

2 Peter 3:18

“How Can I Grow in My Faith? (Pt.1)

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intro. How many of you have a physical exercise plan? What are some of the benefits? How many of you think that a spiritual exercise plan would produce benefits?

Subject: How you can grow in your faith

Object: Implement a spiritual exercise plan

I. Read the Bible to know God the primary revelation of God to man

A. You need biblical knowledge to develop Christ-like character

1. Apart from God’s revelation through the Bible we can’t know Him

a. Rom. 7:7 We would not know that coveting is wrong absent God’s word

B. Is the Bible reliable? cf. Bible written by men changed through years

1. Unity: 66 books (39 OT & 27 NT), 40 authors, @ 1500 years,

a. only God could create internal consistency (unity) in these circumstances

2 Manuscripts, Archaeological, Prophetic, Scientific [MAPS]

a. Dead Sea Scrolls and the OT 1948 discovery of manuscripts from 200-100 BC

Cf. earliest prior 1000 AD. No significant variances despite more than 1000 years

i. Scribes’ reverent approach to copying the sacred text

b. Jesus affirmed the OT Scripture: no dispute as to which books were part of OT

3. How did we get the New Testament [NT]? Canon (standard), 4 keys

i. Apostolic authorship: apostolic author or source [Peter re Mark’s gospel]

ii. Agreement with other books of Scripture: complete consistency

iii. Acceptance in the early church: general circulation

iv. Activating: life transforming quality to produce godliness

2Tim. 3:16-17 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

C. Develop the discipline of regular Bible reading:

1. Make a plan regarding Bible reading [a key to a spiritual exercise plan]

2. Read to hear from God vs. simply completing a task

3. Reading plan on nexus site

4. Commentaries [blueletterbible.org]

What tips would you give to encourage Bible reading?

II. Prayer: learn to communicate with God [speak,listen,lifestyle 1Th.5:17]

A. a model for prayer: remember there is no formula.

1. ACTS: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication

a. Express adoration for who God is & what He has done, confess sin, thank God, and make requests.

B. Jesus' model prayer ["The Lord's Prayer" Matt. 6:9-13]

1. Person: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name [9]

a. Relate to God as a perfect Father. What He is: holy (hallowed). Where He is: heaven

2. Purpose: Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven [10]

a. We recognize that what is best is God's rule and His will, not ours

3. Provision: Give us this day our daily bread [11]

a. We declare our dependence upon God for daily life and our daily needs

4. Pardon: And forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors [12]

i. We ask God's forgiveness for our sin, realizing we must forgive others.

5. Protection: And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one [13]

a. We ask the Lord to guide us, give us wisdom, and protect us from sin.

6. Power: "For Yours is the kingdom & the power and the glory forever. Amen."

a. We recognize God's authority & our dependence

C. the importance of prayer

Matt. 21:13 "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,'

1. Submit prayer requests encourage that we are a praying church

2. Receive prayer request to intercede for others [prayer@calvarynexus.org]

3. Pray with others pre-services, during worship, cf. I'll pray about that vs. praying

D. Develop the discipline of regular Bible prayer:

1. Make a plan regarding prayer [a key to a spiritual exercise plan]

What tips would you give to encourage Bible prayer?