

Ruin To Renovation - Sermon #12 - Yes We Can Study Questions for Groups & Individuals

OPENER:

In which of the six dimensions of the human makeup do see the Holy Spirit working in your life, and how does one affect the other? For instance, how does the Holy Spirit leading you to make better *choices* affect your *body*?

1. Thought (images, concepts, judgments, inferences)
2. Feeling (sensation, emotion)
3. Choice (will, decision, character)
4. Body (action, interaction with the physical world)
5. Social Context (personal & structural relations to others)
6. Soul (the factor that integrates all of the above to form one life)

OPENING PRAYER:

Let's pray for our women's team going to the Middle East!

Please pray for the three Six:Eight women who will be attending the **Syrian Women's Conference** coming up in early June. There will be a total of about 20 women going from various partner churches.

1. Pray for exactly the right Syrian women to be selected to come & be disciplined, trained & refreshed.
2. Pray for the \$50,000 needed for this project..
3. Pray for strong preparation & training before they leave.
4. Ask that prayer & financial support would come in quickly & with ease.
5. Pray for protection against spiritual attack given they are enemy challenging territory.
6. Pray for physical, emotional & spiritual protection over them & their families throughout the time of preparation, through & after their trip.

DISCUSSION:

Read our signature verse for the day, 2 Corinthians 3:18, which says,

¹⁸And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

What sticks out to you (phrases/words/ideas).

Do you believe this is possible in your life?

How have you seen it happen?

In which areas would you like to see more of Jesus in life?

2 Corinthians 3:18 says a great deal...

- (1) *Unveiled faces*, refers to that divine movement which had to happen in us in order that we would be woken up from spiritual death & have the means to grasp Scriptural Truth
 - (1) Look up Ephesians 2:4-5 & Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus in John 3, discuss what you see in these passages. How are they similar?
- (2) *Contemplate*, refers to our active role in spiritual formation, informed & led by the Word of God.
 - (1) What are some healthy forming practices we can introduce into our lives?
- (3) *Transformed into his image*, refers to the result of the Spirits work in our lives in conjunction with these two things. There's a direction, goal, standard = Christ. The process of spiritual formation towards Christ-likeness.
 - (1) Look again briefly at Romans 12:1-2, and discuss how it is similar to 2 Corinthians 3:18.

How do *doubt, distrust & disbelief* undermine your ability to practice spiritual formation? What does submission mean in light of living in a culture which has elevated these things to the level of virtue or value?

Do you feel jaded due to the failure of Christian leaders (more doubt & distrust), or just the mediocrity of Christian life in American Culture? (Do you feel like the frog in the pot slowly boiling to death?)

1. How do you divorce your feelings from that focusing on what God really calls us?
2. Are there people in your life who although may not be perfect are growing in Christ-likeness?

In the *Miserable Sinner* view of the Christian life there are two assumptions.

- (1) It makes too much of the idea, we're depraved. It misses the possibility of divine change in the human heart.
- (2) It assumes this physical world & body are the real problems.

The natural reaction to this is an underlying pride. That it's actually God's fault. He's not doing enough, and if we could shed this body which plagues us, we would actually be able to deal with God on the basis of personal merit. Do you feel you've taken on this faulty view of the Christian Spiritual Life?

In response to that, read through & discuss the following verses...

1. Philippians 3:13b-14
2. Philippians 4:8-9
3. 1 Corinthians 11:1
4. 2 Timothy 2:22

Paul ran the race well. But it was a race to be run & in the spiritual life one never rests on their laurels (accomplishments) - resting athletes grow soft. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 where Paul outlines this devotional life.



What is your emotional reaction to these words? Do they sound hard, or challenging?

It isn't easy to truly want change (an addiction to spiritual mediocrity), or even to truly believe it's possible (not many good examples). As the man exclaimed in Mark 9:24, "*I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!*" Sometimes we have to ask for Christ to make us want change, or bring us into trust that we can be changed. Do you often feel like that man?

Look at the story of Manna & Quail in Exodus 16 - how do you start your day with Jesus in the Word (gathering your manna), and end it with him in review (gathering your quail).

What are your daily spiritual practices which lead you closer to Jesus?