

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Your Journey with God

Micah 6:8

Definition: Your faith journey is a life-long adventure as God transforms us into the image of His son. Micah 6:8, "He has shown you, O man, what is GOOD and what the Lord REQUIRES of you: Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God." Our walk with God is not a "checkbox" that we check off and move on from, but rather an ongoing journey.

Segment Questions:

- Have you ever thought about your "faith journey"? What does faith journey mean to you?
- Think of someone whose faith you admire? What qualities of their character stand out to you? What actions in their life do you remember or value most?
- Do you see God transforming you into the image of His son, Christ Jesus? How do you know?
- What are your thoughts on Bishop Ryle's perspective on working on holiness in this life to enjoy our God and the next life more abundantly?
- Describe your thoughts on Thessalonians 5:23-24 and Philippians 4:4-9? What feelings do these verses stir?

Action Questions:

- What is the balance between lethargic non-action (letting God do everything) and over-active checkboxes (taking control and planning everything)?
- Which of the requirements of Micah 6:8 are most difficult for you? What steps can you take to improve your opportunities to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?
- Think about the importance of guarding your heart as opposed to doing good actions (Proverbs 4:23). How do you guard your heart? What steps have you taken to guard your heart at work? In marriage? With friends? How can we spur each other on? What verses encourage or comfort you on your journey?
- Describe your walk with God at this point in time. What is going well? What are challenges to your journey? What strategies do you use to walk with your God? How do you avoid a legalistic, checkbox mentality?

Your Journey With God

I enjoy traveling. There is something about hitting the road on an adventure that makes my spirit soar. Last November, my wife, kids, and I drove down to Disneyworld for an adventure. My wife is absolutely amazing at planning trips: estimated cost, money saved, hotel reservations, restaurants to visit, itinerary, packing lists, etc. After she is done, we are well prepared and the adventure happens. We exhaust ourselves and return home. We all have experiences with taking trips, but our faith journey is very different. Our journey with God has to be very different than taking a trip.

In Romans 8:29 and 2 Corinthians 3:18, the Apostle Paul that we are being “conformed to the image of His (God’s) son” and “transformed into the same image as Christ.” Notice the words “conformed” and “transformed” involve the reforming us into the image of Christ. Have you thought about this process? It is an ongoing process, not an instant check box that gets checked, like “load the car – check.” Bishop JC Ryle (1816-1900) posited that we practice holiness and spiritual growth in this life, so that we will enjoy heaven and worshiping the almighty God all the more. That we do not just magically become more in love with our Maker upon death. Through our life, we journey through faith to know God and ourselves more.

There is a topic we need to mention, a fine line to define, as we walk on this journey. What is your role and responsibility and how does that fit in the idea of the sovereignty of God? That will not be figured out in this meeting, but let’s look at some Scriptures.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Philippians 4:4-9: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice... do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus... and the God of peace will be with you.”

God is transforming us into the image of His son. God has called us, and He is faithful and will complete it. What a relief! As we struggle and stumble through this life and put one foot in front of the other, the God of peace will be with us. Are we to passively allow God to change us? Why “call” us if we are to lethargic slugs that do not do anything?!

I use checkboxes in life. I make checklists to get through my day, to organize my honey-do list, to get ready for our next family adventure. The problem is that our faith journey is not a week in Disney. The check box mentality does not fit. Become a Christian – check. Marry a nice Christian girl – check. Get a degree – check. Get a job – check. Have 2.5 children – check. Grow wiser - ... Get holy- ... Through Scripture, God guides us. My thoughts again go to Micah 6:8, “He has shown you, O man, what is good and what the Lord requires of you, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” That is not a good list of checkboxes. You cannot just say, “Yep, I love mercy – check.” It is a great list to live by.

Lastly, Proverbs 4:23 says, “Above all else, guard your hearts for from it flows the wellsprings of life.” That is the important thing – our hearts. Did you notice, God’s peace will guard our hearts. We are to guard our hearts.

Make your life count! Let God do His work. You can trust that He will. Focus on what God has told us to do – Rejoice in the Lord. By prayer and with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God. Guard your heart. Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.