

Spiritual Growth

Sunday, December 06, 2020
Mike Miller
Straight Paths Bible Church

2 Pet 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.

Psa 92:12-14 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

I. We are to grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1 Pet 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

GROW – To enlarge in bulk or stature, by a natural, imperceptible addition of matter, through ducts and secreting organs, as animal and vegetable bodies; to vegetate as plants, or to be augmented by natural process, as animals. Thus, a plant grows from a seed to a shrub or tree, and a human being grows from a fetus to a man.

- A. Grace is the divine influence upon the heart and life.
- B. Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is simply becoming more familiar with Him and knowing Him like you do another person.
- C. So the question for each of us is: "Am I growing in grace and knowledge of the LORD?"
 - 1. Have I grown in the past year? In the past month? In the past week?
 - 2. Is there a difference in how much influence God has over my everyday life? My thoughts? My opinions about things?
 - 3. Is there a difference in how well I know the Lord?

II. Growth is a slow process.

- A. It is such a slow process that you cannot see it happening moment by moment – it is imperceptible.
- B. Plants grow slowly.

Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, – James 5:7

- C. Animals grow slowly.
- D. People grow slowly – both spiritually and physically.

III. Where there is life there will be growth.

- A. When something isn't growing it is because there is no life there – it is dead.
- B. Life necessarily produces increase.
 - 1. Trees get bigger; grass gets taller.
- C. But life doesn't produce growth that is like an explosion – it is so slow that you can not observe it moment by moment.
- D. Some things you can observe day by day, others week by week. garden, lawn
- E. Other things you can't measure the growth until you go to larger intervals of time. children, trees, hair

IV. So spiritual growth is the same:

Isa 28:9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

Isa 28:10 For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and there a little*:

- A. True spiritual growth only happens slowly and over a long period of time.
- B. Spiritual food doesn't come in concentrated pills that instantly boost you to a higher level of spirituality. like Popeye and his spinach
 - 1. It comes in little bites that you must chew and swallow – one at a time.
 - 2. It isn't a miraculous, powerful message that holds the key to spiritual strength and maturity – it is the little gleanings that you get from day to day and week to week.
 - 3. It is not the one outstanding message, but the steady, faithful partaking of spiritual food that brings you to spiritual maturity.
- C. There are times of faster growth – and these are usually times of great difficulty.
- D. Think of the number of meals it takes to grow an infant to a full-grown man!
- E. Spiritual growth is the result of perseverance in seeking God.
 - 1. Feeding on his Word
 - 2. Listening to preaching
 - 3. Reading and studying on your own

V. Spiritual growth is actually a work of God – not a work of our own.

1 Cor 3:7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

- A. You may eat healthy and often, but growth is the result of life.
- B. Spiritual growth works the same way.
 - 1. As we are faithful and seeking God by adding to our knowledge of Him by his Word – we find that our hearts have been enlarged.
 - 2. We also find that our understanding and vision has been enlarged.
- C. But the addition of knowledge is not spiritual growth.

Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. – 1 Cor. 8:1

- D. In order to grow spiritually God's life must be in you.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

- E. If you are still living YOUR life there can be no spiritual growth.

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

- F. Spiritual growth actually means you diminish and God increases in your life.

John 3:30 He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

- 1. Spiritual growth doesn't exalt us or put us in the places for men to honor us.