

Paying Attention

“Pay attention.” How many times have you been told this? How many times have you told it to others? We are not convinced that focus and concentration will make the difference. But yet, it truly does.

Our attention is a much sought-after commodity. In fact, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and media of all types measure success by grabbing and keeping the attention of their users. Attention is the currency that translates into advertising which converts to dollars for the media platform.

If we think we control the product which the currency of our attention purchases, we would be wrong. There is an important truth about attention that everyone spending it should know. That is, **we become what we pay attention to**. Attention in one direction, over time, will shape us into the conformity of that object. Very often our attention purchases us more than we bargained for. Devoted attention to various media sites can shape what we think of our physical appearance; what we think of social movements; what we think love is; or what we think truth is. We are shaped to fear, to worry, to agree, to disagree, to be agitated, or to be compassionate. Attention plus time equals mirroring what we are paying attention to.

“And be not conformed to this world” Rom 12:2

Certainly, this calls us to be circumspect. What is the content I am paying attention to? Is it true? Is it balanced? Is it biblical? If a believer is conformed to this world, certainly his or her attention has played an active role. Yet there is a terrific promise in the axiom that we become what we pay attention to.

“but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” Rom 12:2

Attention plus time attending to Jesus will have the effect of Christlikeness in our lives. We will more readily respond like Him, think like Him, love what He loves, and hate what He hates when we pay attention to Him. The transformation of a believer into the likeness of Christ is not necessarily complicated or mysterious. Everywhere you find Christlikeness in God’s children, you will find an attentive person to Christ.

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Cor 3:18

Take some time to pay attention to your attention with the encouragements below:

- Who and what is vying for your attention on social media? Take some time to do some custodial work in your social media feeds. Use the controls provided to curate a social media experience that is not distracting.
- Intentionally place reminders in your life that can re-direct your attention to Jesus. Posted Bible verses, music tracks, Bible passages read aloud to you, text reminders to check-in on friends, or a phone call to a believer can bring your mind back to Christlikeness.
- Practice silence with God. Draw yourself silent and shut out the stimuli of your world. Begin with small amounts of time, a few minutes for example, and work yourself up to a longer period of time.