

SC Church 4.19.2026

Gradually Then Suddenly
Practice brings Growth

- A. Intro: Do you like to Practice?
- B. Big Idea: Our Faith takes Belief and Regular Practice to Grow.
- C. Scripture: Hebrews 5:12-14 NLT – ¹² You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. ¹³ For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn’t know how to do what is right. ¹⁴ Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.
- D. 1 Corinthians 9:27 NLT – ²⁷ I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.
- E. 1 Timothy 4:7-8 NLT – ⁷ Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives’ tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly. ⁸ “Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.”
- F. Philippians 2:13 NLT – ¹³ For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.
- G. What Practices of the Faith are Essential to Growth?
 - a. Daily Scripture Study
 - i. Joshua 1:8 NLT – ⁸ Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.
 - ii. Psalm 119:11 NLT – ¹¹ I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.
 - iii. Psalm 119:105 NLT – ¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.
 - b. Daily Prayer
 - i. 1 John 5:14 NLT – ¹⁴ And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him.
 - ii. Matthew 6:7-8 NLT – ⁷ “When you pray, don’t babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!
 - iii. Colossians 4:2 NLT – ² Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.

iv. Philippians 4:6-7 NLT – ⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

c. Regular Church Attendance

i. Hebrews 10:25 NLT – ²⁵ And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

d. Sharing my Faith

i. Matthew 28:19-20 NLT – ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

ii. 1 Peter 3:15-16 NLT – ¹⁵ Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. ¹⁶ But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.

iii. Colossians 4:5-6 NLT – ⁵ Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.

H. Close: Where can you use more practice?

a. Hebrews 10:24 NLT – ²⁴ Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.

b. Next Steps

i. Memorize: Hebrews 10:24 NLT – ²⁴ Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.

ii. Think: What do I need to regularly practice that I am not currently?

iii. Action: Make regular church attendance a priority.