her Sarah. I’ll bless her—yes! I’ll give you a son by her! Oh, how I’ll bless her! Nations will come from her; kings of nations will come from her.”

-Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

God makes a covenant with Abraham and Sarah, after they have grown old, far beyond the years of having children. God had promised them a child a long time ago, and continued to make this promise, but it took a long time to fulfill. They struggled along the way, and while they waited they grew impatient. God’s covenant with Abraham and Sarah was that they would be the ancestors of a multitude of nations. But they only had one son. They didn’t see the true fulfillment of the covenant in their lifetime—they saw only a glimpse, in the birth of their son. Sometimes our own trust in God fails, as we wait for fulfillment or satisfaction—or even simply rest from the weariness at times. Where do you see hope? Where do you still find courage to trust? Where is God calling you to have renewed trust?

Practice: Journal about your own struggles with trust. Where is trusting God difficult in your life? What do you need from God to help you renew your trust?

As you pray this week, pray for God to renew your trust. Pray for the courage to take the leap of faith, and to put your trust in God.