

Growing In Righteousness

Lesson 9

Memorize (Select One) –

- ✓ Philippians 3:14 - I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- ✓ II Peter 3:18 - 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.

The Christian life is an on-going quest toward Christ-likeness. It is God's will that His children be continually conformed into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification" (I Thess. 4:3). Sanctification is about a progressive holiness (Godliness) of life that ought to be true of every believer. The Doctrine of Progressive Sanctification is the Doctrine of Growth and Change. Sanctification is progressive because it is a continual process involving effort toward change that does not cease until glorification.

Growing in righteousness is hard because it is a struggle with sinful habits and selfish attitudes that remain in our lives. Summarize how Paul expressed this in Romans 7:15 & 19:

Growing in righteousness is possible because God provides enabling grace for growth (Romans 5:20) with the help of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. When a Christian cooperates with the Holy Spirit in obedience to God's Word, growth and change are realized.

I. Wrong Views About Sanctification (Growth)

A. *Growth is Instant & Painless*

Some teach that growth is independent of the Christian by, "Let go and let God", an experience sought by "going forward" or a divine zap. None are Scriptural and each are inconsistent with the call to continual effort in putting off and putting on (Ephesians 4:22-24).

B. Growth is Automatic

The Bible clearly teaches that the only thing man does “automatically” is _____ . (Romans 7:17)

C. Growth is Bible Knowledge

Knowledge of God’s Word is important to growth but obedience is essential. “Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, _____ (James 4:17).”

D. Growth is Optional

To think growth is necessary for some saints more than others, or, that a commitment to growth is related to some kind of new level of discipleship, is totally erroneous. Every Christian is commanded to grow and there will be times of more and less growth experienced. To claim Christ and ignore God’s call to sanctification is contrary to the new mindset of a regenerated life.

II. Dynamic of Progressive Sanctification**A.** All growth begins with right (biblical) thinking.

1. What does Proverbs 23:7 tell us about a man’s thoughts?

2. According to II Corinthians 10:3-5, the warfare involved in the life of a Christian seeks to bring every _____ captive to the obedience of Christ (v. 5).
3. Romans 12:2 is a call to a transformed life. How does this verse tell us to be changed? _____
4. Summarize what Philippians 4:8 tells you to think upon.

B. All growth involves the Scriptures.

1. How does Hebrews 4:12 express the Scriptures power to change us?

2. Note the four ways that the Scriptures are profitable for our growth and change (II Timothy 3:16).
 - a. _____ (What's right)
 - b. _____ (What's not right)
 - c. _____ (How to get right)
 - d. _____ (How to stay right)
3. According to II Timothy 3:17, what do the Scriptures equip us for?

C. All growth involves effort (discipline).

1. What does I Timothy 4:7b tell us about how to develop Godliness?
_____. (The verb γύμναζε [*gumnaze*] is related to our English word gymnasium).

In Godliness Through Discipline Jay Adams states: “There are only two kinds of life: the feeling motivated life of sin oriented toward self, and the commandment motivated life of Holiness oriented toward Godliness.”

2. Read Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:8-10. Both of these passages are essential to the effort involved in progressive sanctification. Both convey an ongoing process of _____ the old self and _____ the new self.
 - a. According to Ephesians 4:23, the new self requires a renewed _____.
 - b. Based upon Colossians 3:8, what kind of habits are common to the old way of living?

 - c. List the new self habits that are to be put on (Colossians 3:12 & 13):

Old habits are not easily broken and new habits of Biblical change require daily practice and perseverance. Habits are a learned way of living that have become so ingrained they are second nature. Habits are a gift from God, if not for them, we would have to continue to relearn everything. Sinful habits hurt us but new Christ-like habits develop Godliness.

What selfish and sinful old man patterns in your life linger, requiring repentance and replacement? By grace, change is always possible. *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”* (Matthew 5:6)