



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

Principles of Spiritual Growth

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Review: Hindrances to Spiritual Growth

1. Lack of Knowledge of God

Solutions:

- 1.1 Begin a consistent plan of Bible Study.
- 1.2 Read one book a month on spiritual things.
- 1.3 Establish a relationship among Christians for prayer and study.

2. Lack of Enthusiasm

Solutions:

- 2.1 Find someone who has a need to minister.
- 2.2 Look for enthusiastic Christians.
- 2.3 Write your own conversion story.

3. Lack of Accountability to Others

Solutions:

- 3.1 Find a prayer partner & develop a relationship.
- 3.2 Meet with a group to share your struggles.
- 3.3 Set specific goals & evaluate your life against these goals.

4. Lack of Commitment

- 4.1 Remember the grace and mercy of God.
- 4.2 Write specific commitments you need to make.
- 4.3 Put a timetable on this commitment.

Principles of Spiritual Growth

We should have growth in all areas of our lives: family, career, income, and relationship with Christ. If we are not growing in every area of our lives, we will have many problems, and we will die.

How do we experience growth in our lives?

1. The "BIG BETTER BEST" Principle

Be faithful in the small things (Mt. 25:21). When we have small things, we want Bigger, then we want Better, and eventually we want the Best! Be faithful to your ministry. Every ministry is important.

2. The "LOVE ME TENDER" Principle

Love your neighbor as yourself (Mt. 22:36-39, Jn.13:35). "Love" is mentioned 508 times in the Bible. Love your God, your neighbor, your spouse, and even your enemies.

3. The "DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY" Principle

Be content, stop complaining (Phil. 4:11-13). Being human, we have desires of the flesh. But, be happy with what God has blessed you with (1 Tim. 6:6-10). Worry makes you age faster (Sir. 30:24).

4. The "GARDEN" Principle

Whatever you sow, you will reap. We live in a world where we want something without doing anything. If you want to grow, but do not want to go to church or to pray, it is impossible. If you want your marriage to grow, you have to spend time with your spouse. If you want to get rich, you have to work hard. You have to invest in the kingdom of God.

5. The "YOU WANTED IT, AND YOU GOT IT" Principle

When much is given, much is required. When you grow, your responsibilities also grow (Lk. 12:48)

SIGNS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH:

- 1) **Shows Compassion for Others:** ability to relinquish whatever is holding us back from following Jesus (Mk. 10:17-23).
- 2) **Love for Others:** Above all other virtues, Love bonds them all together in perfect unity (Col. 3:14). How many of us will suffer for others? Love makes everything else come together.
- 3) **Control of the Tongue:** Words are powerful. The growing believer must understand that they need God's help. Words offend people quickly (Jas. 3:2). In order not to offend, we should take time to consider what we say, how we say it, and with what attitude we say it. Even in the midst of an angry discussion, we must carefully pick our words, since words can affect our testimony. Death and Life are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18:21).
- 4) **Obedience to God's Word:** It is not enough to simply say I believe every word in this Book. The spiritually growing or mature person will show evidence they trust & believe the Bible's message (1 Jn. 2:5). If anyone obeys, love for God is truly complete in them. We must be "Doers" of the Word of God, not just "Hearers" (Jas. 1:22). We must DO what the Bible says.

Reflection: Are you showing signs of spiritual growth? If not, do something about it and ask for God's assistance in living His Word. Let all of us go forth growing as a person in the service of Christ. What will you now do with this message? Will other people see these four signs in each one of us?

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