

Daniel Byungbub Choi

Spiritual Growth Plan: to grow more intimate with God but spending more time with Him alone.

In the next 3 and a half years, my spiritual growth plan is to spend more alone time with God, just as I did in the 8 minutes of stillness I practiced this semester. As I shared before, in the first few weeks of doing the 8 minute time of stillness, I was honestly struggling. I had no idea it was going to be this hard to just sit still for 8 minutes meditating on hearing God's voice. Looking back now, I realized how little time I really spent before the Lord. Through Guyon's book on "Experiencing God through prayers", I know that it is not based on my efforts or hard work that God will hear me. Instead of relying on my efforts and hard work, just relying on God and waiting for God will allow God to lead my life a lot better than if I were to go before God through my own efforts and hard work. There are no techniques or methods to prayer. This helped me a lot because it reminded me it is not my effort that God looks at or even my results. What He looks at is my heart and whether I truly desire a personal relationship with Him.

Though the first few weeks were difficult, as weeks went by, things started to be different. As I tried to really depend on God and wait for Him in silence, I really felt the Holy Spirit moving inside of me. There were no longer struggles or hardships but peace. I felt the peace of God upon me. I knew this was the moment God was waiting for. He wanted me to wait for His presence. Not by my efforts. But through the Holy Spirit. Though I couldn't see God, I knew He was there. I knew He was really listening to me. And as I started to pray, I felt tears coming out of my eyes. I didn't feel numb or bored

anymore. I just felt a pang of pain in my heart. I felt like I was naked and vulnerable. And I knew before God, I couldn't hide anything. He knew everything yet He wanted me to express them and talk to Him. Though it was hard at first, I started to feel more free. Because I knew God knew. And I knew God was the God of comforter.

Now that I have realized how important spending alone time with God truly is, I intend to do it more often. In our church, we have an everyday night prayer. There were so many times I just went but couldn't really meet God. I was more focused on just letting the time pass as soon as possible so I can hang out with my friends after. Now, I plan to really come before God and spend alone time with Him. There are church members, including my pastor, who can help me keep accountable to my words. Through this alone time with God, I desire to be more emotionally stable and spiritually more intimate with the Lord.