

Grow: Good Soil | October 14, 2018

In our passage Paul highlights 3 disciplines necessary for spiritual formation in a person's life.

#1. Discipline: Just as you Accepted Christ Jesus as Lord you must follow Him:

- a. The key word is "accepted" Christ Jesus means to accept for the first time and to keep on accepting what Jesus offers us on our spiritual journey. We all need to keep coming to Jesus empty handed to open hearted.
- b. Accepted – Jesus LORD. We need to give Jesus absolute ownership. We belong to Jesus and therefore is given the power of deciding and what is suitable to for us to living a life conformed to the union we have entered into with Christ.
- c. Accept Him as we follow Him. I find in Jesus Christ that which I find nowhere else.

#2. Discipline: Let Your Roots grow down into Him

Jesus is this good soil that our roots are to grow down in to.

Roots have two main roles – anchor and enrich

1. Anchors – helps create stability
2. Enriches – helps with sustainability

Our dependence is upon the soil to stabilize and sustain us as we follow Jesus. Our lives are lived as beneficiaries of the nutrients and transformative work that happens when our roots grow down into Him ..

#3. Discipline: Let Your Lives Be Built Upon Him -

The key word is "Built". Paul says we don't do the building. Jesus does as we do the surrendering and the offering of our lives. This results in a prophetic promise a lived in our lives. Our lives will grow following a plan with pre-designed (pre-defined) specifications.

Ephesians 4:14-16 - God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love—like Christ in everything. We take our lead from Christ, who is the source of everything we do nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.

We don't do the building ... we do the surrendering and the offering ..

Ezekiel 36:26 - And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.

Romans 12:2 - Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Two Identifiable Markers of Spiritual Formation:

#1. Faith Will Grow Strong in the Truth You Were Taught ..

Growing Faith for a believer is about benefiting from an ongoing process of "God's divine persuasion." This is about the Lord continuously birthing faith in a yielded believer's mind, heart, and soul.

Ephesians 2:8,9: " For by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast"

Faith is a gift from God. it is about God at work. Faith always comes from God as a gift and involves revelation. Faith is not something that you and I "drum it up at will." Rather, faith comes as Christ speaks His rhema-word within us and this Word producing faith and encourages the walking out of a faithful Christ – centred life and ministry.

Faith – that God's ways are the best ways ... God's instructions are the best instructions ... This would obviously involve unlearning selfish ways, unlearning independent thinking, stopping our tendencies to posture, our tendencies toward selfish promotion, selfish ambition.

Faith -enables the believer to know God's preferred-will. Growing faith is about a life being changed as that individual is being persuaded by God's will, plan, priority and purposes. – The gospel is all about change .. you and I have to get used to change!

#2 And You Will Overflow in Thankfulness

Defining and exploring thankfulness is part of spiritual formation - finding our point of origin as human beings involves worshiping in the right direction. Involves directing every need, emotion, every problem, every relationship towards God, act of service. Out of this origin thankfulness flows because we are experiencing Jesus as the source of life . The fertile soil from which all good and godly living finds its source.

Discussion Questions

- Where are my roots? Have I plunged myself into this relationship?
- How can I be on the lookout for growth?
- What does it mean to be a person increasingly open to God's change?