



Asking For A Friend

How Do I Grow In The Lord?

2 Peter 3:14-18
Week of January 24, 2020

Before Connect Group

- 2 Peter 3:14-18
 - Watch the sermon by going to <http://switzerlandcommunitychurch.org>
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Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

2 Peter 3:14-18, ESV

Sermon Notes

You cannot grow in Christ if you do not make the leap to combat these two things. I would argue that you cannot do that on your own.

When we have come to the Lord, the things that brought us joy at one point no longer bring us joy. We are no longer satisfied with the things we indulged in our past life. Then we question how do we grow in the Lord. Many people, though, not finding an answer, simply give up and return to the things they did before they came to the Lord, living in a constant state of conflict between themselves and their spiritual growth.

The scriptures point us to the answer in order to grow in the Lord. The overall conversation that Peter is having with his reader is a conversation regarding spiritual growth. You may have noticed that this text comes from the closing words of this Epistle. Peter is writing to his Church brothers and sisters with great concern over their growth and continued faithfulness to the Lord. So much so that the final verse of the letter is a command to "grow."

Growth is one of the greatest struggles of the Church.

- *1 Corinthians 3:1-2 But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready,*
- *Hebrews 5:11-14 About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*
- Some of us have been Christians for years, decades, even our entire lives and we simply have not grown. The lowest attended of events are bible studies and prayer meetings. We have been given everything we need for life and godliness but tend to struggle with growing in the Lord.

You are Growing

- Scripture does not have a category for non-growth.
- Every day you wake up, you are growing in something. If it is not in the Scriptures and faithfulness to the Lord, then it is the philosophies and faithfulness to this world. Something is shaping you and moving you towards something whether it is God or not.
- Your time and effort is invested and produces return... The question is whether or not that time and effort is in things of Heaven or things of this earth?
- It is clear throughout all of Scripture that the intent of the Lord is for you to grow up in Him. If you have come to know the Lord, He has provided the beautiful work of the Gospel unto salvation. He has transformed the Joy of your heart. And He has given you a capacity to Love and feast unto growth of the things of heaven!

Am I trusting in the Lord?

- *2 Peter 3:14 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.*
- Eventually, if we did in deep enough to this question, we will come to the conclusion that we do not. We all, being honest, have areas of our life that we do not submit to the Lord

and hold to ourselves rather than submit them to God.

- Peter has definitely heard that the church has begun to waiver in their faith.
- *2 Peter 3:1-4 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."*
- Every day on this earth is a day that seeks to challenge your trust and hope in the promises of God. The combination of our flesh and the enemy of this world battles against our faithfulness to God.
- There are a few things that work against our trust in the Lord that rise up every day.
 - Our vision.
 - The things that are promised to us by God are things Eternal. There is nothing of this earth that can match the salvation and love that has been given to you and to me in Jesus Christ. There is nothing that can bring greater joy than obedience to His purpose and Glory here on this earth. These are facts for the believer.
 - However, we continually struggle to see because we are earthly beings that wrestle with our flesh. So much so that Paul's prayer over the Ephesian church is for capacity.
 - *Ephesians 3:14-19 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*
 - Because we can't see it clearly, we start to function with short-sightedness. We start to focus on the things right in front of us. The issue is that those things can deceive us and even distort our ultimate goal.
 - Our focus
 - This is about our flesh and the warring desires within us.
 - We struggle to sustain true trust in the Lord because we lose vision and then our flesh rises lustful passions.
 - Our flesh seeks to justify actions, our sight is already adjusted to lesser glory, this creates a recipe for unfaithfulness and ultimately a lack of trust in Christ!
 - You cannot grow in Christ if you do not make the leap to combat these two things. I would argue that you cannot do that on your own.
 - We must lay down entertainment for growth!

Am I diligent?

- *2 Peter 3:14 Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.*
- There are competing grammatical flows in this verse.
 - There is a state of being... "beloved"
 - There is an active verb... "be diligent"
 - There is a passive verb... "be found"
- This is important, because it sets up the way we should think about our position before God.

- You are Beloved.
 - Paul uses this several times in his address to the churches. This past week in our Wednesday night study we spent the entire hour just talking about Romans 1:7 where Paul address his letter to “those loved by God (Beloved)” and to the “Saints”.
 - This is a state of being, meaning that you did not do anything to earn this badge, but it was given to you.
 - *Romans 5:6-8 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
 - While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
 - You do not identify as a sinner because you have been justified by Jesus Christ and you are a new creation in Him.
- Be diligent and Be found.
 - This does not mean that God cannot find you. This also does not mean that it is your job to present yourself without spot or blemish.
 - The work of presenting you without spot or blemish is wholly on the work of Jesus Christ.
 - You being at peace is attached to your diligence.
 - Peter says it this way at the beginning of the Epistle:
 - *2 Peter 1:3-11 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*
 - Make every effort to supplement and be diligent to confirm.
 - *Colossians 1:21-22 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,*
- This word diligent in our text places today's question back on you.
 - We need to take the time to question ourselves and ask whether we really want to grow. Growing in the Lord is an active work. It is not something that just happens to you. It is something you go and get.
 - Diligence in the Word of God
 - We are paralyzed by the unbiblical notion that pastors and ministers are the only ones who should pour over the Bible. That will make me grow, but I cannot make you grow in just a sermon.

It is time to grow. Those who have not grown in Christ will find themselves without a foundation to stand on when all is said and done. Today is the day. You can begin a relationship with Christ today. You can change the growth pattern of your life today.

Connect Group Discussion Questions

- When you consider the passage from 2 Peter, what stands out to you as the main thrust and the main point of this passage? How does it speak to our growing in faith and pursuit of the Lord?
- What does it look like to trust in the Lord? What does it look like to be diligent in our pursuit of faith?
- What are some of the things that we give our time to diligently other than the Lord? Where can we submit our time and our attention off of things of the flesh and focus on the Lord?
- Why do we tend to stop growing in our spiritual walk? What are some the reason we give of stop pursuing the path of discipleship and stop growing spiritually? How does Jesus Christ guide us in our spiritual growth?
- How do we think that our lives will change when we pursue spiritual growth and put aside the distractions? How will our lives change?

Challenge For The Week

Everyone wants to grow spiritually, yet the answer does not hve a quick fix or short term path to success. To ask How Do I Grow Spiritually means

- This week, take some time during your quiet time to consider where you put your dilligence and attenion in your spiritual pursuit. Ask God to reveal the areas in your life where you are not trustuing Him.
- One of our next steps is to actively share our faith with the people in our life. We cannot grow in our faith without the abundance of God moving through us to others. Who is one person you can find an opportunity to share your faith with?

