

My Church Isn't Feeding Me Spiritually—What Should I Do?

"The church I go to just isn't feeding me!" I can't tell you how many times I've heard that statement. People go to church, but they aren't growing. They stay in the same place every week, never developing the thing they learned the week before.

Why? The sad truth is that many people have handed the responsibility of growing themselves spiritually over to someone else—whether that's a pastor, a teacher, a spiritual mother or father or maybe even a spouse. If you're six months old in faith, then I understand that you do need help growing, and that's OK. But most times I hear that statement it's coming from veterans in the faith. If you're 6 years old in God, then pick up your Bible and feed yourself! Take the gifts you've already been imparted and do something with them. Today I want to encourage you as a dad to take responsibility for yourself.

Faith Determines What You Get

We tell our BSSM students that if they're going to do their homework so that they don't get in trouble, then they haven't taken ownership of their life but rather left it with us, their teachers. They're not going to grow if they don't take ownership for their lives. We ask them to do their homework so that they'll grow their inner man. Do the hard work, be willing to be vulnerable, let God in and stay hungry. The same is true for every believer going to church on a Sunday. Come with an attitude of hunger and expectancy to learn. Don't come to critique the message, just take gold and receive the grace in the room that is in fact being released.

When you come to the fountain, your faith determines what you get. When you come, come ready. Prepare your heart and get everything you can. We often spend an hour proactively getting

ready for church; we brush our hair, take a shower, fix our faces ... but we don't take five minutes to grow our inner man. What would happen in our lives if we spent 10 minutes on a Sunday proactively thinking about the gifts and goodness within us before we even got to church?

Next time you're going to a church gathering, prepare yourself to receive. Honor the gifts of the people around you and realize that they won't get everything perfect, but God can still use them. Find out what tools you received and start to build something with them.

Self-Pity Gets You Nowhere

David set an amazing example for strengthening himself in God! In 1 Samuel 30:6 it says, "David was greatly distressed, for the people talked of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in spirit, each over his sons and daughters. But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God."

Think about it; David was facing people who wanted to stone him! However, he didn't whine and cry ... He refused to feel sorry for himself. What an amazing lesson. Regardless of what's coming at you today, you still have an opportunity to respond by strengthening yourself in God!

"But Pastor Kris, all of this stuff is happening to me!" you may be thinking. I'm not saying that actual victims don't deserve empathy. What I am saying is that a victim mentality, where you're powerless and believe everything is bad, is not your royal identity. This kind of thinking has got to go. I think self-pity is the most culturally accepted sin in the body of Christ. The truth is that you need to be responsible for yourself! Instead of being a victim, David recounted the works of the Lord in his life and the prophecies previously given to him.

Whatever you're going through, whatever challenges you may be facing, take the prophecies that have been given to you and

use them to fight the good fight! When negativity starts to feed your mind and you get anxious, pause and remember what God has said about the world.

Take Care of Yourself for the Sake of Others

It doesn't matter if you're the baby toe or the head in the body, we need you to be you. You're important, and if you don't show up it costs somebody else. We were made for community and the body can't operate in our proper form if we're missing a body part. Maybe you were supposed to be the grace to someone next to you last Sunday, but you were so busy feeling sorry for yourself that you couldn't give them what they needed. Maybe they needed healing that you had the grace to pray for but never did. We've all been in that self-absorbed place where we focus on our deficiencies, but we can't partner with "I'm nobody. I'm nothing. I'm a victim," and not deliver the grace that we're supposed to deliver.

Proactive Preparation

Today, I want to encourage you to set aside some time to prepare your heart for growth. Let's make stewardship of our gifts a priority, so that we can be a blessing and a light to the people around us!

Father, we thank You for all of the equipment and gifts You've given to us. Today we commit ourselves to give time to proactively growing ourselves so that everyone around us can see and experience that we are growing in You. Lord, give us more gifts so that we can help more people to prosper. We thank You for what You've already given us, and we commit to steward it in Jesus name! {eoa}

Kris Vallotton is the senior associate leader of Bethel Church in Redding, California, and cofounder of Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry (BSSM). Kris travels internationally, training and equipping people to successfully fulfill their divine purpose. He's a best-selling author, having written

more than a dozen books and training manuals to help prepare believers for life in the kingdom. He has a diverse background in business, counseling, consulting, pastoring and teaching, which gives him unique leadership insights and perspectives. Kris has a passion to use his experience and his prophetic gift to assist world leaders in achieving their goals and accomplishing their mission.

This article originally appeared at .