

THE DIMMER SWITCH PRINCIPLE

Grow Up, Part 3

November 14th, 2010

As life happens, we're suddenly confronted by the need for personal growth or more biblical information in an area of life that up to now hasn't seemed all that important

Information, even incredibly vital information, doesn't stick unless we're convinced at the time it's delivered that it's important to know – or at least will be someday

In most cases once we've finished a course or program, we think we're done

In reality we don't know it; we're just familiar with it

Spirituality isn't something we master; it's a lifelong quest of getting closer - not getting "there"

Philippians 3:12-14 (NCV) "I do not mean that I am already as God wants me to be. I have not yet reached that goal, but I continue trying to reach it and to make it mine. Christ wants me to do that, which is the reason He made me His. Brothers and sisters, I know that I have not yet reached that goal, but there is one thing I always do. Forgetting the past and straining toward what is ahead, I keep trying to reach the goal and get the prize for which God called me through Christ to the life above."

You'll get where you need to be as long as you stay on the path (worship, small group, etc) & look first to God & Scripture when a need-to-grow or need-to-know crisis pops up

Seeking Counsel

There are cases where people come asking for advice but don't really want it

Lots of people who ask for advice really want confirmation; they are already convinced they know best

Typically they go out & continue doing exactly what got them into the mess in the first place

They often continue to come back asking for advice, and once they get it, they blow it off as unreasonable & unworkable

We do the same thing with God

When God gives advice or guidance, it's not coming from a potentially fallible source, i.e. a pastor or friend; it's the counsel of God

When this happens we go through a role-reversal: He stops being our God and becomes our cosmic consultant

A consultant is someone whose wisdom we highly value and listen to, but at the end of the day, we make the final decision

God doesn't do consulting; He does God

The Dimmer Switch Principle

When we respond to the light we have, God gives us more; when we don't, He takes away the light we already have

It's not just that we stop growing when we ignore what we already know; we actually lose the light we once had

Romans 1:18-28 (NIV) "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts... Furthermore, just as they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, so God gave them over to a depraved mind, so that they do what ought not to be done.

When we respond to the light we have – no matter how dim it may be – God turns the light switch up

Proverbs 4:18-19 (NIV) "The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble."

The longer we walk in obedience, the clearer the spiritual picture becomes

I don't have to worry about all the things I don't know; I just have to respond to the light I have, and the rest will come in God's time

Maturity and spiritual depth take time; however, I can please God right away by obeying what I already know

Biblical knowledge & theology are important, but they don't equal pleasing God

In spiritual growth the amount of light we have at any given time isn't nearly as important as what we're doing with that light - and is God in the process of turning it up or down

My Next Step Today Is...

- There is spiritual light in my life that God has shown me, and I need to & will obey it
- I will stay on the path (worship, small group, etc) & turn to God first as things come up in my life
- I will memorize Philippians 3:12
- I/my family am/is coming to the Harvest Family Potluck on Sun, Nov 21st at 5 PM. We'll bring _____; # attending _____