

*Earlier this year, several Pastors were meeting to discuss how the church was handling the pandemic & the effect it was having on the spiritual condition of the church.*

*There was great concern about a pandemic-like virus that is stunting the “Spiritual Growth” of believers all around the world.*

*A story was then shared about an individual who had joined a gym.*

*After visiting the workout area, impressed by all the fancy equipment & being inspired by all the people who were hard at work performing various exercises - he signed up on the spot.*

*He was handed a membership card & was told that the gym was open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.*

*He did not have to call ahead to schedule a time to work out, he could just show up anytime he wanted.*

*He was encouraged to drink plenty of water, given a list of healthy foods to eat, as well as a list of foods that he needed to avoid.*

*A year later, when the gym owner called to secure his membership renewal – he declined.*

*He explained that the gym was not benefiting him & that he would not be renewing his membership.*

*The gym owner asked the man, “How many times have you come & worked out this past year?”*

*“Every week for the first couple of months.”, the man replied.*

*“Well, are you drinking plenty of water?” the gym owner asked.*

*“No, not particularly. I don’t really like water.”, said the man.*

*“Are you following the diet plan? Eating healthy & staying away from junk food?”, asked the gym owner.*

*“I’ve tried to do that here and there, but none of it really appeals to me.”, the man replied.*

*And so it is in the life of many believers – who are not benefiting from the local New Testament church.*

*Many get excited about being a part of something new for the first few months, but then aren’t interested in putting in the work it takes to become a soldier in the Army of GOD.*

*Becoming a Christian & not growing, is the same as getting married – then never getting to know your spouse.*

*Never going home, never celebrating your anniversary, never celebrating Valentine’s Day.*



*Just as a soldier in the military must grow & a successful marriage must grow – it is imperative that we as believers experience & exhibit “Spiritual Growth” as well.*

**2 Peter 3:18 - But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

*If RPBC is going to be the Bride of Christ & the church that GOD intends for us to be for this community, we will need to focus on “Spiritual Growth”.*

## Mark 4:1-20

*The “Spiritual Growth” of the church – or an individual will be determined by what one has done with the Word of GOD that is sown into one’s heart.*

### 1. ARE YOU DRINKING PLENTY OF WATER

- † **John 4:7** - There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, **Give me to drink.**
- † **John 4:8** - (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)
- † **John 4:9** - Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.
- † **John 4:10** - Jesus answered and said unto her, **If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.**
- † **John 4:11** - The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?
- † **John 4:12** - Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?
- † **John 4:13** - Jesus answered and said unto her, **Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:**
- † **John 4:14** - **But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.**
- † **John 4:15** - The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

***JESUS is the Living Water – Drink up!***



## 2. ARE YOU EATING RIGHT

- † **John 6:32** - Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.
- † **John 6:33** - For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.
- † **John 6:34** - Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.
- † **John 6:35** - And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

*Stay away from junk food & feast on the Mana from Heaven.*

## 3. ARE YOU EXERCISING

- † **1 Timothy 4:6** - If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.
- † **1 Timothy 4:7** - But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.
- † **1 Timothy 4:8** - For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

*Put GOD's word into action & benefit from a healthy spirit.*

## 4. ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH REST

- † **Exodus 33:14** - And he said, My presence shall go [with thee], and I will give thee rest.
- † **Matthew 11:28** - Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
- † **Matthew 11:29** - Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
- † **Matthew 11:30** - For my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light.

*Resting your mind, body & soul will help you achieve "Spiritual Growth".*

*To be spiritually fit, we have to follow GOD's plan & not our own.*

*GOD has already completed the toughest part – now we must do our part.*

*Let's get in spiritual shape & be ready to experience "Spiritual Growth".*

