

SEPTEMBER 2003—*Engaging the Process*

Spiritual growth is not automatic. If we are to be conformed to the image and likeness of Christ, we must become intentional about our spiritual growth. This means actively and energetically responding to God's call to maturity in Christ, using the means of grace God has given us for this purpose.

C.S. Lewis highlights an important aspect of spiritual growth when he says, "...the real problem of the Christian life comes where people do not usually look for it. It comes the very moment you wake up each morning. All your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists simply in shoving them all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other, larger, stronger life come flowing in. And so on, all day."¹

Many of us in the modern world are doing more than we should and are leading busy, hectic lives. We are often too busy to give daily attention to God and to the nurture of our souls. Preoccupied with what is seen, we lose touch with what is unseen. The world and its loud, insistent demands drowns out the quiet gentle voice of God's Spirit in our lives.

Lewis's insight points the way for us to break out of this cycle and begin to grow in our spiritual lives. In practical terms, this means turning our attention to God first thing each day through prayer and the reflective reading of Holy Scripture. As we prayerfully seek to hear God's voice in his Word, the Holy Spirit will illumine our hearts and minds to his truth, showing us more of his character, glory, ways, and direction for our lives. Then comes the opportunity to live the truth we have learned as we go about our day in communion with him. As we seek to consistently obey the truth, the Spirit works to transform our hearts and character.

This process takes time to produce change in us, but over time it has a profound effect. As Lewis goes on to say, "We can only do it for moments at first. But from those moments a new sort of life will be spreading through our system because we are now letting him work at the right part of us. It is the difference between paint, which is merely laid on the surface and a dye or stain which soaks right through."²

...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

II Peter 3:18 NIV

¹ *Mere Christianity*. C.S. Lewis. © (1943, 1945, 1952) 1960 The Macmillan Company. p. 168.

² *Ibid.* p. 169.