

April 9, 2024

Learning to Grow

Psalm 4

*Answer me when I call, O God of my right! You gave me room when I was in distress.
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.*

*How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame? How long will you love vain words
and seek after lies? (Selah)*

*But know that the Lord has set apart the faithful for himself; the Lord hears when I call to
him. (Psalm 4:1-3)*

When we cry out to God, and he remains silent, we often jump to the conclusion that God has left us. What we fail to remember is that he never leaves us; he is just giving us some space. We often want a quick fix to our particular prayer of the moment, and when we don't get it, we feel abandoned or forgotten. We forget that we have the gift of free will. Our understanding of God's plan is equivalent to a toddler's understanding of the life of an adult.

We think we understand; we mimic things we perceive as good with no real, deeper understanding as to why. As with toddlers, sometimes a loving parent will take a step back to let the child make decisions, learn how to achieve tasks for themselves. Sometimes the parent even allows the child to make poor choices. How are we to learn without making a few mistakes?

We often perceive God as an old grandfatherly figure, but I see God more as a young parent who has baby-proofed the house and is letting us roam and explore our surroundings. Like a loving parent, God is with us the whole time. Sometimes we can feel him sitting next to us; sometimes we--as children--think that he is looking away, and we can get away with things. This is when we often get ourselves in trouble.

Like any good parent, God knows that we need to be given the chance to work some things out on our own. This is how we learn and grow. He has gifted us with gifts and abilities. He wants us to use those gifts.

How fun would life be if we just sat there while God did everything? We would never learn anything. No matter if you are 10 or 100, we are all children of God. He is allowing us to explore, giving us the chance to succeed or fail, while always watching over us.

Prayer: *Heavenly Father: thank you for giving us love, guidance and support, while letting us try on our own. Thank you for the free will to make both good decisions and bad ones. Thank you for your forgiveness for when we mess up. Help us to grow each day to be more like you. Amen*

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