

The Goal of Spiritual Life

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

Aim

✠ To be focused during our day to day life and not to lose our goal.

Key verses

“For what profit is to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt 17:26)

Reading - 1Kings 10

This passage describes the greatness of Solomon’s wisdom. God responded to Solomon’s humble request to rule the kingdom justly by giving him great wisdom. God said to Solomon “So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.” (1Kin3:14). Solomon used this wisdom to grow his Kingdom and built great alliances with other kings by maintaining peace. He even married Pharaoh’s daughter knowing that the king would not attack his son in law. With his wisdom and knowledge he was able to build a great temple with a sanctuary to lay the Ark of the Covenant. God was pleased with this Holy Place and accepted Solomon’s offerings. God said again “Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David.” (1Kings 6:12)

Solomon continued to grow his kingdom and acquired great wealth and power. He married many wives who were princess of other nations. These marriages enabled Solomon to maintain peace in his kingdom. The problem was that his wives were from nations who did not follow the way of God. They were pagan worshippers. Solomon allowed his wives to worship other gods and conduct pagan rituals in his home. As time went on, his wives swayed his thinking into worshipping these pagan gods. After building this great kingdom Solomon had forgotten God’s Way, His statutes and His commandments. Solomon in his great wisdom fell into great sin by forgetting the Lord’s ways. God was displeased with Solomon and took away his kingdom after he died and gave it to one of Solomon’s servants. Solomon understood what he did was wrong and was sorry for forgetting the Lord.

This story clearly tells us that all of God’s people can succumb to the worldly temptations and sin, even the wise Solomon. It is important that we remember the importance of our spiritual bond with God. When this bond is loosed through the worldly obsessions, we can so easily fall as Solomon did. No matter how strong your spiritual life. Solomon had the bond with God when he asked for wisdom, and with this he built the great temple. When he failed to remember what God had asked of him “walk in My ways, keep My statutes and My commandments”, he failed and lost the great kingdom he had built.

The Goal of Spiritual Life

What is the goal of our spiritual life?

To be constantly abiding in God's way, His statutes and commandments. By achieving these goals we will be closer to God and enjoy the presence of His Holy Spirit. This goal may seem quite easy to achieve however there are a number of challenges in life that stops us from reaching this goal. Man is constantly exposed to temptations and sin during this spiritual journey. Our faith and spiritual life is very fragile due to our human weaknesses. Just like glass, if we are not very careful in looking after our spiritual life we may find that our faith may be broken by falling into sin and stray away from God's way, His statutes and commandments. We are often found collecting these shattered pieces of our faith and spiritual life. Most importantly we have broken the bond with Our Lord through our failures.

How can we achieve this goal?

Prayer – brings us closer to God. Through our prayers we can ask for God's assistance in our spiritual journey to ensure that we do not fall far from the path which leads us to Him. We ask for strength to overcome our weaknesses and to forgive our sins. Your prayer is a weapon against evil. Remember that the devil will tempt and distract your thoughts during prayer. So continue praying no matter how much your thoughts may stray. The prayer should come from the heart. God knows what you need before you even ask Him. So be honest and sincere with your prayers.

Contemplation – We must deeply examine and analyse our current spiritual life. It is very important to firstly understand where we are in our spiritual journey. There are a number of methods we can use to contemplate on our spiritual life. These include contemplations through prayer, reading the Holy Bible and stories of saints, sitting in silence and also contemplation on experiences of our life. This close examination and analysis of your spiritual life will bring you closer to God's spirit. You can obtain guidance and consolation through contemplations.

Repentance and Confession

With prayer and contemplation we find ourselves closer to God and we become ready to repent and ask for forgiveness for our sins. The prayers open our hearts to God and deep contemplation helps us realise our faults. Repentance and confession will prepare us for the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. An important factor to remember before confession is to forgive all those who have sinned against us so that God will show us the same mercy and forgive our sins. **"Forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us"**

Holy Communion

Without confession we become unworthy to receive Holy Communion. The Apostles said "Therefore who ever eats this bread and drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord but let a man examine himself. For who ever eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself not discerning the Lord's Body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you and many sleep, for if we judge ourselves we will not be judged (1Cor 11: 27-31).

The Goal of Spiritual Life

Through the Holy Body and Blood of Jesus we receive our spiritual strength. This great gift from God will help us through our spiritual journey especially during times when we experience challenges and struggles in our lives. Through Holy Communion we continue to abide in God's way, His statutes and commandments.

Service

Through a life of service we live the word of God. It is a way of practising what we learn during our spiritual journey. We live the words described in the bible by serving God's children. There are a number of different services within the church. Each of us has talent given to us by God. This talent is then used during our service. Therefore it is not what or how we serve but why we serve that is important. A life of service requires sacrifice of time, energy and effort. However this sacrifice is accepted by God and he will be pleased. There are great benefits in participating in a service. We continue to grow with strength in our faith and spiritual life. Remember the service must come from the heart and with love we serve the Lord.

Benefit of our spiritual life.

1. Through these important methods we gain strength in our spiritual lives. It brings us closer to achieving our goal. We will remember God in all we do. God will be number one in our lives, which means our heart is constantly with God during this journey. The spiritual man can overcome sin and the devil
2. The spiritual man will not be deceived or tempted into sin
3. The spiritual man overcomes all the obstacles that stop in the way of his spiritual life and spiritual growth
4. The spiritual man will repent and confess his sins if or when he falls
5. The spiritual man overcomes tribulations and problems through prayer, faith and patience

Conclusion

During our spiritual journey we aim to achieve the goal of abiding in God's way, His statutes and Commandments. We cannot achieve this goal on our own human capabilities. If we depend on our will, strength, experience and intelligence we will never be able to achieve this goal. **"Without Me you can do nothing"** (John 15:5). As Solomon fell in sin so can we. We must pick up the broken glasses of our faith when we fall into sin and ask God to forgive us so that we can continue in our journey.

Glory is to God, forever. Amen.