

Steps Forward with Grace and into Real Progress in Christlikeness in Real Life
Renovaré Series Video #3 - Part 1 – The Goal of Formation is Life
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ESSENTIAL QUESTION #4 - How do I become a really good person?

*I must learn to live in all circumstances of life
in expectation that the God who is present
will act with me to accomplish things
far beyond anything I could do by my own effort.*

1. The process of spiritual formation

For the Christian, spiritual formation is the process of reforming the inner world of the human self...the part you can't see! Your body which was once ready to do what was wrong without thinking is now ready to do what is right without thinking. Through spiritual formation we farm our character out to our body.

The secret of routine easy obedience is not having to think about it. When Jesus asked the Pharisees if it was proper to heal on the Sabbath, they had to think about it because they lacked God's character. Their motives were wrong. Motivation presupposes a condition that shouldn't be there in the first place in most conditions. Therefore, we want our inner being formed in such a way that it increasingly becomes like the inner being of Christ.

2. The process of spiritual formation requires discipleship.

It only takes place in disciples.

Formation a process - Discipleship is a status - The process occurs in a status.

Paul describes spiritual formation as putting off the old person and putting on the new person. It's not external, but internal. *Matthew 23:26 Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.* The end result of inward formation will be - easily walking in the goodness and power of Christ.

Though this is of grace, it will not just happen to anyone, because it is not imposed. It requires sustained, intelligent effort.

Ephesians 4: 20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Colossians 3:1-17

Colossians 3:8-10 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him—

Colossians 3:11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew... It's not the outer man, but the inner man.

3. Spiritual formation is salvation - salvation is life!



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Titus 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men...

What did the grace of God that brings salvation teach us?

v. 12 ...instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age...

v14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Going to heaven when we die is wonderful, but salvation begins now.

Begin to see your salvation as a LIFE. Life is self-initiating, self-directing, self-sustaining activity.

Those who have the Son have life. 1 John 5:12

John 5:26 For as the Father has life in himself, so also has he granted the Son to have life in himself.

1 Timothy 6:13 ...God who gives life to everything, and of Jesus Christ...

1 Timothy 6:19 ...they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

4. Spiritual formation happens when we abandon our life and join in Christ's life
Human life apart from God is torn by human desires. Life does not work if all we have to go on are our natural powers organized at a natural level.

Ephesians 2:1-3 – Life apart from Christ's life is dominated of the world, the flesh and the devil.

- Flesh by itself is actuated by desire.
- The world is flesh organized.
- Satan basically works with ideas.

When we surrender our will...God begins to work with us...we make choices...God is with us...Grace is operative...We find the goodness of the things God says to do.

2 Cor. 5:15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

A major problem is the idea that spiritual formation has nothing to do with salvation.

QUESTIONS

1. How do you understand this? "Formation a process - Discipleship is a status - The process occurs in a status."
2. How has spiritual formation in your life resulted in "...routine easy obedience?"
3. It's common for many to view being saved as being separate from discipleship and discipleship as being separate from spiritual formation. How are these inseparable and how are they dependent upon life in Christ?

Notes, outline and summary are by Bill Dwyer.

