

Discipleship Part 4 (Mike Kaye, CE Elder)

This series has repeatedly mentioned that Bible study is essential for you to grow as a disciple of Jesus. (Gee, think I've heard something like that lately--yeah, in the new HPC by-line, "**Growing in Christ.**") To grow, you must first have a strong foundation--as that by-line also says, "**Rooted in Faith.**" It is only through a strong root system that any plant can draw the nutrients for life, let alone growth. It is the same for each of us--we need strong *spiritual* roots in order to draw the spiritual nutrients that the Holy Spirit provides to nourish growth.

To grow as a disciple of Christ, you must know and understand God's Word in order to apply it to your life. As Paul said in Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God,"

In fact, Jesus set the ultimate example for us in applying Scripture to His human walk during His first Advent. A few examples, He used Scripture: to answer Satan's temptations in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13--Deuteronomy 8:3; 6:13; 6:16); to answer those who tested Him (Matthew 16:4--Jonah 1:15-17; Matthew 22:23-33--Exodus 3:6; Mark 10:1-12--Genesis 2:24); to justify His righteous anger in cleansing the temple (Luke 19:45-46--Isaiah 56:7); and to fulfill prophecy on the cross (Matthew 27:46--Psalm 22:1).

Well, OK; yes, I would expect Jesus to know God's Word far better than I ever will! I love how He often corrected the Pharisees--those most learned in all Israel--on what Scripture really meant beyond what they had gleaned from it. But knowing, understanding and applying God's Word is not a destination; it is a journey--one of ever-expanding appreciation of individual portions and books, themes, connections, promises, prophecies, etc., that lead to blossoming awe, love for and obedience to God and the growth in faith that accompanies growth in Christ. Hebrews 11:1 tells us: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Why not spend a few minutes and read Hebrews 11 today? The examples of faith are worth revisiting--to inspire faith of God's daily involvement in our lives for good (Romans 8:28); faith that the promises and prophecies yet unmet will indeed be fulfilled; and faith that following and growing in Christ will be richly rewarded with eternal life in Him.

But most of all, Bible study of both Old and New Testaments provides an expanding realization of how the entire Bible points to Jesus in the Old Testament and reveals Him more fully in the New. That realization of God's ageless & unalterable plan strengthens your foundation for worship, prayer and faith in a cycle with deepening relationship with Jesus.

Each Christian must know what and why they believe. Each must grow in knowledge and wisdom to discern and be able to reject, if not refute, the false teachers and their teachings of which we have been warned (Mark 8:38; 1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). The 7 churches in Revelation 2-3 exemplify churches today in varying degrees for things commended and things criticized. Sadly, more than a few have accommodated themselves to the world's values.

The Bible is God's Word to **you**! Per 2 Timothy 3:16, "God-breathed" and useful for equipping us; it is reliable and without error, proven true by hundreds of fulfilled prophecies. God does not change and neither does His Word (Matthew 5:18). You need it to know Him!

Take today's "mini"-lesson to heart and try one of these classes!

- **Sunday, 9 am: Sermon topic of the day;** Cher Kaye
- **Sunday, 9 am: Book of Romans;** Melissa Vande Mark
- **Monday, 2:30 pm; Book of Revelation;** Mike Kaye