

FOREVER FORWARD

NIGHT #2

QUICK REVIEW:

- 1. When the spiritual life comes first the believer gets the right perspective on all aspects of temporal life. We are able to set boundaries on temporal life.**
- 2. A believer who is advancing is able to set routines in life for the purpose of growing and advancing.**

PRINCIPLE: The spiritual life must come first then everything else falls in place. You must put spiritual growth first.

- 3. Routine and preparation need to be daily. You can't be great at anything without the routine necessary to get there.**
- 4. The routine of doctrinal inculcation is the spiritual training that a believer needs for serving and glorifying God in every aspect of his life.**
- 5. You can't have a great prayer life without a great routine.**
- 6. A Christian must establish some spiritual growth if they ever hope to advance in the Plan of God.**
- 7. There is no other acceptable outcome for any believer but to learn grace orientation. Grace orientation is the development of one's understanding of God's grace policy.**

8. Christians must have nourishment if they intend to grow up. Growing up “Spiritually” is akin to growing up “Physically”. Both require nourishment for growth.

When you get serious about your spiritual advance it’s an amazing plodding routine that develops into the greatest life anyone can experience.

Greatness in the Christian life is not speaking holy words; acting holy; giving money; it’s not doing all these things which Christians today think make them great as believers. What you are doing right now is what makes you great. Through a day by day study of the Word of God you gain a relationship with our Lord.

When you develop a great routine and perseverance you get momentum in the Christian life.

- 1. With a day by day advance you gain great confidence of your eternal future.**
- 2. You develop a relaxed mental attitude in the mist of all the turmoil that surrounds you.**
- 3. Learning to think with the very mind of Christ so that following him becomes second nature.**
- 4. Another great reward of following the Lord is that in Spiritual Maturity there are permanent solutions which maximize a wonderful life that’s provided for you.**

- 5. There are lasting benefits like no other in temporal life. There is nothing in this life that can match what the Lord Jesus Christ provides when we learn His word.**
- 6. You learn the amazing Problem-Solving Devices and can recall them and use them.**
- 7. You can preclude stress in the Christian life by applying doctrine. Utilizing the resources of the Problem-Solving Devices. All the resources available to the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and no where else can this be found.**
- 8. The spiritual life and applying Bible Doctrine will be rewarding beyond anything temporal life has to offer.**
- 9. It is to share the wonderful privilege of a personal relationship with God. That's what happens when you advance in the Christian life.**
- 10. You will have the confidence of His grace, His faithfulness, and care every step of your life. Absolute security in Christ.**
- 11. You will have no uncertainty who oversees and guides your life.**
- 12. You know there is an unassailable, personalized plan for you, and it cannot be equaled in any other human system.**

13. You have absolute truth. You have the wisdom of the ages at your fingertips and in your soul. You have the very mind of Christ!

14. You get eternal security that no other system can offer.

15. You have opened your eyes to who you are and what you have in Christ. It's called spiritual self-esteem, a personal sense of destiny. You develop a great relationship with the Lord and are able to use the problem-solving devices in adversity.

16. You have an unwavering confidence in your eternal future. When you gain that confidence; gain that routine all the phoniness of legalism, and all the hype of emotionalism are exposed, and they are removed. Grace orientation removes the legalism that resides within us.

17. The mature Christian life gained by the routine of metabolizing Bible Doctrine is a life without pretense and without hypocrisy.

18. The more you hear, the more opportunity for growth.

19. The Word of God in your soul and occupation with Christ prepares you to meet any exigency in your life. Any and all circumstances you can handle.

If you don't have a good routine and persistence in the spiritual life you will get:

1. Unfulfilled expectations, false promises, frustrations, nagging doubt, soul bankruptcy and ultimate failure in the Christian life.

In Luke 9:57-62 (Also in Matthew 8:19-22) you see an example of short time followers, Christian Comets (here today and gone tomorrow), and short time trustors.

1. Some believers talk a good game but when it comes right down to it, they make excuses.

2. They are part-time followers who opt out when times get tough.

3. You want to be great in your job, in your hobbies but what about the spiritual life. You practice all of those what about your spiritual life?

4. Peripheral Christians don't consistently take in Bible Doctrine and they are not growing spiritually, and they have no application. They are not prepared to consistently do what is required to fulfill the Plan of God on a daily basis.

5. Are you a short time follower that we see in Luke 9:57-62? Oh, you're a believer alright and will be in heaven but minus the rewards our Lord had for you because you couldn't make time for the advance!

5. Peripheral Christians don't consistently take in Bible Doctrine and they are not growing spiritually, and they have no

application. They are not prepared to consistently do what is required to fulfill the Plan of God on a daily basis.

PRINCIPLE: There is only one reason to be consistent in Bible Class (In attending) and it's to grow spiritually (there are a lot of excuses to miss; to take the day off; to forget spiritual nourishment). I bet you don't forget any meals!

But any excuses are a volunteering break in spiritual growth. Every day without Bible Doctrine is a wasted day for spiritual advance.

When there is a break in spiritual growth, spiritual growth becomes secondary in one's overall life.

Often the short break or short time to do something else gets extended indefinitely that's what happens when a believer falls into reversionism.

There is no excuse for putting off your spiritual advance

Satan does not want you to grow to become a mature believer. He will try to discourage you with your own mistakes and your own weaknesses. He'll try to get you trapped into guilt where he can manipulate you. You have to be careful about this and not get disillusioned with yourself. God has not set some standard that's unattainable.

The alternative is divine discipline. But any punishment will be designed to motivate you to rebound and returning to grace orientation and spiritual advance.

The discipline to the believer is always done in love by God. Hebrews 12:6 – (“**Whom the Lord loves He disciplines**”) - For the purpose of spiritual recovery.

PRINCIPLE: The time the Lord has given you is so valuable that you have been given time so you develop wisdom and understanding so you can re-present Jesus Christ in your life.

Bottom line – Following Christ is a lifelong pursuit that must be consistently chosen and fulfilled despite the difficulty.

The last thing Peter said before he died was in 2 Peter 3:18, "**But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; to Him be glory, both now and in the day of eternity.**" Before Peter died, he understood that God emphasis must precede people emphasis. Although Jesus Christ is the Shekinah Glory, only our advance to spiritual maturity gives Him the glory that belongs to Him from us as members of His royal family.

if you are going to lead the way into the next generation, you have got to be faithful to the mandates. (Remember 2 Peter 3:18 – “**GROW**”; Matthew 11:29-30 - “**LEARN**”; 2 Timothy 2:15 - “**STUDY**”)

If you are not prepared, you can't be used by God. The only way to be prepared is to obey these mandates.

You need to be doing just what you're doing right now day after day.

For professional athletes the hours spent in training translates to a life in professional sports fame and money.

The big stage of the Christian life is open to the advancing believer. The plowing ahead believer growing in the Christian life can be tiresome, it can be tedious, it can be wearisome, I just don't want to do it today but the results of plowing and plodding ahead are worth it. Fulfilling the Plan of God for your life in a fantastic Hall of Fame way that will be and is being recorded in heaven. Everything you do, every move you make, every doctrine you inculcate, every gospel presentation moves you ahead in the Plan of God and moves you into greatness.

As we get close to finishing, I hope I haven't lost you but I do hope that I challenged you to stay the course, to develop a routine, get serious about a day by day study of God's word and to never, ever quit.

What does it take to accomplish this: Here are a few points:

- 1. You need to have a good routine in order to consistently study God's word on a daily basis.**
- 2. You must never, ever quit! Always forward. Always advancing.**

3. You need to make Bible Doctrine and the study of the Word of God your number one priority.

4. You must be consistent with your intake and the study of the Word of God and apply it every day in your life.

5. Organize your thinking around Jesus Christ.

6. Learn the mystery doctrines of the church. **“Christ in us the Hope of glory.”**

7. Organize your life around Bible Doctrine. Set those temporal boundaries.

6. Occupy yourself with Christ. Concentrate on Christ.

Hebrews 12:2: **“Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, suffered the shame, and has sat own at the right hand of the Throne of God.”**

8. Why? Galatians 4:19: **“Until Christ be formed in you.”**

What is your priority number 1? What is your motivation? It’s your personal love for Jesus Christ. Never forget!

Philippians 1:20: **“According to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.”**

I want to end with the Doctrine of Spiritual Approval, and you can think about your spiritual life as we go through this.

DOCTRINE OF SPIRITUAL APPROVAL

1. Qualification for promotion in the Spiritual Life comes only after Divine approval. 1 Peter 2:21 – **“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps.”** Before our Lord Jesus Christ was qualified to go to the cross, He had to meet Divine approval – 33 years’ worth of testing. Before God ever turns you loose you are going to have to meet **Divine approval. God uses prepared people!**

2. The call of God invites you to a life of suffering. This does not mean God wants you to live like a homeless person and have nothing. Here’s the reason why – Romans 5:3 – **“and not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;”** **(Proven character – there it is).**

3. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit that enables us to meet the challenge of the spiritual life and pass the test of adversity. Where do you get the gift of the Holy Spirit? You received it the day you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior. The Holy Spirit seals you and when you believe in Jesus Christ you’re sealed until the exit resurrection or until you die and go to be face-to-face with the Lord. He:

- a. He fills you.
- b. He indwells you.
- c. He deploys spiritual gifts into your life.

4. The call of God invites misunderstanding in your motives and your actions. When you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior some people are going to dump you. You get serious about studying Bible Doctrine you are going to lose friends. By the way some will be Christian friends!

PRINCIPLE: Some of the greatest heartbreaks will be when close friends and family don't get serious about studying Bible Doctrine and it divides us.

5. The believer should never try to fit in. If you're worried about fitting in, you should just hang it up as a Christian. When you die, you'll go to Heaven with no more tears and no more sorrow but as long as you're alive on this earth you'll be the most insecure person who ever lived. You're going to be miserable because you're going to think no one ever likes you. Don't ever try to fit in because you're always under suspicion from all sides and you're going to be avoided by those outside your belief structure. So, if you're worried about making friends and influencing people you've got the wrong priorities. The priority is the Word of God number one.

6. To pay the price of approval you must be willing to go it alone. You must be willing to utilize grace and stay focused for a lifetime.

7. The proven character is vindicated by faith. Hebrews 11:1 – “**Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**” It's the confidence in the invisible assets God has given to you. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you have invisible assets.

Ephesians 6:16 – **Faith can protect you** – “**in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.**”

2 Corinthians 10:15 – **Faith can grow**...if it's watered by the Word “**not boasting beyond our measure, that is in other men's labors, but with the hope that as your faith grows...**”. You plant faith and it will grow.

Romans 10:17 – “**So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.**”

There's **saving faith**....” for by grace you are saved by faith it's a gift from God not of works lest any man should boast.”

There's **living faith** – Habakkuk 2:4 – “Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.” and Galatians 3:11 – “Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for the righteous man shall live by faith.”

It's a **daily faith rest**. It's mixing faith with the promises of God EVERY DAY! God said it you do it. God said it you believe it. You don't have any faith...that's one of the reasons God doesn't answer your prayers. One of the 10 reasons God doesn't answer prayers is praying without faith.

8. The proven character is educated by **DOCTRINE**. Hebrews 5:11-16. Have you obeyed the mandate in 2 Peter 3:18? Grow and you can't grow if you don't eat. Jeremiah said, “Your words were food and I ate them.” When you get to Bible Class under a qualified Pastor you are being fed.

Remember 2 Peter 3:18 says, “Grow in grace” and that it's in the imperative mood in the Greek New Testament. Remember 2 Timothy 2:15? It says, “Study to show thy self-approved unto God.”

9. He's motivated by personal love for God (PSD #7 – Motivational virtue). 1 John 5:3 says, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.”

Do you love God? You say, “Yes I do”. Do you keep His commandments? Do you even know what they are? The test is right here in 1 John 5:3 – “If you love Me obey Me”. His word tells us it's not

hard it's just making good decisions everyday based on what the Bible says (Baseball Analogy)

You can't know what the Bible says if you don't come to Bible class. If you're distracted by the details of life. In Deuteronomy we see an Old Testament mandate - Deuteronomy 5 – **“Love the Lord God with all your heart with all your soul, with all your strength”**. That is reciprocal love motivation. We love Him because he first loved us. You can love Him, and he won't lie to you and he won't cheat on you He won't throw you under the bus or abandon you. He is the same yesterday today and forever. I don't care who you are you can always trust God. Always!! When you get confused you go to God and say, “What should I do”. He'll show you.

10. He's evaluated by ADVERSITY. What does this mean? Ecclesiastes 7:14 – says, **“In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider this, surely God has appointed one as well as the other.”** There's going to be good times and there is going to be bad times. God's going to evaluate you.

11. You are elevated by FIDELITY. 1 Timothy 1:12, **“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful, putting me into service,”** Before he was ever appointed, he had to be proven.

Revelation 2:10 – **“To the church at Smyrna be faithful unto death and I'll give you the Crown of Life.”** Fidelity is essential to have a proven character. Without fidelity God can never promote you.

12. He's taught out of DOCTRINE. He's molded by DISCIPLINE. He's promoted by GRACE. Vindicated by GOD. Evaluated by CHRIST. **“Let a man so consider us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mystery of God and moreover it is required in stewards that they be found faithful.”** You are elevated by FIDELITY.

Here are a few final thoughts – steps to keep you in the game:

1. Don't deviate from sound doctrine. Hebrews 13:7-9
2. Don't drift from grace. Hebrews 2:16 – **“We must pay attention to what we've learned lest we drift away.”**
3. Don't be discouraged by discipline. Hebrews 12:2 – **“Those whom God loves He disciplines”** – You sin you confess and move on. Pick up your shield and get back in ranks. Remember discipline corrects your course.
4. Do not doubt God's timing and provisions (as Abraham and Sarah did). Genesis 16:1-2
4. Dedicate yourself fully to the Lord – Jeremiah 4:4 **“You must genuinely dedicate yourselves to the Lord and get rid of everything that hinders your commitment to me,”**

Now here's the question before we close. **WHAT WILL YOU DO?** There has never been a better opportunity to be an invisible hero than right now. This nation needs you. Are you content to be on the team but you're going to put your shield down and lay down your pike and set on the bench or are you willing to get prepared and pick up your shield grab your pike and stand shoulder, to shoulder and get prepared so you can be **“promachoi”** – front ranker!! It's your choice.

Remember Hosea 4:6 – **“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.”**

National condemnation in Proverbs 1:24-33 – “Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded, Vs.25: Because you disdained all my counsel, and would have none of my rebuke, Vs.26: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, Vs.27: When your terror comes like a storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you. Vs.28: “Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. Vs.29: Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord, Vs.30: They would have³ none of my counsel and despised my every rebuke. Vs.31: Therefor they shall eat the fruit of their own way and be filled to the full with their own fancies. Vs.32: For the turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; Vs.33: But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil.”

Which one are you?

Ezekiel 22:30 – “I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one.”

Isaiah 6:8 – “Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

Forever forward!