

HOW TO GROW AS A CHRISTIAN – LESSON 03

TOOLS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

*“Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face,
and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?”*

~ 1 Thessalonians 3:10

1. Review

- a. God’s will → 1) salvation and 2) knowledge of the truth (growth/edification/established)
 - i. 3) sanctification (1 Th 4:3), 4) service (Eph 2:10, 3:9, 4:16, 2Ti 2:15, 2Cor 5:18)
- b. 1) Growth is God’s work in you (see Paul’s words such as fruit, increase, edify) – 1Co 3:6
 - i. When it is apparent ... it is encouraging, a joy, praiseworthy, thankworthy
 - ii. When it is not ... it can be discouraging, doubtful, confusing, hard, hopeless
 - iii. Goal → being strong in the Lord and the power of his might – Eph 6:10
- c. 2) The word of God shows you areas of needed growth through identifying problems
 - i. Paul’s course of epistles identifies and addresses problems
- d. 3) What are tools of spiritual growth? How is my spirit exercised/strengthened/built up?
- e. The tools are simple, cliché, but not secrets (even the world tries to use them)

2. Bible

- a. *If your problem is ...* lack of understanding, knowledge, confidence, empowerment
- b. The word of God is said to be the food of the Christian life - Matt 4:4
- c. It is also a sword without which you won’t get anywhere in the battle – Eph 6:17
- d. Reading and study brings understanding, knowledge, wisdom - 1 Tim 1:13, Col 1:9
- e. Assurance increases – Col 2:2 – with being approved by God not men – 2 Tim 2:15
- f. No Bible is a problem, but so is all study and no work /charity ... 1 Cor 8:1, 1 Cor 13:2

3. Prayer

- a. *If your problem is ...* lack of desire, spark, interest, application, focus, peace
- b. Prayers of thanksgiving, praise, request, acc. to the will of God, from the heart
- c. Seeds need to be germinated, eggs need to be broken, cars need to accelerate
- d. Prayer is said to be the breathe of the Christian life – 1 Th 5:17
- e. Strengthens the inner man, moves doctrine past knowledge to fullness – Eph 3:14-15, 19
- f. It promotes peace of mind through Christ - Phi 4:6-7, 1 Tim 2:1,8

4. Praise/Rejoicing

- a. *If your problem is ...* lack of zeal, motivation, priority, contentment, joy
- b. Praise - It is a thoughtful expression of gratitude, merit, or honor
- c. Joy – The delight of the mind; an emotion of excited by possession of some good
- d. Praise and worship services are to this what preaching services are to Bible study
- e. Think on these things - Phil 1:9-11, 4:4, 4:8-9

5. Fellowship

- a. *If your problem is ...* lack of problems, practice, relationship, responsibility, results
- b. Secular study → Key to happiness = gratitude, long-term perspective, valuing others
- c. Fellowship as a tool of spiritual growth – family, marriage, friends, neighbors, church
- d. Every part contributes to edification, even if the part is needy – Eph 4:15-16, Acts 17:4
- e. What is lacking cannot be perfected without you working with one another – 1 Th 3:10
- f. The difference between Christian/non-Christian is the fellowship is with Christ – Eph 3:9