

Beyond Belief: What the Spiritual Disciplines Are

Session 4A

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INTRO: "We've come to the point now where we want to talk about practical steps to be taken to enter into the teachings of Jesus and make them a part of our lives in the way that God intended them to be not as external legalisms but rather as expressions of the kind of person that we have become."

SUMMARY / REVIEW

As Jesus's disciple I am learning from him how to lead my _____ as _____ would lead my life if he were I.

- It is my consciously _____ aim to learn this.
- I am constantly arranging and rearranging my affairs to reach this goal.
- If I really do intend to be Jesus's disciple, to really learn the things he has taught about blessedness and righteousness, then I _____ myself to it.

It's one thing to wish for it, another thing to want it, another thing to intend it. Intention comes at the point that we are going to bring this into reality.

MY PART IN SPIRITUAL FORMATION: 2 Peter 1:4-7:

- Agape love is presented as the capstone.
- Romans 5:1-5, Matthew 5, Colossians 3:14
- This is something for us _____ !

→The issue of passivity and activity is the deepest unsolved mystery in the understanding of spiritual growth today. In a personal relationship you never have just one. You have activity and passivity on both sides.

→Relationship of _____ is one where the gift of God comes to us through the Word of the gospel and we are brought to life and there is an element of passivity in that but as soon as that Word takes root in us and the Spirit begins to move, then we're active.

Our contribution to spiritual formation:

- 1) Do we want it? (Do we understand it well enough to want it?)
- 2) Do we intend it? Intention comes in degrees.
- 3) We must _____, "Yes this will be it." Take steps into discipleship...

I'm going to have this, to learn it from Jesus Christ, and to _____ my affairs so this will happen.

Is this what our life is about? What is our life about?

- My life is about _____ this kind of person.
- God will accompany it with His grace and we'll not go it alone.

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STEPPING INTO DISCIPLESHIP

The place of discipleship is _____, _____ and play. I'm learning to do it all in the Kingdom of God.

If we can't bring our job into discipleship, we are automatically _____ a major portion of our life from learning to live in the Kingdom of God.

- It means I learn to do that job as Jesus would do it, in the power of the Kingdom of God.
- One of the things it means is I simply don't cooperate with evil.
- We ought to see the hand of God making a difference miraculously in our work.

Our life is not just avoiding sin! As we grow increasingly the good that we are involved in makes sin appear like the _____ it is. I don't have to spend my time resisting _____!

When I'm caught up in what is good, then I'll see the prosperity of God's Kingdom in the good I do.

As a disciple, we take our work, whatever it might be, and we make that the place where we look for the hand of God. We learn how to do that.

REVIEW OF THE SERMON OF THE MOUNT

The commands of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount are _____ to be a certain type of person.

SANCTIFICATION

A consciously chosen and sustained relationship with God in Christ in which one is able to do and _____ does what they know to be right before God.

- Problem: Not being able to do the things that you intend to do or doing the things you don't intend to do.
 - That is the situation of the person even though they have this immortal soul, and are an unceasing spiritual being, they're caught in a world that leaves them in bondage and they're not able to do the things that they know they should do.
 - In sanctification you have, as a disciple, come to the point where you are actually able to do the things that you know to do.
- We know that we have made great progress when we don't have to _____ about certain kinds of things.
- What we have to _____ about is a deep indication of who we really are on the inside.

Sanctification is not an experience, it's not a status, it's not something you attain, it's not an outward form. It does become a track record, and it does become a habituation. That's a constantly sustained relationship. This is the outcome of spiritual formation.

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SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The formation of the inner self so the righteousness of Christ is extended throughout the _____.

Various approaches:

- New Age - "Enlightenment." Aiming at a set of physical and mental disciplines in such a way that you come to a place of enlightenment where you perceive you are not distinct from anything else and you lose all of your desires. Inspired by Hindu and Buddhist thinking. The curse is desire, and the aim is to get rid of it.
- Legalism – Force people to do things. It will not necessarily change what they are on the inside.
- Church Services – passive consumer approaches. Revival, baptism in the Spirit, consuming services of teaching preaching and sacraments. If you don't hear it explicitly said you'll pick it up what changes you spiritually are the services of the church. Are they important? Yes, but people can attend church services endlessly and not change inwardly.

John 8:31-32 - What changes is action continuing in the word of Jesus.

- To "continue in his word" is to abide, live in it. You're putting his word into practice - you're an apprentice.
- "...the truth will set you free." Free from what? In that context, it's freedom from sin. You will see sin for what it is and you'll move out of it.

Character can only be formed by _____. "My neighbor is learning Spanish for me."

- You have to go into _____ if your character is going to be changed.
- God cannot impart that to you without you acting.
- Look at how Jesus heals people. He rarely heals people without asking them to do what they cannot do.

You are in your essence creative will. Creative will is formed into character only by action. And that is why spiritual formation is carried out by _____.