

The Principle of Little by Little

I want to share with you a very fundamental, yet very crucial aspect of our Christian Walk, which I have called the principle of little by Little.

Although some things in our lives look to be instant, the truth is that nothing is. Things take time or are taking time. It's vital for us to understand that God is not in a sprint business but rather in the marathon business. We all desire to see things happen instantly, but the truth is, life is not like that.

Why would God deal with us on an instant basis when real life is a life of steps, increments, little by little, progression, and stages? Everything in the Kingdom of God is built on steps and stages, little by little. We win in life by increments. The little things we do are what cause us to win, not the big things.

There is value in the little increments we make.

There are things that you might be believing for, yet it is essential to understand that while they are exciting, some things take longer because of the steps involved.

A. Creation

- a) Genesis 1:5, 8 "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."
 - i) Take an example of creation. I believe God could create the heavens, earth, and the things therein instantly but rather chose to do it in steps and stages. He took six days to create everything.

A. Children of Israel and the Promise land.

a) Deuteronomy 7:22-23 "And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee. But the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed."

i) It is quite interesting what the children of Israel probably thought at this point as they were taking the Promised Land. I believe they thought they could just walk in and take the land all at once. Wrong! God had a plan which probably many never considered.

ii) He was going to drive them out little by little, not in one shot. Why? He gives the reason here by saying that if He had driven the people all out at once, the beasts of the earth could increase upon them. This was a strategy to protect the children of Israel, although they probably couldn't see it then.

iii) Furthermore, Exodus 23:29-30 "I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land."

o These verses give more reasons why God would not drive these people all at once. He says that the land would become desolate, the beasts would multiply because of that, and finally, the children of Israel were still small in number. The land becoming desolate would mean that there would be no one to take care of it, and hence weeds and bushes would arise and increase.

o The land was too big for them to occupy all of it at once. They had to first increase and take care of the land that they were about to

take.

B. The blade, ear, and full corn in the ear

a) Mark 4:26-28 "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

i) These verses are portraying how the Kingdom of God works.

ii) It is like a seed cast into the ground. This seed takes time to grow. It doesn't happen overnight.

iii) When this seed is cast into the ground, it first produces the blade, then the ear, and finally the full corn in the ear.

o This doesn't go from seed in the ground to full corn in the ear. There are steps and stages involved in the entire process.

C. Precept upon precept

If you have not yet realized, a revelation from God's Word comes in progression. It doesn't come instantly.

a) Isaiah 28:10,13 "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken."

i) This is another excellent example. Many people think that when it comes to spiritual things, no time is involved. The verses above make it clear that the Word of God is revealed to us little by little, step by step. We do not get greater revelation without the basic revelation. First is the basic, and then we build upon that.

- ii) We need to see time as our friend, not an enemy. Waiting is not hard if we have something to do as we wait. Although most of us want things to happen today, we are much wiser tomorrow than today.

D. Steps

- a) Jeremiah 10:23 "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
- b) Psalm 37:23 "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way."
 - i) If we were to take the word "steps" literally, it would still make sense to say that our steps are steps like the steps we make as we walk. When we are walking, we make or take steps; we don't just fly or get instantly teleported to wherever we want to go. To me, this means a process and a progression in everything we do.

E. Little is much with God in it.

- a) Proverbs 15:16 Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.
 - i) In the eyes of God, having little is infinitely better than having much without the fear of the Lord.
 - ii) Although we should not settle for little, we should learn to be content.
 - iii) We can't be a blessing if we are hardly getting by.
 - iv) We are blessed to be a blessing (Genesis 12:1-3). Luke 12:15 "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."
- b) Proverbs 16:8 "Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right."

- i) The world has made it clear that it's all about having more and more, regardless of the means we use to attain it. "I have to do what I have to do to put food on my family's table.

F. Lay your hands on me so I can get the same results as you!

Have you heard someone say, "I prayed just as they did, but I didn't get the same results? Why is it? Is God fair?" Such folks only see the minute-long prayer that we pray, but they don't see the years of seeking, fellowship, and preparing our hearts to seek the Lord. It takes time and years to know and grow in the Lord. It's a growth process for each one of us, and you should not skip yours because it takes a while. We all have been there.

a) "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little;" (Isaiah 28:10, 13).

- i) What we envy, wish for, admire, see, or even desire in other people's lives takes years and years of cultivation, preparation, seeking, and fellowshiping with the Lord.

b) It took someone forty years to get to a place where they do what they do effectively. It did not take just one day of fasting and prayer. No shortcuts. You must put in the time. Preparation time is not wasted time.

c) There is a reason God does things in our lives little by little or in increments. We all want God to act quickly and take us wherever we want to go, but few have a concept that there are steps and stages that are involved in our walk and growth with God.

d) If God were to do everything instantly without any steps on our part, we would never mature at all. Time helps us grow in character, patience, and dependence upon the Lord. Many times, we think we are ready, but we aren't.

e) We should be willing to let God take His time in our lives to get us to wherever we want to go. If we kick down doors because we don't want to wait but instead want things to happen right away, we take away from our would-be growth process.

- f) Not everything in life is a sprint. There is nothing in life that we learn overnight. It is all little by little. Everything in life is not a microwave. If we want the best-cooked meal, it is not made by a microwave but rather the oven or a crockpot. No one climbs a ladder from the top.
- g) You can't just receive prayer to know whatever someone else knows. This will happen little by little. Plant the Word of God in your heart, with time; it will grow and bring forth.

G. Faithful in the little

- a) Luke 16:10 "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."
 - i) This verse teaches a powerful life application principle. We can learn from this. We need to learn to be faithful in the little before we can be faithful in much. Many of us want to be faithful in much before we are faithful in much. We should be willing to let God grow us incrementally; first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.
 - ii) There are certain doors in your life that God is not going to open because you are not ready. You might think you are, but you aren't.
 - iii) God is still looking out for us, even if we aren't where we want to be yet. He is growing us, preparing us in character and patience. Some things in life can't be rushed; God is one of them.