

Dr. Charles O. Galbreath

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Lazarre Simonis

Pathways To The King



Pathway to the king by Dr. Rob Reimer is a well profound book that covers so many levels of spiritual formation. So far, as I read the first three chapters, I can reflect on the several topics that the author mentioned. This book should be recommended for all Christians. Also, I would suggest using this book in conjunction with the Bible for Bible study at the local Churches. Folks at church need to know these key ingredients for the growth of their soul and spirit. I have been at Church for as long as I can remember, and I have always seen folks dedicated their time to the church that I thought the church was God and God was the church. So, I grew up with the concept that if I go to church then I am in good conduct with God. Well, as a child growing up that's what I saw folks did, so I copied what they did. Evidently, I became a slave to the church and had an undeveloped relationship with Christ. I was so focused on the local church that if there was a day that I could not go to church, I would feel like that I have committed an unforgiven sin against God. I was adapted to such a culture; I became a paralyzed Christian. For a while I did not experience the grace of God, the mercy of God and the love of God. Since I did not have that experience, I treated folks the same way. I was judgmental and was not even aware of it. It took me a while to start living the freedom of God in Christ.

As I read through the chapters, I realized Dr. Reimer talks about relationship with Christ. Developing an intimate relationship with Christ is the most important aspect in a Christian life. But the church does not teach that. So, I wanted to be as perfect as I can be because I was told that in order to be right with God, I have to be perfect. I didn't think there was a relationship with God. I grew up knowing that if I do everything right then God loves me and if I commit a sin then I am going straight to hell. Dr. Reimer quoted Apostle Paul many times in the first couple chapters and one of the quotes is that "Paul says that because we are justified, declared righteous before God, we now have peace with God." So, in order for me to have peace with God, I need

to be justified. Once, I accept Christ as my Lord and Savior for my salvation then I have peace with God. Therefore, my peace with God is not based upon me trying to be perfect and be slave to the church but solely based upon the salvation of Christ. Well, this is where Church folks fail a lot. I have seen it and heard it too many times where folks at church believe that in order for them to keep salvation, they must work for it. So, the more they work at Church, the closer they are to Christ. I have seen folks who hold big titles at church and are participating in all activities at church and have no time to spend with God alone. And that is what is being taught at church these days.

Reimer stated that “God doesn’t want us to just own the concepts of salvation. He doesn’t want us to just get it cognitively.” What Dr. Reimer is implying here is that we need to live salvation not just the idea of being free but live free under Christ. Again, at church, I have heard it often that folks say they have to pray at a certain time during the day or it jeopardizes the rest of the day. I love routine and like to create a schedule for myself. I too like to start my devotional prayers and reading in the morning. Nonetheless, if I face a challenge that stops me from praying at that particular time, I will simply change it for that day. My prayer communication with God is not based on a specific day and time but it is active at all times. I can pray anytime during the day and still experience the grace of God. Though it is good to have a prayer schedule and for reading the word of God, but be also flexible. The main point we are trying to achieve is developing and maintain a relationship with God. As Christians, we all should work on reaching out to God at anytime, anywhere and at any given moment. We should not be so focused on a specific place and time to reach out to God because it will limit us from enjoying the presence of God.

Sometimes, folks at church seems to forget that God takes priority in everything. This institution has been applied wrongly at the local churches. Church folks put the work of God before God. Folks will focus more on doing for God rather than doing with God. The idea of soul caring is highly neglected in the Christian community. There seems to be little to none in soul caring. Some folks don't even know what it means. So, I can't blame them, you can't practice what you don't know. After all, I was one of those who did not know much about soul caring. I thought soul caring was work hard for God. It took me sometimes to realized that I was not having much a relationship with God. Dr. Reimer stated "First, He is the most important thing because God is the most important person; He is utterly unique." So, God takes the first place in everything with do, not His work. At church this statement get confused a lot. Putting God first is not the same as putting His work first. Putting God first mean to have a personal relationship with God. If I am not connected to the vine, I can do nothing. So, in order for me to get anything done for God, I first have to be connected with God. For me to connect to God, I have to maintain a relationship with God which is soul caring. Caring for myself is soul caring, caring for my family is soul caring. I remember I had a debate at church with some folks about putting my family before ministry. People told me that ministry should come first before my family and that went to a long debate. In the end, I realized, only God can change their way of thinking only if they allow the Holy Spirit to work with them.

As Dr. Reimer quoted Luke 9:23 and 24 in his book about self-denying and take your cross to follow Christ, I realized this is another aspect about the Christian life folks at Church gets wrong. These days, what I see across the local churches are physical activities and hard work to maintain salvation. I am not against church activities, but it should not be the essential aspect to the growth of the church. The foundation and growth of the church is based upon spirituality.

Though we have activities to reach out to the local community, our main focus should be spiritual growth. Take your cross and follow Christ does not necessarily mean that deny your family and focus on the work of God. I have seen pastors and church leaders who have no time for their family because they are always too busy with church activities. God never ask us to deny our duty as husbands and wives to do His work. The book of 1 Timothy 3 vs 5 tells us that if a man cannot manage his own family how can he manage the church of God. What many Christians seems to forget is that caring for your family is part of soul caring. You cannot teach what you don't have or preach what you are not practicing. For, eventually the evidence will speak for itself. Pathways to the king is a book that focus on how to live the freedom that Christ provide for us through salvation. The sad truth is far too many Christians are not living that freedom. The materials shared by Dr. Reimer in this book are key essentials for Christians all over the world to live freely in Christ Jesus.

References:

Dr. Rob Reimer, *Pathways To The King: Living a Life of Spiritual Renewal and Power*
(Franklin, Tennessee: Carpenter's Son Publishing, 2013)