



LEARNING TO GROW

On December 31, 2009, I sat down with a blank sheet of paper to create my list of New Year's Resolutions. *Growing spiritually, reading more books, making time for family and friends, working out, eating healthy, etc...* As I was writing these down, it dawned on me that my resolutions have been almost the same every year for as long as I can remember. For a split second, I was very discouraged that I had the same resolutions each year and wondered why I could not be more diligent in keeping them. But dwelling on my lack of determination did not help with anything and I quickly shifted my focus on to what really mattered in life – that it is not all about completing, but more about growing.

Remember the last time you tried to learn something completely foreign to you? Most of us are far too comfortable with what we know already in life so we forget how it feels to learn something completely new. All babies go through months and years acquiring basics of speech and motor skills. Children (and adults) spend many years “mastering” subjects such as language, math, science, music, sport, etc., if such mastery even exists. In this process of learning, countless trials and errors happen, which are all a very important part in growing. How ridiculous would it be if parents expected their newborn to start conversing with them on the current economy of the world or if teachers expected a kindergardener to solve calculus?

Continued on p. 2

Want to learn more about Binnerri English Ministry?
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PASTOR'S CORNER



I don't know if you set any resolutions this year, but when my kids woke up early on January 1st, I asked them to write down 10 things they resolve to change in the New Year.

Here are some of the things my youngest wrote: *I am not going to whine. Not going to sleep in your bed. Not going to cross my arms. Not going to pee in my bed...*

From my youngest daughter: *Don't have a bad attitude. Separate when you know you're going to fight. If your older, set an example. Think of other people first and think of yourself last...*

My oldest daughter said: *Try to read the Bible everyday. Try not to complain. Try to grow up this year. Try to be responsible...*

They were all pretty similar, but I noticed something in the language they used. My youngest wrote things that he was NOT going to do, where as my oldest wrote things she WANTED to do. And maybe that's because we internally know that it's not just helpful to stop doing something as much as it is to start doing something. And there was another thing that I noticed. The younger the child, the more definitive the goal was, because the oldest one started almost every resolution with "try." And when I saw that, there was something that I identified with. I've noticed that the older we get, the more we come to know ourselves, and the more we realize how difficult it is to change. And so, we say we'll try, rather than making those definitive promises.

And so this was a reminder that the older we get, the more we don't believe that we can change. But it was also a humbling reminder that we can only change by the grace of God.

Lord, please give me the wisdom to believe that I can change, and the courage to actually change.

- PK

Continued from p. 1

In the same way, I wonder if we have unreasonable and almost unfair expectations of ourselves, family members and friends when it comes to spiritual growth. So many of our problems within and with others might have to do with the fact that we easily lose the patience of allowing time for growth to take place in life. Paul states in Colossians 3:12-14: "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

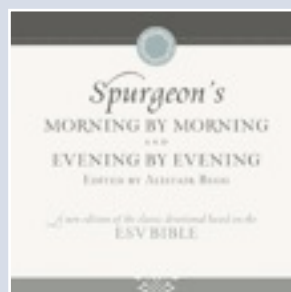
Just as it took many people and number of hours for one to acquire basic and necessary skills in life, it takes the same, if not more, people that clothe themselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience for a person to grow spiritually. So if we ever find ourselves getting frustrated, let us remember people and circumstances that God had placed in our lives in the past that led us to who we are today. Furthermore, let us allow patience to take place inside us to give ourselves and others the permission to grow.

- Grace Choi

DEVOTIONAL RESOURCES

Ready to renew your intimacy with God? Try one of these classic devotional resources.

My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers is a true Christian classic, and one of the most enduring devotional bestsellers of our time. This book has touched the lives of millions, leading them into a deeper and more passionate walk with God. And although this book is considered a classic, it still speaks so relevantly to us today.



For tens of thousands of Christians over the last century, Charles Haddon Spurgeon's *Morning By Morning* and *Evening By Evening* has been a daily devotional guide through life's ups and downs. These devotional resources offer its readers the best of Spurgeon's insight and wise counsel on themes that are as relevant to our day as they were in his day.



LifeGroup is our small group environment and the heartbeat of our ministry. Our goal for the LifeGroups is to “provide a predictable small group environment where participants experience authentic community and spiritual growth and do life together.” We believe that true life change happens best in the context of a structured relationship. And our best expression of these structured relationships is found in the small group ministry. Our LifeGroups consists of 6 to 8 individuals or 5 to 6 married couples that meet during the week for fellowship, Bible study, prayer, and accountability. It's a safe environment where real life and real issues are discussed. This is the environment where we celebrate the successes and good times of life, as well as comfort one another during the tough and disappointing times. And it's a place where we are encouraged, equipped, and challenged to become a devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

We are launching new LifeGroups this month, so if you have been thinking about getting into a small group, this is a great opportunity for you to join. We believe that true spiritual maturity comes when we're growing in our relationship with God as well as with the people He has placed in our lives. We want to encourage you to take that next step and to consider getting into a LifeGroup in this season of your faith journey. If you have any questions please visit our Web site: www.binnerriem.org/connect/lifegroups. You can also email us at lifegroups@binnerriem.org.

Still not so sure about LifeGroups? Don't just take it from us; here's what others who experienced a LifeGroup had to say.

“It's revealing. I think it reveals a lot about yourself and a lot about others, and how we share experiences. It helps you realize you're not alone in all the experiences that we go through.” - Joon Choi

“I like it because I get to learn about the Bible.” - Joe Estrera

“I love the people.” - Jieun Malarcher

“It's girl bonding time.” - Melissa Chang

“My LifeGroup guys will be my friends for life.” - Andres Kim

“LifeGroups definitely give you the opportunity to have a support system with a group of people that at first you don't know, but you get to know and that are willing to pray for you and be accountable for you.

LifeGroups in that way are awesome.” - Joe Nam

“Our LifeGroup was amazing. It was really one of the best small groups that I've ever been in.” - Deborah Kim

Want to submit an article? We'd love to hear from you! E-mail us with your articles/ideas at connections@binnerriem.org. Submissions must be made by the third Sunday of each month.

Want to serve in a different way? Join the Connections team!

E-mail us at connections@binnerriem.org for more information.

NEW STAFF PROFILE - PASTOR JO KO

Pastor Jo is an Assistant Pastor of Binnerri EM, and works primarily with LifeGroups and Starting Point, which we will be launching this spring. He grew up in the Northern Virginia Area and moved to Dallas to attend Dallas Theological Seminary. He is currently in his 2nd year in the Th.M. program. Pastor Jo has been here for a year and a half and he absolutely loves the community that he has found at Binnerri English Ministry. He is married to Cindy and they recently had their first daughter, Ava this past winter. During his free time he enjoys playing sports, taking pictures of his new daughter, catching the latest movie, and traveling to new places.



Three fun facts about Pastor Jo:

- 1) His full name is Jo Ko, just four letters.
- 2) He loves Coca-Cola, and will NOT drink Pepsi.
- 3) He is from the Washington DC area but is a Cowboys fan.

Congratulations to Pastor Jo and Cindy on the birth of their daughter, Ava! We asked them to answer some questions about her. Here are their answers.

How's it been adjusting to having Ava in your life?

Life with Ava is new everyday. Before we had Ava, we felt so prepared for her arrival and now it seems like we are learning as we go. There are many times we look at each other and say, what are we supposed to do now? Adjustments we've made include lack of sleep and getting used to her feeding and sleeping schedule. Still, we have been lucky because we have had so much help with both moms coming into town to help with the cooking, cleaning, bathing, feeding, and everything else.



Any unexpected surprises - good or bad? How do you adjust?

Never realized how much babies eat and sleep. It seems like the moment we are finished feeding her, she is ready for another feeding. The amount of diapers we have gone through is amazing. Sometimes she soils a diaper mid-changing. We have been blessed to have generous donors who have supplied us with many diapers. Most people say after the first one, they don't want to have children for a while, but a week after I was surprised to be ready for another one.

Please share some funny memories of Ava!

The three weeks that she has been alive, she has managed to poop on daddy, both grandmas and peed on our bed; good thing for mattress protectors. So far mommy has been lucky. Even at a young age, her personality is coming in. She makes it clear on things that she likes and things she does not like. There is this face she makes to make it clear to us. As frustrating as it can be, you can't help but laugh because she just is so cute.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAT - 2.06.10	SAT - 2.13.10	SAT - 2.20.10	WED - 2.24.10	SAT - 2.27.10
Couples Gathering in RM 209, 6:00 PM	Men's Prayer Meeting, 6:30 AM	Women's Prayer Meeting, 6:30 AM	Pathway Gathering, 7:30 PM	FamilyLand in EM Sanctuary, 7:00 PM