THOUGHTS ON A MISSIONAL LIFESTYLE

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in the tension of living between the old creation and the new creation, learning about God isnâ€™t a straightforward business. It doesnâ€™t come automatically. It isnâ€™t fashionable to say so, but the Christian life involves discipline. We need to set time aside, individual and corporately, to get to grips with the Bible; to read it, immerse ourselves in it and to allow it to shape our thoughts and actions.
Category: Observations

The Bible is brutally honest about the way in which people failed God. Even central characters such as King David and the Apostle Peter are not spared. God accomplishes his work through human beings, but the human beings are always flawed, and that includes us.

The Spirit is at work in our lives and God is able to do great things through us, but we still need to be honest about ourselves and our failings. This doesnâ€™t mean being morbid or miserable, wallowing in the things we get wrong and feeling perpetually discouraged. What it does mean is allowing the story of Scripture to shape our lives and to draw us closer to God. As we learn and understand more about what God has done and how he is at work in the Church and in our lives, we will find ourselves becoming more like him. However, in the tension of living between the old creation and the new creation, learning about God isnâ€™t a straightforward business. It doesnâ€™t come automatically. It isnâ€™t fashionable to say so, but the Christian life involves discipline. We need to set time aside, individual and corporately, to get to grips with the Bible; to read it, immerse ourselves in it and to allow it to shape our thoughts and actions. We need to spend time talking to God in prayer. Itâ€™s no good saying that we have a relational God, if we are not willing to invest in the relationship. We also need to take time to examine our lives; to look at our strengths and weaknesses and to confess to God when we have stepped out of line. We need to ask for forgiveness and to ask for Godâ€™s strength not to repeat our failings. All of this depends on the work of the Spirit in our lives. We canâ€™t understand the Bible or apply it in our lives without the Spirit helping us to do so.

This is really important. If we are Godâ€™s ambassadors to the world, then we need to reflect Godâ€™s character. This means that we need to be changed by the work of his Spirit; there is no escaping that.