

Practice, Train, & Produce Audio Script

Welcome to another Inward Authority discussion. Today we will be taking a deeper look at Godly education and training. They are different.

This talk will move quickly around some complicated ideas. Pause, reflect, and think about what is described. Let the material and concepts sink in.

Next are descriptions on the differences between education and training.

“Education aims at creating a permanent behavioral change in the individual through imparting knowledge.”

“Training, unlike education, is focused upon gaining a particular skill.”

<https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-education-and-vs-training/>

We need both education and training. We need the knowledge and we need the practice. Putting our knowledge into practice tests our knowledge. The only way to know if our understanding is correct is to test it. As we act upon our knowledge we may learn we do not know as much as we thought. Testing our knowledge is the process of science for good reason.

To grow, improve, or become better is to change. Before changes can be made we will need some knowledge of how to do it and then a plan of action. It's not until we actually do it that we see what it really requires of us and whether we are really willing to do it. Spiritual growth requires patience, focus, effort, perseverance, suffering, and endurance. We learn through the doing. We grow through the experience.

Resistance of the practice of God's character comes from sin within us. Sin is to miss the mark and the mark is God. If we are not doing God's will the way God desires for us then we are following sin. We all have our excuses and justifications for skipping prayer, meditation, self examination, confession, patience, forgiveness, mercy, and love. Some of us multitask our prayers in the shower, while driving, or as we lie down to go to sleep. God wants us to be steadfast, standing firm, diligent, persevering, enduring, and to make every effort. Are we seeking God the way the Bible instructs?

There is education and then there is re-education. Education is for those who do not yet have an understanding about God. Re-education is for those who have an understanding about God and are willing to learn different. Since there are different beliefs about God and flaws in the religious system we must become willing to accept the flaws within our learning. We all have flaws in our knowledge otherwise we would be perfect. We learn from churches, parents, friends, and even media. Yet we choose what information to accept and believe. We must be humble and willing to see how our knowledge can be improved and be corrected. We must be seeking correction in order to improve. If we are not seeking correction it won't be found. It's so much easier to ignore correction than to accept it. Humility is key.

Training Builds Skills

Training is to develop a skill and the skills we ought to develop are God's ways, will, grace, goodness, and righteousness. We ought to be gaining education about patience, peace, mercy, forgiveness, compassion, generosity, truth, and justice and putting that education into practice more and more to be trained by it and to test our knowledge with it. (see 2 Peter 1)

Inward Resistance (Anger, hurt, fear, disbelief, shame, vanity, idolatry)
We all have different forms and levels of resisting beliefs or thoughts within us. Some of us may be angry at the world while others only angry at themselves. The root here is still anger. Some of us may have slight irritations while others extreme hate. It's still anger. Justifying the anger blocks forgiveness and mercy. Our inward resistance needs to be identified, confessed, and we will need to switch our hearts and thoughts to focus on forgiveness and mercy. This is not black and white. Discernment is another skill that can be developed over time through practice and training.

Many of us will need to develop skills to cleanse our minds and purify our hearts in order to prepare us for love and peace. Humbling ourselves will be a necessary daily practice to grow with God's grace. We must let go of control, anger, and resistance to thoughts and practices that develop God's goodness. We must give in to sincere and honest prayer for spiritual guidance. The practice of humility is to take the roll of a student, to become clay and give ourselves over to God's will for formation.

We must examine ourselves, our thoughts, our plans, and our actions. As we discover resentments, dishonesty, selfish ambition, vanity, obsessions, and fear we ought to practice confession and be willing to replace it with God's grace of patience, mercy, forgiveness, compassion, peace, generosity, truth, and love. God is just, impartial, and fair so we too ought to guard against being partial to ungodly things. Being partial to ungodly and worldly things can lead to idolatry and favoritism. (our partiality, favoritism, and bias will be discussed more in another talk)

Let's not get overwhelmed with the process. Once we can humble ourselves to trust God and live by God's grace we begin setting our sights and thoughts toward good things. We seek out peace and patience and learn the goodness and beauty that exists within it. We realize living without resentment and fear can be a better way of life. As we give up practicing our old ideas and give our hearts and minds over to God's methods we realize our abilities become enhanced. Truth becomes more clear, with patience we are more in control, and without fear we are more confident. Faith increases as our understanding of what adherence to God's grace brings. The proof is in doing good works. (See Ephesians 2)

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Romans 13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

1 Timothy 6:18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,

Titus 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,

One Master, Lord, & God

This perhaps is the most important point which we must get right in order to be with God. If we serve anything more than God then whatever that is, it becomes our master.

There is no justifiable reason to not seek God's will each day in all that we do, if God is our God. Is God the most important aspect of our lives? This is the defining question of our religion, faith, and salvation. The good news is that we can choose right now to seek God and develop that trust. We must agree that God will be our primary guide to what we do and how we do it each day. We all get distracted and sin. So the journey with God involves a plan of action to recommit and redirect our hearts and minds back with God. We seek God each day over and over as we go because of God's saving grace.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

John 13:16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

2 Timothy 2:21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.

As we learn to respond to life with patience, peace, mercy, forgiveness, compassion, generosity, truth, and justice we will learn a new reality that brings joy and freedom. When pleasing God becomes our goal our fear of what other people think will often slip away. As our inward attitude moves more in alignment with God's character, our confidence in the spirit can grow. As we set our hearts and minds with God's righteousness we can gain spiritual confidence and peace. (See Ezekiel 18, John 15 & 1 John 4)

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

There are two forms of learning. Passive learning and active learning. Passive learning involves sitting in groups, listening, reading, and watching. Passive learning is relying upon groups, sermons, media, & books to change us. Passive learning is about education, not training.

Active learning involves independent thinking, practicing on our own, setting personal goals, and taking responsibility for our actions. Active learning involves training.

Are we training the way the Bible suggests?

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

We are like our teacher

Luke 6:40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.

Most of us follow our parents, coaches, groups, careers, teams, etc. We become like them. We speak their language, follow their customs and traditions, and mirror their behaviors. We become like those we follow. We may try to be our own leader and follow our own ideas, yet still we become like those we follow. God wants us to follow God.

Hebrews 12:11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Thoughts, behavior, attitudes, and beliefs are developed gradually over time.

“Watch your thoughts, they become words;
watch your words, they become actions;
watch your actions, they become habits;
watch your habits, they become character;
watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.”

FRANK OUTLAW

Passive learning can create habits, character, and destiny. Having a careful evaluating and discerning mind is not a habit. Active discernment and evaluation is to be alert, assessing, and putting things together continuously. Life is constantly changing. Spiritual awareness is to be alert and watching. (See Ephesians 6 armor of God - Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Faith, Salvation, & Spirit)

Living for God is not running on automatic pilot. Growth does not lead to the same ol' same ol'. Living for God is to exert ourselves mentally, challenge ourselves emotionally, seek new understanding daily, and make corrections within us regularly.

All training involves rest periods. During such rest periods the one training maintains focus upon the prize.

Matthew 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Once we have accepted God to be our Master and have begun purifying our hearts and cleansing our conscience we can begin sensing an inner peace. Since God is peaceful & patient and we are seeking to think and act likewise we will experience how the “yoke is easy.”

2 Corinthians 10:5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

1 Timothy 4:15 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.

Grace exists for us to tap into, participate with, demonstrate, and experience. We have control over our choices and our choices have everything to do with what we learn and experience. We can choose God's grace or vanity, selfish -

ambition, lies, etc. Our choices affect our conditioning. (See Deuteronomy 30, Ezekiel 18, and John 15.)

We must accept responsibility of choice. Many people will tell themselves “I don’t have a choice” or “I have to....” We can choose to pray or not. We can choose to meditate or not. We choose our schedule, where to go, and what to eat. Some may choose to give control over to another, but it is still a choice. Christians choose to serve God as Jesus did. (see John 15) Serving God involves love, but love the way God describes it which is often different than the way we understand it. (See 1 Corinthians 13:1-3) We choose to serve God, but we must also choose to love God. As we purify our hearts and cleanse our conscience we will be able to better understand love and peace.

Our thoughts, attitudes, and actions must be set to progressively learn the good in practicing God’s will through experience.

Matthew 6:10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

Luke 22:42 saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”

Our actions are limited by our perceived options. We cannot choose something we don’t understand or believe we can’t do. A person who does not experience sobriety will not understand sobriety. A person who has never been on a bicycle will not understand how to ride it. We cannot just simply do God’s will if we are not used to putting it into practice. There is a learning curve to grow in love, peace, patience, generosity etc. As we begin practicing and experiencing new applications of Godly character traits we can receive new understanding that can reshape our knowledge. Then when we try again we can make adjustments and improve.

For example, while waiting in line we may for the first time think to ourselves “go slow, seek peace, practice patience, care for others.” We may recognize someone else in line who is restless and seemingly impatient. We can learn a lot about ourselves and others as we focus on spiritual disciplines of patience, peace, mercy, love etc. We may share a compliment to someone or let someone even move ahead of us and experience spiritual benefits from it. This spiritual benefit can affect ourselves and others in our hearts, minds, and attitude.

To live for God is to utilize such thoughts and analysis to grow our spiritual understanding. Yet we must keep our hearts involved to connect with others emotionally and spiritually. We truly affect each other all the time whether we want to or not. There exists a sense beyond our physical understanding and God is right there in it. Evil exists in the same way.

We ought to discern between good and evil. Evil too is learned through experience and practice. Shame comes through experience of evil as joy comes through experience of good.

James 1:14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

We choose where to go and who we spend time with. Are these people and places practicing Godly character? If we choose to associate with ungodly people we are choosing to place ourselves in a situation to experience evil. What happens there is beyond our awareness. The spiritual affects are subtle and if we are not examining ourselves carefully we can easily begin putting into practice the evil we have chosen to surround ourselves with.

Acquired Taste

My wife and I got a couple of puppies. We learned the puppies needed a lot of praise when they behaved correctly. I learned I was to throw a party, clap my hands, and use enthusiasm. At first, doing this I felt like I was walking around with a dunce cap. I felt stupid and embarrassed. My mind kept thinking how awkward it was and it was like pulling teeth just to do it. Using such happy talk seemed fruitless to me, but I witnessed how the dogs reacted which changed my understanding.

New experiences of moving deeper into God's character can evoke resistance within us. This is natural and normal. Our understanding will not fit always with God's grace otherwise we would be perfect like God. Jesus and all the characters in the Bible felt struggles as they resisted tempting thoughts and served God.

Progress not perfection

We ought to seek continued new application of God's character traits to improve our experience and understanding with it. We ought to observe and see how others may react when we are applying patience, compassion, and mercy. Speaking the truth in all things can teach us a lot about others and ourselves. We can learn a lot about what lies within our prompting thoughts as we progress along this journey.

That about wraps it up for this talk.

The next talk will be about self-deception and personal bias. We all have it and ought to be aware of it.

May God bless you richly as you grow spiritually.