



CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

Can You Take the Next Step?

Ephesians 2:8-10

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⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.
¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

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"Being transformed as a creative expression of the divine artist is such an honor... We are not junk needing to be radically repurposed. We are masterpieces needing to be restored. Original goodness precedes original sin."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

The Lord had said to Abram... ² "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

"On this transforming journey we aren't being transformed only for our own good. The process isn't merely a personal improvement project. We aren't just seeking our own joy or peace. We are being transformed for the good of others."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

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Who wants discipline?!?



The words "discipline" and "disciple" share a common Latin root, *discipulus*, meaning "learner."

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What truly good thing doesn't require some kind of learning or training?!?

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What truly good thing doesn't require some kind of learning or training?!?

Placing ourselves under the "discipline" of God is "for our good."

"Something in me rises up in reaction to a word like discipline . It feels like a synonym for punishment, but it's not that. It's training. Being trained by discipline is an experience of personal guidance from the Master Trainer...

The pain in the moment of training is producing a harvest of something good and right. It is leading me to a life of peace and well-being. It has been helpful to remember that the One who is training me knows me well and seeks my good."

(from What Does Your Soul Love?)

"Do we prefer the pain of training, or the pain of the consequences of our current choices? For most of us, willingness kicks in when the pain of staying where we are becomes greater than the pain and fear of moving forward into discipline."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

"There is a temptation to settle for a faith and spiritual life defined mostly in terms of having the right answers to important doctrinal questions and doing things right externally. But, the invitation from Jesus is to become the sort of people from whom good words and good deeds more naturally flow."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

"Let's eat Grandma!"



"Let's eat, Grandma!"

**PUNCTUATION
SAVES LIVES.**

Taking the next step into what God has for us isn't perfecting our doctrinal details, or finally getting that "one thing" right.

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A Posture for Continued Formation

Are you OPEN?

"Being open as a first step may look like opening the door of your heart and letting God know that you are ready to welcome him into every room so you can get a good look at everything together."

(from What Does Your Soul Love?)

A Posture for Continued Formation

Are you OPEN?

Are you AWARE?

"Awareness means your eyes are open and you begin to notice what's going on inside of you. You pay attention to your patterns, habits, longings, and desires. You can also notice what is going on around you and what your natural reactions are in any given situation... Awareness is key because you cannot change what you do not see."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

A Posture for Continued Formation

Are you OPEN?

Are you AWARE?

Are you WILLING?

"Sometimes you have to acknowledge that you aren't quite willing yet. In that case it's perfectly okay to say, 'I am willing to be willing.' It may seem like a mind game or simple semantics, but saying that you are 'willing to be willing' is a viable way to take your next step toward what you desire."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

Closing Reflections

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Do you trust the loving hand of the "Divine Artist" who wants to restore you as His unique masterpiece?

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Ask the Spirit to help you see the lives of those around you who could be blessed by your growth in Christ.

Closing Reflections

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What is one of the biggest barriers for you to take the next step in this soul-forming journey with Jesus?

Closing Reflections

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Where are you with the three parts of a continual posture for formation? Are you open? Are you aware? Are you willing?



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