

Essentials to Grow Spiritually

1 Peter 2:1-3

I. Introduction

- a. Christians have been born again by the word of God – 1 Peter 1:22-25
- b. They are people to whom the gospel was preached, v.25, who of course heard it preached, who believed to the point of obeying that truth, v.22, which involves being baptized into Christ (3:21), and whose souls were thus purified, v22 (3:21).
- c. As a consequence of being born again, regenerated to a new life, Christians ought to grow – “therefore” – 2:1
- d. Growing spiritually not just some knowledge exercise, but growth in, among other things, faith, love, hope, service. See 2 Peter 1:5-7.
- e. 1 Peter 2:1-3 tells us of essentials for spiritual growth: laying aside the old man; the right attitude and action required from the heart, the right foundation & material – the food, and the purpose of spiritual growth.

II. Must lay aside carnal attitudes and conduct

- a. Laying aside worldly attitudes and conduct – v.1 – cast off entirely. These will hinder, stunt, even prevent spiritual growth. (malice, all guile, hypocrisies, envy, evil speaking)
- b. Part of the old man to be put off, put to death
 - i. Ephesians 4:31; Colossians 3:5-10
- c. Carnal thinking and conduct prevent moving on to solid food
 - i. 1 Corinthians 3:1-4
- d. Illustration of bad attitude: Isaiah 28:9-13

III. Must have the right action and attitude for spiritual growth

- a. The command is to desire. Desire is a part of the will of man which is part of the heart of man. Desire is a choice.
- b. “Long for the spiritual milk that is without guile” (ASV); “desire the pure milk of the word” (NKJV)
- c. Must desire as strongly as baby for mother’s milk. Involves continuing desire for more. Desire for more milk is natural for babies physically. In Christians, is developed and proceeds from having tasted that the Lord is gracious.
 - i. 1:19, 22; Hebrews 6:5; Titus 3:3-5
- d. Desire is for the word of God. As Christians mature they continue to desire the word.
 - i. Matthew 6:7-8; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-11
- e. Involves zeal and diligence
 - i. 2 Timothy 2:15
- f. Involves meekness; willing to yield; desire to be taught of God
 - i. James 1:21; 3:17; John 6:44-45
- g. Therefore cannot be
 - i. Dull of hearing – Hebrews 5:11
 - ii. Sluggish – Hebrews 6:12

- iii. Indifferent – Revelation 3:15-19
- iv. Complacent – Revelation 2:4
- h. Examples to imitate: Acts 2:42; 8:4; 11:23, 26; 17:11

IV. Must have the right foundation and material – the right food – for spiritual growth

- a. The incorruptible seed – 1:23-24
 - i. Incorruptible = not subject to decay
 - ii. Endures forever = unmoved, fixed, permanent
 - iii. Lives and abides forever – forever true
 - iv. The word of God; the word of the kingdom; the gospel (v.25b); the truth (v.22)
 - 1. Luke 8:11; Matthew 13:19
 - 2. Produces only Christians, and Christians only
- b. Spiritual milk that is without guile (ASV)
 - i. Spiritual – belonging to the reason. God reasons with us through His word.
 - ii. Without guile = pure, unadulterated
- c. The sweetness, attractiveness, value of godly wisdom revealed in God's word
 - i. Jeremiah 15:16; Psalm 19:7-11; 119:103; Proverbs 3:15
 - ii. The gospel contrasted to the wisdom of men: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
- d. Start with a solid foundation
 - i. 1:22; 2:4-8; Ephesians 2:20
 - ii. Continue to build upon
 - 1. Matthew 7:24-27
 - 2. Colossians 2:6-7 – rooted and grounded, established, in a solid foundation
 - 3. Ephesians 4:14 – so not carried by every wind of doctrine
 - 4. Continue from there so you don't need foundation laid again – Hebrews 6:1-2
- e. Has power to not only save initially but to sustain us, build us up and strengthen us unto the saving of the soul eternally. Without it, will become weak and spiritually sick.
 - i. Acts 15:31, 32; 16:4-5; 20:32
 - ii. Error will do the opposite
 - 1. Acts 20:30
 - 2. Reject creeds, opinions, rationalizations of our own mind

V. Must recognize the right purpose or objective for spiritual growth

- a. "that you may grow thereby unto salvation" (ASV)
- b. Necessary
 - i. 2 Peter 1:8-11; 3:14-18
 - ii. Great reward in growing
 - iii. Grave consequences if don't grow

Are you growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? Have you laid aside carnal attitudes and conduct that will hinder or prevent your growth? Do you have the strong desire you ought to have for the word of God? Let us be resolved to grow unto salvation.