



KEYS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH

HOW TO DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

#5: PRAYER: THE CONVERSATION THAT CHANGES YOU (PART 1)

JIM HINTON

With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine.

Ephesians 3:20 (NCV)

God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams!

Ephesians 3:20 (The Message)

Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All glory to him, both now and forever! Amen.

1 Peter 3:18 (NLT)

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE

1. Spiritual growth is becoming more like Jesus in my thoughts, actions and character
2. Spiritual disciplines are those behaviors or habits that facilitate spiritual growth (See 1 Timothy 4:6-10)

The job of a football coach is to make men do what they don't want to do in order to achieve what they've always wanted to be.

Tom Landry

II. WHAT PRAYER IS

Essentially prayer is a conversation with a friend – who happens to be God

The LORD spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend.

Exodus 33:11 (NCV)

I do not call you servants any longer, because servants do not know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father.

John 15:15 (TEV)

III. HOW PRAYER EMPOWERS MY SPIRITUAL GROWTH—PRAYER:

1. Raises my awareness of God's presence

The LORD is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.

Psalm 145:18a (NLT)

Never stop praying.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NLT)

2. Reinforces my trust in God's love

Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?... Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?...No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

Romans 8:32,38-39 (NLT)

3. Recognizes my submission to God

"Father...not my will, but yours be done."

Luke 22:42 (NIV)

4. Replaces my worry with His peace

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7 (NLT)

5. Realigns my thinking with His Wisdom

If any of you needs wisdom to know what you should do, you should ask God, and he will give it to you. God is generous to everyone and doesn't find fault with them.

James 1:5 (GOD'S WORD)

6. Reaffirms my reliance on God's power

"O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you!"

Jeremiah 32:17 (NLT)

When we rely upon organization we get what organization can do. When we rely upon education we get what education can do. When we rely upon our eloquence we get what eloquence can do. But when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do.

A.C. Dixon