

Spending time with God

Life in this world for every believer is a struggle. The book of Romans particularly chapters 5-7 explain this struggle. It is the difference between the old nature and the new nature. The world and things in the world also apply tremendous pressure to the individual to leave the things of God and pursue them instead. The epistles teach us that we are to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called. We are to consider the old man dead. We are to press on to the mark looking neither to the left or the right. We are to imitate Paul who said “I walk as though I had already attained...” walk and not faint. Be not weary in well doing...Be ye holy for I am holy, and so on.

Imagine how powerful the effect of the believers on the earth if half of the above were true of all believers. The sad reality of it is that in a visible way and in an unseen way, through errors AND omissions, we fail miserably, daily. The power granted to us is left mostly unused. For many Christians, never “turning the page past Romans seven”, leads to frustration and unresolved internal conflict. This is seen today in a rampant spread of mediocrity. Our focus has turned from Christ to ourselves. The Christian music change of the last fifty years is a real eye opener in this regard.

There is a hymn called “Victory in Jesus”. It is old, (and nowadays abashed since Mark Lowry did his comedy sketch on life as a young Christian) but true. It tells of being an overcomer and being victorious in our lives here. You may wonder, “How do we get there?” And perhaps even, “Why would I want to?”

So, what do I mean by personal holiness? Well the obvious answer to all the above is to commune with Christ and to walk with him daily. There is the source of strength and the power to overcome. This is not news. The answer to the struggle is not news. Nothing on my mind for this subject is news. That said, I believe consideration on a few topics may be helpful.

Get an “Attitude of gratitude”

Remember you are just a creature, yes very loved, but a creature none the less. Everything you enjoy in life is a gift from above. but you may ask, “How do I get this to be *real* in my heart?” One way is by having a sense of appreciation of the cost of my salvation. Meditating on what Christ did for me seems a good way to start. In your minds eye, in a remembering way, walk to the cross at Calvary and sit down. See the blood stains on the ground. See the crowds of people jeering. Look at the nails piercing his hands and feet. Look at his head and see the crown of thorns and see the look of compassion in his eyes. Remember the words if Pilate, “I see nothing in this man worthy of death.” See his body bleeding and sore. See the darkness filling the skys, Listen to the thunder and Hear his words, “My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?” Realize now, this innocent bloodshed, and suffering and humility and enduring God’s wrath was for you, for me. Is just one time a week enough for this to truly affect my heart?

Having an unwavering purpose of heart

Consider Joshua and Daniel. Notice their dedication to God and how God used them both in a mighty way.

Joshua was among the children of Israel who God delivered out of bondage in Egypt. He was a minister to Moses. Joshua and Caleb were the only adults to actually possess the promised land. This circumstance was caused by the unbelief of the children of Israel when they arrived at the promised land, they did not believe God that he would deliver it into their hand. Joshua and Caleb were the only ones who believed God and said that they should go forward and take it. Instead, after they had sent spies in and heard the report of giants in the land melted in fear. For this reason God Judged all the people of Israel and no one over the age of twenty was allowed to enter the land save these two brave men. Then, forty years later, Joshua was used by God in a mighty way to aid the people of Israel possess the promised land. At the end of Joshua's life, he made a farewell address to his people. In it he said "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Daniel was a child among the wayward children of Israel who were taken into captivity at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He was chosen to serve in the king's court. The king had ordered the children to be fed the same food as the king. But Daniel had purposed in his heart that he would not be defiled by the king's meat. As a result of this dedication of heart, God was able to use Daniel in many and mighty ways while in captivity. God gave him the ability to interpret dreams. This would cause him to see the visions by the king first and then he himself had visions. In these visions Daniel had revealed to him the great kingdoms of the world even to the end of time.

Making good habits

Just as daily habits of brushing your teeth and exercise is healthy for the body, daily spiritual activities are healthy for the soul. Folks seem to shy away from the word "habit", as if any habit were evil. This of course is not true. Good habits are the cornerstone of a walk of faith (action, see Hebrews 11:1)

What are some good daily habits?

Time with the Lord alone in prayer, (Daniel prayed to the Lord three times daily).

Time with your family/spouse in prayer, (practicing good leadership habits)

Time in the word for refreshment

Time in the word for growth (different activity than just refreshment)

Time with your family about the Lord's things

Time to speak to someone about the Lord

Time to fellowship with other believers, healthy social gatherings are very important

Time to visit someone who is alone

Counting your blessings in a reverential way

Do you really need to watch TV 2-3 hours each day?

These things are some ideas that will help propel you on to a holy walk. 1st John 3 and 1st John 5 state that the new creation in us does not sin. Let us consider to keep that new nature healthy so it will rule your day to the glory of God. Do you feel strong when you are hungry? or do you experience a sense of weakness? Your new nature *and* old nature both work in a similar way.

Things that we struggle with, issues in the assembly, issues with the youth relating to their friends outside of the assembly and etc. will fade quickly if we all could “get there” so to speak in our spiritual walk.