

Cultivating Fruitfulness
Bible Study
Lesson 5: Intentional Faith Development!

A Bible Study Series of The Mt. Zion Church

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Book: *Cultivating Fruitfulness*

By

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We Have the Vision to be a LEARNING Church!
We are Rooted in Christ and Reaching the One!

Check in Time: We are nearly halfway through this study! It is time for us to take a step back and check in on each other! Please spend the first 10 minutes of group time checking in with one another to see how your work life, family life, mental health, physical health, etc. are going. Share your successes and failures and encourage one another.

Answer the following: How has God been working in your life?

Introduction: In our next two lessons, we will delve into the idea of intentional faith development. At the outset, you may think of this as reading your Bible daily or consistent prayer. To some degree it includes this and if you are beginning to grow your faith, this may be where you start. However, to truly understand what developing our faith is all about, we should think of it as building a deeper relationship with Jesus through studying His word, communicating through prayer, and giving more of our will over to His way. The key is that we understand we are developing a relationship with Jesus which grows closer over time with consistent work. As you grow closer to Christ, you will find that He will push you to do new things, and understand Him in new ways.

Psalms 73: 26-28 Describes the exact idea we all need when considering what it means to have an intentional relationship with God.

1. We realize God is our strength (source of everything)
2. We realize without Him, we will fail
3. We realize that closeness to God ensures we have a refuge (place of safety) we can run to and know we are safe. (We exist in the refuge versus looking for it when an emergency comes)

CONSIDER: What is the difference between being a Christian and being a Christian disciple?

The term disciple means learner. To truly understand the context of this term we should think of someone from the ancient world who is working to become a skilled tradesman such as an artist. This person would study under a master for a number of years, perfecting the skills of the master, working in the master's workshop, and following the methods of the master. Why does Christ call us to be disciples? Perhaps the answer lies in the relationship between a master and a disciple.

1. To take on the mind and attitude of the master, what would a disciple have to do?
2. To perfect the skills of the master, what would the disciple have to do?
3. To understand what it takes to become a master, what would the disciple have to do?

In each of the previous questions, you will notice the attainment of mastery relates to the disciple making a decision to act in order to attain the skills of the master.

Intentional Faith Development is the same. It will not happen until we decide to act consistently to get to know the ways of The Master who is Jesus.

To Discuss:

1. Why do you have difficulty growing your faith beyond where you are right now?
2. How is the small group Bible Study helping your faith development?
3. How could the group be more helpful in your growth?
4. What is your growth goal? If you do not have one, decide to have one that is manageable. Try one of these for example: You could read through the Bible in a year. Reading 1 chapter in the Bible and writing down what it means to you in your journal. Choosing 1 person to share your faith with for the next month and get them to your Bible study group or to church. Praying with a partner daily. Tithing obediently and share the results with your group. Remember, the goal is intentional growth, so you have to step out of your comfort zone.

Big Question for Consideration: 1 Corinthians 1: 2 states we have been called to **be** Jesus' holy people who are sanctified (cleansed). How would this verse change in meaning if Paul had written we are called to **act** like Jesus' holy people? Are we to act or are we to be? In what ways have you been taught to act like Christ instead of becoming more like Christ? How does this relate to developing your faith?