

March 18, 2020
Read Proverbs 3: 1-6.

Keeping love first.

"³Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. ⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

At my age, a person might reflect on what legacy one leaves. As a participant in the Two Year Academy for Spiritual Formation, we had to reflect on our pasts and look for habits, influences, whatever that was not of God and begin the work of getting rid of those things. We also looked at habits, spiritual disciplines, for example, that we could adopt in our practices. This kind of examination needs to be honest, can be brutal, but the results can help us move towards the kind of relationship God wants with each of us.

One of the most valuable classes was finding the path that's right for us, that fits with our nature. Dr. Bob Mulholland, retired from Asbury, took us through the Pauline letters to find Jesus' instructions. After each hour-long lecture, we had an assignment on which we had an hour of silent meditation. We were asked daily to do as verses 5 and 6 ask, to trust the Holy Spirit to bring us each His message for us in our lives. At the end of the hour, we came back together to discuss, one at a time, our responses and questions, if we chose to share. The discussions were lively and productive, as were the later conversations at dinner and in small groups.

In this time of such divisiveness in both politics and religion, we need to look to Scripture and then examine our hearts and minds. Is love and faithfulness to God etched on our hearts? Do things from our past stand in the way of sharing agape love with others? Do we let things we hear or see in the news or on social media get in the way? Or do we ask God for His will in any given situation? Do we submit to His will?

It isn't about leaving a legacy for me, but if I have influenced anyone, let it be from the heart with this scripture in mind. I have a poster with the last two verses on the door to my bathroom, so I see them several times a day! If you get a chance to study The Way of Discernment, I hope you take it. It has certainly helped me in using these verses.

Prayer: Father God, help us all to lean more on You and not our own understanding, as we grow in spirit and in grace in our relationship with You. Amen.

Yield: Today, I will look at one thing I may have disliked in the past with the eyes of agape love and see what I can learn by doing that.

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