5/28/24: The Ministry of You Presents; We must be Intentional About Our Spiritual Growth

The Holy Spirit gave me a phrase that has helped me tremendously in my spiritual growth. “We become intentional, so we can direct our attention, which is focus.” The Lord Jesus had been discipling or teaching His disciples during His earthly ministry. However, the time came for Him to return to His Father. So, He begin to direct the attention of the disciples towards their New Teacher, the Holy Spirit. AMPC John 16:7; However, I am telling you nothing but the Truth when I say it is profitable (good, expedient, advantageous) for you that I go away. Because if I do not away the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengthener, Standby) will not come to you (into close fellowship with you); but if I go away, I will send Him to you (to be in close fellowship with you).

So, Jesus makes it very clear the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Jesus has taught His disciples many things during His time on earth. Yet, He explained that there was more for them to learn but they weren’t ready at that time to hear it all. However, the Holy Spirit would come and continue to teach them as Jesus had done. AMPC John 16:12; I still have many things to say to you, but you are not able to bear them or to take them upon you or to grasp them now. But when He, the Spirit of Truth (the Truth-giving Spirit) comes, He will guide you into all the Truth (the whole, full Truth). For He will not speak His Own message (on His Own authority); but He will tell whatever He hears (from the Father; He will give the message that has been given to Him), and He will announce and declare to you the things that are to come (that will happen in the future).

The assignment of the Holy Spirit in our lives as believers is huge. He has been assigned to us as our Teacher. Jesus declared the Holy Spirit to be our Guide. According to the Merriam and Webster dictionary the word “guide” is defined as a Person Who directs another’s conduct or course of life. Jesus has given us an open invitation to enroll in the School of the Holy Spirit. AMPC Matthew 11: 28-29; Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and overburdened, and I will cause you to rest. (I will ease and relieve and refresh your souls). Take My Yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I Am gentle (meek) and humble (lowly) in heart, and you will find rest (relief and ease and refreshment and recreation and BLESSED quiet) for your souls. For My Yoke is wholesome (useful, good and not harsh, hard, sharp, or pressing, but comfortable, gracious, and pleasant), and My Burden is light and easy to be borne.

Jesus is wanting us to be intentional about learning about Him. The word “learn” that Jesus used in this verse of Scripture is an interesting word. Learn is the Greek word manthano (man-than-o), and it means to learn, to increase one’s knowledge, to be increased in knowledge, to hear, be informed, to learn by use and practice, to be in the habit of, and accustomed to. He wants to intentionally increase or grow in our knowledge of Him and use and put into practice this knowledge we are learning. To the point that this behavior becomes habitual, and we become accustomed to our new way of being and living.

Jesus also admonished us how we enter into His School of the Holy Spirit. AMPC Matthew 18:2-3; And He called a little child to Himself and put him in the midst of them. Truly I say to you, unless you repent (change, turnabout) and become like little children (trusting, lowly, loving, forgiving), you can never enter the Kingdom of Heaven (at all). Why did Jesus have to explain this to them? Because most people who are adults don’t want to become like a child again. Honestly, most people look forward to no longer being a child and being told what to do. We all have said at one time or another, “I can’t wait until I am grown so I can do what I want to do.” Now Jesus is saying to us, I want you to become like this child again, even though you are an adult. The Lord Jesus is telling us I want YOU to intentionally become childlike or teachable.

The Holy Spirit, my Teacher, has me studying the laws of growth. One of the books He has instructed me to read and He’s using to teach me about spiritual growth is John Maxwell’s book, 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth. John Maxwell lists the first invaluable law as the Law of Intentionality. This law indicates that growth doesn’t just happen. He suggests that we should have a plan for our personal growth. This is exactly what Jesus our Lord is saying to us. Moreover, he discusses in the first chapter of the book the gaps that keep us from learning and growing. The gaps are the problems that are caused by some disparity or difference of opinion.

The first gap is the assumption. Assuming YOU will grow automatically. YOU don’t improve by simply living, YOU have to be intentional about it. When we are children, our bodies grow automatically. Many people carry into adulthood a subconscious belief that mental, spiritual, and