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Go and make disciples!

E-votional 47

Always Learning

2 Timothy 3:7 (ESV),

always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

Lately, I have been grappling with a question before the Lord. I have not necessarily been looking for a direct answer to this question but some sort of sympathy in a sense. When I say sympathy, I am referring to the state of some Christians and that I would like some sort of sympathy for them so that I would be better equipped as a shepherd to help them on their journey with Christ.

In relation to this question, I have been racking my brain as to why some believers who walked with the Lord for many, many years are still actually weak in the faith. Many are in Bible-believing churches and hear the Word studied and preached but still lack in themselves some sort of significant faith. I wonder, maybe you know someone like this and are asking some of the same questions.

I am troubled to say the least because when I read the Scriptures, I see a called-out church who was empowered by the same power that rose Jesus Christ from the dead. Not many of these were wise or even of noble birth as Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 1:26, so there was nothing in themselves intellectually or culturally or even from status that gained them a significant faith, rather it was the power of God as also mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:18. The purpose of this was so that no one person would have anything to boast about in the Presence of God as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:29. This same power that saved them was also the same power that enabled them and empowered them to grow in the faith.

There is a passage that talks about others not growing as they should, so this is something that even the early church experienced and for that reason attempted to teach through it. One place of significance is found here in

Hebrews 5:12 (NLT),

You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food.

Believe me, when I say this, I am not intending to condemn here, but simply to point out that in each of us, myself included is the capacity (according to the sinful flesh) to fall into this category. The category that I am trying to bring to light in this teaching is that of always learning but never arriving at a knowledge of the truth. That is simply put that we can learn everything there is about the Bible through solid Bible teaching and have an appearance of godliness but still never actually grow. I would like everyone to understand that in context with this passage there was a sort of selfishness described to the person in this category as opposed to one bearing real godly fruit.

In short, our faith is always under attack. The purpose of this attack is to turn godliness into a means of personal gain instead of a selfless faith that looks to build others up and be obedient to God regardless of what it looks like. Honestly, this is something that does not happen overnight but progressively. It is evidenced in the one who makes all of their decisions on personal preference rather than on true discernment of the Holy Spirit. It is a sleight of hand of the devil to make one believe this subtle lie, nevertheless, a lot have eaten of the forbidden fruit.

Learning what the Bible teaches is not what makes us grow. So it is, teaching the Bible accurately will not make one grow. The Bible is the inspired Word of God and therefore needs an inspired teacher to bring out its treasury spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. Again, just learning the Bible and filling our heads with biblical knowledge is not what it means to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

In this study, I came across some comments that really impressed me. Barnes (1834),

"And never able to come to the knowledge of the truth - They may learn many things, but the true nature of religion they do not learn. There are many such persons in the world, who, whatever attention they may pay to religion, never understand its nature. Many obtain much speculative acquaintance with the "doctrines" of Christianity, but never become savingly acquainted with the system; many study the constitution and government of the church, but remain strangers to practical piety; many become familiar with the various philosophical theories of religion, but never become truly acquainted with what religion is; and many embrace visionary theories, who never show that they are influenced by the spirit of the gospel. Nothing is more common than for persons to be very busy and active in religion, and even to "learn" many things about it, who still remain

strangers to the saving power of the gospel.”

I really like what the Apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 3:18 (ESV),

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

This here speaks directly about the relationship between growth and knowledge. It is imperative to understand and grow in knowledge through faith and application of the truths laid before us in the Bible and to not just learn of them or to just learn the Bible for the sake of learning the Bible.

I have met some believers who were not biblically savvy yet had within them the very witness of Christ through the Holy Spirit and because of this lived out the Word every day. And then I met those who were so biblically grounded and knowledgeable yet could not tell it by their faith. Where do we stand in all of this?

I pray the Lord to open the eyes of our spiritual understanding, to give us hearts of diligence, to open up the heavens over us, and to pour out His Holy Spirit upon us without measure so that we might walk in the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. O Lord, to You alone, belong all glory, honor, and power. You are more than able to raise up from stones those to worship You in Spirit and truth and to declare Your praise. So according to Your glorious power and might radically transform us, in Jesus name. Amen.

References

Barnes, Albert (1834), Notes on the Bible, taken from

https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/2_timothy/3.htm

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Chris and Jeanne
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