

First Things

Just like in other pursuits, knowledge about God follows a sequential manner. If you haven't learned to walk, you won't be able to run. If you haven't learned the basics, you can't learn the weightier matters. There are requirements to go on. What does God require? He has shown us through His Word what He requires: to do justly, to love God and love mercy, to fear Him, and to walk humbly with Him in all His ways with all our heart and all our soul (Micah 6:8, Deuteronomy 10:12). Without these things, there's not a chance of building precept upon precept. We are supposed to add to our faith (2 Peter 1:5). Without faith, the things in us that are supposed to abound in (virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love, and abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom (2 Peter 1:5-11) won't be able to abound.

The tests and trials of life are useful in developing our character, one direction or another, good or bad. If we build on the foundation laid by Jesus, our life will be like a house built on the rock. In the storms of temptation and tribulation we will be safe and secure. Circumstances running contrary to our wishes is a time to count it all joy because God makes us perfect and entire, wanting nothing (James 1:2-4). If we know a basic thing, faith, then our faith will work the patience that is needed. Without faith, agitation will not put us in a place to receive God's blessings. We aren't believing for them. Faith is the substance of what hasn't come yet. If we don't have faith, then how will we receive the manifestation?

There are two kinds of wisdom, a wisdom from God and a wisdom we figure out. We don't have wisdom that produces purity, peace, gentleness, mercy. Our natural wisdom works with how can I get things to satisfy me, which engenders strife and confusion. From the beginning we must look to God to give us wisdom and not figure out ways to achieve our ends naturally. With the wrong mindset we absolutely will not be able to receive the things of God. Our starting point must be to depend on God. What we think can be perfectly justified in our minds and yet be wrong for all sorts of reasons, since we were not operating in the Spirit, that we can't see. No one would be able to convince us otherwise either because the carnal mind can't at all receive the things of the Spirit.

If a Christian life is not advancing, does it have the basics? If not, there's nothing to build upon and the life is unfruitful toward God. We need to give God something to work with. He gives us all the faith we need to start. It's a faith that will, when built up, take us through any situation, us being co-laborers with God.