

Intentional Growth This Summer

“. . . My servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly”

Numbers 14:24

Summer brings a different schedule and opportunities for each of us. Some will have opportunity to continue investing in students in different mission field venues; hopefully all will take time to be with family and friends and get some much needed rest. Your summer can also be a time for spiritual renewal and refreshing for the coming fully scheduled months of a new fall semester. The Holy Spirit seems to be prompting me with some ideas for spiritual renewal for this summer interlude that I want to share with you. He may be leading you in a different direction altogether, but I have full confidence that He is leading you to more intentionally focus on Him during these days.

My practice of a few spiritual disciplines is essential to my continuing maturation as a Christ follower. However, if I am not adding new spiritual habits into my lifestyle I am not growing in intimacy with Him as much as I could. I think the Lord is prompting me to add the regular practice of a least one spiritual discipline that will be new for me. I know the one He is prompting me with. You might ask Him, during these summer weeks, if there is a new discipline He desires for you to begin.

I believe God is prompting me to take one day this summer to go on a spiritual retreat with Him. For me, that means getting away out of my normal routine, to a place where I can be alone and for a day focus on being with Him. Such a day could include fasting and certainly will include other spiritual disciplines. The retreat will provide an opportunity for spiritual renewal and to better hear truth He wants me to hear and meditate on.

The Holy Spirit is leading me this summer to work on a relationship that I have with a non-believer. I have opportunity to see this person often and with a little intent I believe there can be opportunity to have spiritual conversations with him without “scaring him off.” I am confident there are people in all our lives we can be more intentional with in sharing faith issues and the Holy Spirit will use such conversations to spiritually shape both of us.

Last, I think God is leading me to simplify my lifestyle. By ceasing a particular activity in my life I will have more time to spend on more spiritually constructive things and my life will lessen some of its hectic pace. It is much easier to begin activities than to cease them, but I believe God never intended for our lives to be as stretched as they are in doing all that we try to do. That is not the model that Jesus gave us during his earthly ministry.