

August 17, 2020

## **The Art of Intentionality**

Taken from *Girlfriends in God* | **Gwen Smith**

### **Today's Truth**

*I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith...* (Philippians 1:25, NIV)

### **Friend to Friend**

When I was growing up, ours was on the doorframe between the kitchen and the hall with the red carpet. A vertical trail of penciled dashes and dates that marked the growth of my siblings and I – that eventually got painted over. An archive of ages and heights that proved physical progress was really happening in the Eisaman household.

And boy did I want my growth to show.

Each time my dad lined us up to draw lines just above our highest hairs, I would stretch my spine to the sky. (It's even possible that I might've lifted my heels occasionally. Possible. Just throwing it out there. Don't judge me. Dad always bumped us back down.)

I loved seeing the tangible distance between where I used to be and where I was.

I loved seeing the evidence of advancement. Progress. Growth.

I still do.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul encouraged him to set an example to other believers in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity (1 Timothy 4:12). He also challenged his young protégé to devote himself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation (encouraging others), and to teaching.

He told Timothy to be intentional. Move forward in faith. Grow in such a way that it impacts others.

**“Practice these things. Immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.”** (1 Timothy 4:15)

I read this and I wonder. What type of spiritual progress can be seen in my life?

Am I setting an example in conduct... in the way I behave, react, respond and live?

Do I set an example for others in the words I use... in the ways I love... in my purity?

Do I reflect Jesus in these things?

Am I growing in His image?

These questions drive me to my knees. I'm forced to ask God to search me and know me – inside and out. I ask Him to show me the ways that I've grown and to show me the ways I still need to grow.

The progress I want to see in my life is no longer about a height chart – it's about a *depth chart*. I want there to be visible evidence of my faith in Jesus that doesn't waver in the winds or crumble in the uncomfortable. Don't you?

Though our faith is unseen (Hebrews 6:1) let's press on in progress and move forward in the hope, joy, love and peace of Christ so that others will be inspired to do the same.

Let's live today in such a way that our behaviors, responses and attitudes showcase a vibrant, honest faith that's deeply rooted and growing.

### **Let's Pray**

Dear Lord, Thank You for being so gracious and compassionate with me. Thank You for loving me where I used to be – in spite of me – and for loving me where I am today. Please forgive me for the times I try to move forward without You. Help me to prioritize progress and seek You continually so that others will clearly see You in me.

In Jesus' Name,

Amen.

### **Now It's Your Turn**

Read Philippians 1.

How does the beginning of this letter to the people of Philippi that was written long, long ago stir you toward growing in Christ today? Grab your journal and write a prayer of response.