

Practicing the Way – Spiritual Formation and the Gospel

Philippians 1:9-11 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:3-8 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. 7 For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. 8 For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

- In *Practicing the Way*, John Mark Comer shared 6 things that form our spirits:
- Habits, Stories we believe, Relationships, Environment, Time, & Experiences.
- What role does the gospel play in our salvation? What does gospel mean?

1. Our spiritual formation is a participation in the gospel's work.

Philippians 1:3-5 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.

- If you're a Christian, salvation is not just referencing a past event in your life.
- Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through faith..."
- 1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- Romans 13:11 Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.
- As we share in the gospel, we are availing ourselves to God's activity in our lives.

2. Our spiritual formation is a process of the gospel's work.

Philippians 1:5-6 ...in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

- Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- Salvation isn't just an event or a destination. It's a process.

3. Our spiritual formation is a positioning for the gospel's work.

Philippians 1:5-6 ...in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. 6 *For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

- This passage is speaking about change.

- How can we be formed in a way that honors God? We position ourselves for the gospel's work.

4. Our spiritual formation is a perfecting of the gospel's work.

Philippians 1:6 *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

- "perfect" means to bring it to completion.
- If we'll put ourselves in a position of spiritual transformation, God will complete the task.
- God has a plan to transform our lives.
- God doesn't give up on us.
 - **"God will give up on me because I've sinned too much."** Romans 5:20 says, "Where sin increased, grace increased all the more."
 - **"God will give up on me because I'm not worth rescuing."** Your worthiness has nothing to do with your salvation. You are forgiven on the basis of Christ's worthiness alone.
 - **"God will give up on me because I'm a failure."** "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23); i.e., we are all equally failures before God. In Christ, we are made victors: "Everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).
 - **"God will give up on me because I keep taxing His patience."** The Word of God says: "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise. . . . Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).
 - **"God will give up on me because, if I were God, I would give up on me."** I've got great news. You're not God.
 - *Psalm 145:8-9 The Lord is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness. 9 The Lord is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works.*
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- The main part of the process isn't a system or a formula, it's a person.
- He who began a good work in you will complete it.