6/25/24 The Law of Awareness: YOU must know yourself if YOU are Going to Grow

We are continuing to learn together from our Teacher, the Holy Spirit, how to grow from only needing milk; to growing to need meat. AMPC Hebrews 5:12-14; For even though by this time you ought to be teaching others, you actually need someone to teach you again the very first principles of God’s Word. You have come to need milk, not solid food. For everyone who continues to feed on milk is obviously inexperienced and unskilled in the doctrine of righteousness (of conformity to the divine will in purpose, thought, and action), for he is a mere infant. But solid food (meat) is for full grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate and distinguish between what is morally good and noble and what is evil and contrary either to divine or human law.

Moreover, I am including in our lesson today, the second law of growth given by John Maxwell; from his book, “The 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth.” In our last gathering, we discussed the first law, which is the law of intentionality. The law of intentionality basically embodies that growth doesn’t just happen, without you being intentional about growing. In other words, we have to grow on purpose, it won’t happen accidentally. The law of awareness is making us aware that we must know ourselves in order to grow ourselves with the Holy Spirit’s help. This principle is in the Word of God and is discussed by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Jesus was teaching this principle to His disciples.

AMPC Matthew 7:3-5; Why do you stare from without at the very small particle that is in your brother’s eye but do not become aware of and consider the beam of timber that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, let me get the tiny particle out of your eye, when there is a beam of timber in your own eye? You hypocrite, first get the beam of timber out of your own eye (first), then you will see clearly to take the tiny particle out of your brother’s eye. Appropriately, John Maxwell quoted James Russell Lowell in this book. “No one can produce great things who is not thoroughly sincere in dealing with himself.” This sentiment originated with Jesus Christ. We must be willing to deal with ourselves first, before we can help anyone else.

Jesus our Lord stated that behaving this way, to Him, it is hypocrisy. He said, “You hypocrite.” Let’s take a closer look at the word “hypocrite” to get an even better understanding of this word. The Merriam and Webster dictionary defines the word “hypocrite” as a person who puts on a false appearance; a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings. If we don’t become self-aware of the growth process, then being a hypocrite is the alternative. John Maxwell speaks of a case that was documented in 1957 and has been studied by thousands of doctors and researchers. The man whose name was Henry M. was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1926, and he suffered from a case of epilepsy. It was so severe and debilitating that he couldn’t function. So, at age twenty-seven, he underwent an experimental surgery in which parts of his brain were removed to try to treat his epilepsy.

The surgery was successful at stopping the seizures, and he suffered no negative impact on his intelligence, personality, or ability to interact with others socially. However, he did suffer a horrible side effect, he lost his short-term memory. This somewhat caused Henry to be stuck in time. Henry could no longer be self-aware and be able to learn, grow, and change. This was a tragedy. Henry’s story helps us to see how important is for us to be self-aware in order to learn, grow, and change.

This is why we must know who we are supposed to be in Christ Jesus. The Word of God lets us know where we came from and what we have now entered into. AMPC Colossians 1:13; (The Father) has delivered and drawn us to Himself out of the control and the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His Love. So, we have come out of a kingdom of darkness and have been born into a Kingdom of Light. We were born again into a new Kingdom as we left an old kingdom. Now, we must choose to grow up in our new Kingdom from the milk of the Word to the meat of the Word. AMPC 1 Peter 2:2; Like newborn babies you should crave (thirst for, earnestly desire) the pure (unadulterated) spiritual milk, that by it you may be nurtured and grow unto (completed) salvation.

Dear sisters, we have to understand where we are and where we are headed. Unfortunately, we enter the kingdom of God as carnal believers. We must go from carnality which is immaturity to the Mind of Christ which is spiritual maturity. According to John Maxwell, “To reach your potential, you must know where you want to go and where you currently are. The Holy Spirit our Teacher (John 14:26) wanted us to understand this and inspired the Apostle Paul to write the instructions distinguishing between the carnal nature (human nature) and the Nature of God, which is Love because the Word of says, God is Love (1 John 4:8). AMPC Galatians 5:19-21; Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious); they are immorality, impurity, indecency, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies), envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. Next, he explains the Nature of God in verses 22-23. But the fruit of the (Holy) Spirit (the work which His Presence within accomplishes) is Love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence) faithfulness, gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence).

So, the Holy Spirit, our Teacher wants us to understand there is a clear difference between carnality and spirituality or being immature versus being mature or complete. Paul also explains that the only way we can grow from immaturity to maturity is with the Holy Spirit’s help. AMPC Galatians 5:16; But I say walk and live (habitually) in the (Holy) Spirit (responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit); then you will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh (of human nature without God).

John Maxwell says he has observed that there are really three kinds of people when it comes to having direction in life.

1. People Who Don’t Know What They Would like to Do; these types of people are often confused. They lack a strong sense of purpose. They don’t possess a sense of direction for their lives. If they are growing, they are unfocused about it. They dabble. They drift. They can’t reach their potential because they have no idea where they are headed.
2. People Who Know What They Would Like to Do but Don’t Do it: These people are usually frustrated. Every day they experience the gap between where they are and where they want to be. Sometimes they aren’t doing what they want because they worry that it will cause them to neglect other responsibilities, such as providing for their families. Sometimes they aren’t willing to pay the price to learn, grow, and move closer to where they want to be. Other times fear prevents them from changing course to pursue their passion. No matter what the reason, they, too, miss their potential.
3. People Who Know What They Would Like to Do and Do it; these kinds of people know themselves, possess a strong sense of passion, are focused on purpose, grow in areas that help them move closer to their purpose, and do what they were created to do. The word that best describes them is fulfilled. In addition, I would add that these are believers who are following the instructions of Jesus in AMPC John 14:26; But the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, Standby), the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My Name (in My Place, to represent Me and act on My Behalf), He will teach you all things. And He will cause you to recall (will remind you of, bring to your remembrance) everything I have told you. They allow the Holy Spirit to be their Teacher and teach them how to live according to their New Nature from God, which is Love.

I want to conclude with this quote from John Maxwell. “Every successful person I’ve met has a strong sense of his or her unique abilities and aspirations. They’re leaders in their own lives (The Ministry of YOU) and they dare to pursue their dreams.”