



Spiritual Growth: Our Response to God's Love

by Jana Brackbill

So that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 6:12

Working definition of spiritual growth: Spiritual growth is the progression of becoming more and more like Jesus Christ. Having accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit begins the development of making us more like Christ, conforming us to Christ's image. Our old, sinful nature begins to die off and becomes increasingly alive to the new, Christ-like nature (2 Corinthians 5:17). Spiritual growth is an earthly, lifelong process that is built upon by our study of God's word, our yielded obedience to God's Word and His blessing upon our lives as we walk by faith in the Spirit.

What is Spiritual growth?

- **What Spiritual growth is not . . .**
 - Guaranteed because we are older Philippians 2:12
 - Instantaneous and complete 2 Timothy 3:14
 - Automatic 1 Peter 2:2
 - Causing God to love you more Titus 3:5
 - Our Position in Christ 2 Peter 1:3
 - Accumulated knowledge 1 Corinthians 1:8
 - Possessing and using spiritual gifts
1 Corinthians 12:31
 - Something we can produce 1 Corinthians 3:6-7

- **What Spiritual growth is . . .**
 - Commanded by God Ephesians 4:15
 - Aided by God Philippians 2:13
 - Blessed by God Psalm 25:12-13
 - A washing and a renewing Titus 3:5
 - A new life to live Romans 6:4
 - A mixing of God's Word with faith and obedience
Hebrew 4:2
 - A thriving and growing relationship with God
Psalm 25:5
 - A changing of us into His image 2 Corinthians 3:18

Your life is no longer your own . . . you have been bought with a price. But the work you do is never to be done in order to earn something. The work you're called to do is to be done in celebration of something. You don't work to earn God's favor; rather, your work is a hymn of thanks for the favor that Christ achieved on your behalf.

Paul David Tripp

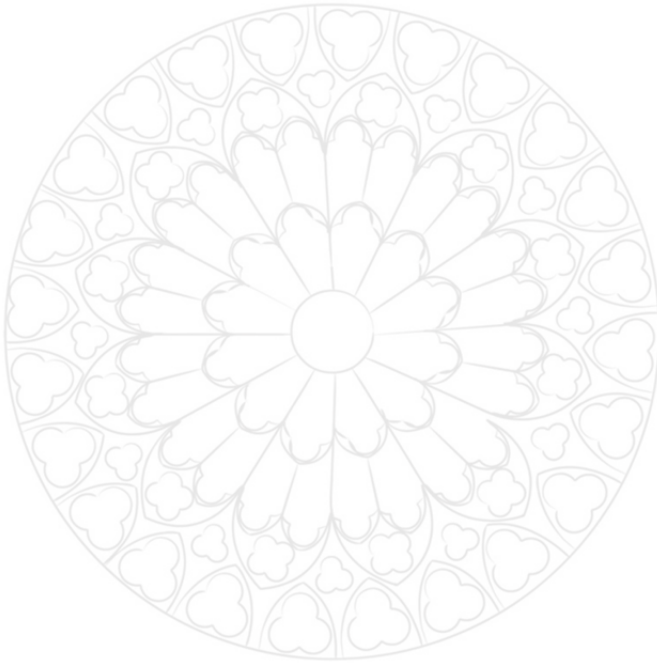
Why is Spiritual growth important?

- It is important to God Isaiah 43:7; John 3:16
 - Fulfill His plan of salvation Romans 5:8
 - Prepare a royal priesthood 1 Peter 2:9

- It is important to the believer
 - Peace Philippians 4:7; Isaiah 41:10; Psalm 62:2
 - Joy Romans 15:13
 - Contentment Philippians 4:11
 - Hope Psalm 43:5
 - Fulfills the believer's reason to exist 1 Peter 4:11

- It is important to others
 - Family Psalm 145:4; Isaiah 54:13; Psalm 78:6; Deuteronomy 11:19
 - To other believers individually and to the church Proverbs 27:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:11
 - To the unsaved Matthew 5:16





Spiritual growth protects us from falling away

- **Further growth**

- Holding fast to the basics but pressing on
Hebrews 6:1
- Blessings acquired Hebrews 6:4-5
- Danger and consequences of falling away
Hebrews 6:6

We are to be prepared to be carried on to maturity
... to be taken on to maturity, not in our own strength.
God carries us forward.

God permitting we will do so. Hebrews 6:3

If you don't go on to maturity with God, you risk falling
away and finding it impossible to repent.

Pastor Mark Minnick

- **Expectation of better things Hebrews 6:9-12**

For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His Name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.

Hebrews 6:10

- Works are not to be forgotten
- Diligence is needful

So that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Hebrews 6:12

- Shun sluggishness
- Realize full assurance
- Maintain good works
- View Christ as our forerunner

- **God's design for us**

So that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil.

Hebrews 6:18-19

- Run to Christ, our refuge
- Take hold of our hope
- Anchored hope sure and steadfast

Practically when does spiritual growth take place?

- Seasons of growth
 - As newborn babes 1 Peter 2:2
 - As those who have been enlightened Ephesians 1:18
 - As mentors Titus 2:3-5
- Perseverance in planning for spiritual growth
 - Having a goal
 - Striving toward a goal
 - Realizing a goal
 - Setting new goals

The vigor of our spiritual lives will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our lives and in our thoughts.
George Mueller

Impediments to spiritual growth

- The conflict of our two natures Romans 7:14-25
- Unconfessed sins Psalm 130:1-5; Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143

We become so accustomed to our sins we sometimes lapse into a state of peaceful coexistence with them, but God never ceases to hate them.

Jerry Bridges

- Time constraints Psalm 90:12; Matthew 6:33
- Troubles and afflictions Psalm 25:16-18

Evidences of Spiritual Growth

- The fruit of the Spirit will become evident in our lives

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

- Faith, hope, and love will be increasing as we grow spiritually in our lives but the greatest evidence will be love.

Who can help me grow spiritually?

- God
 - Father
 - Study of His attributes
 - Asking God to develop these attributes in us
 - Son
 - Examine His life and ministry
 - Examine His prayers John 17
 - Holy Spirit
 - Be attentive to not grieve the Holy Spirit Ephesians 4:30
 - Be attentive in listening for the Spirit as He leads Revelation 3:20; John 10:27-28
- Godly role models
 - Hebrews 11
 - Pastors, Teachers
 - Missionaries
 - Spiritual friends

*So let us know,
let us press on to know the LORD.
His going forth is as certain as the dawn;
And He will come to us like the rain,
Like the spring rain watering the earth.*
Hosea 6:3

Resources:

Sermons on Hebrews 6 by Pastor Mark Minnick

Urgent Imperative for All Who Call Themselves Christians November 08, 2015, Hebrews 6:1-8
Why Pressing On to Maturity Is Our Urgent Imperative November 29, 2015, Hebrews 6:4-5
Fearful Impossibility November 29, 2015, Hebrews 6:6-8
Persuasions and Desires for True Christians January 24, 2016, Hebrews 6:9-12
Take Hold of the Hope January 31, 2016, Hebrews 6:13-18
We Have An Anchor January 31, 2016, Hebrews 6:19-20

5 Year Christian Reading Plan

<http://www.mountcalvarybaptist.org/site/user/files/1/5-Year-Christian-Reading-Plan.pdf>

Books

New Morning Mercies: A Daily Gospel Devotional by Paul David Tripp
The Practice of Godliness by Jerry Bridges
The Pursuit of Holiness by Jerry Bridges
Simplify Your Spiritual Life: Spiritual Disciplines for the Overwhelmed by Donald S Whitney and Richard A. Swenson
What Do I Know about My God? by Mardi Collier

Produced and distributed by: Mount Calvary Baptist Church, ©2016
Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright, ©1960,1962, 1963,1968,1971,1972,1973,1975,1977,1995 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.