

Lent Day 28, March 20, 2012 Follow Me



*Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.
1 Corinthians 11:1*

For this next week, we will be discussing spiritual growth. Just as your physical life is governed by the life cycle of infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, so too should your spiritual life.

Many of us can remember our time of conversion. Some of us can look back to an exact date when we started following Jesus. Others of us know the year it happened; some of us can't pinpoint a time, but we just know we've always been following the Lord. Wherever you lie on this spectrum, the important thing is that you should be able to look at your life and see that you have matured and grown spiritually over the years. If you can't see any growth in your life, then you need to diligently seek to find out why you are stuck.

Spiritual growth is important so that we can take the place God has for us in His kingdom work. Imagine if we never grew up physically and always stayed as helpless babies. This would be a never-ending, time-intensive responsibility for our parents. Now imagine how God feels when He has children who never grow up in their faith. They always remain as helpless babes, needing to be fed, clothed and provided for--never accepting or assuming any responsibility to help Him in His work of sharing the good news.

One way we can grow spiritually is through the process of mentoring. This year my church introduced a way of growth for our congregation called "Way of Discipleship." The foundation for this lifestyle is based on the above verse in 1 Corinthians and is basically summed up in the following words: Follow me as I follow Christ.

Right away, those very words can be a stumbling block, because I know my first thought was "Who am I to lead someone else? I don't have every area of my life all together." Well, as I found out, the idea is not that you are a perfect person (none of those exist, except for Jesus), but that you are one who is learning, growing, and actively seeking God and are willing to share that with someone else.

Can you see how a mentoring relationship can be so beneficial to both people, whether you are the mentor or the "mentee"? Both are challenged to grow and mature as they study and share their lives together. In our Way of Discipleship program, we study 11 practices that are essential to following Jesus: 1) surrender and trust 2) communion with God 3) self-denial 4) seeking the call of God 5) moral integrity 6) justice and mercy

7) material generosity 8) studying the word of God 9) leading others to Jesus 10) loving others well 11) spiritual community.

Application: Will you consider entering into a mentoring relationship with someone? If you are willing to be a mentor, ask God to lay someone on your heart who could benefit from a mentor. If you feel like you need a mentor, begin praying that God would bring a godly person into your life who could fill this place.

- Realize this will take some time. You should meet with your mentor every 2 or 3 weeks and in between times, be studying and learning. In our church, the mentoring cycle is a 2-3 year cycle to complete all the studies.
- Follow the rule that **men should only mentor men and women only mentor women**. Because mentoring is a close relationship, you can't leave the door open to temptation.
- Be sure to pray for each other throughout the week.
- Keep in confidence what is shared unless you have permission to share it or in the extreme circumstance that you feel like the other person's life is in danger.

Prayer: Lord,

Please show me if a mentoring relationship is something I should be pursuing at this stage of my life. Please bring the right person into my life to mentor me, or show me a person that you would like me to mentor. In Jesus' name. Amen.