

## Principles Of Spiritual Growth – <sup>03/01/2020</sup><sub>02/23/20</sub>

**TEXT** – Isa 40:31 <sup>TIME</sup> But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

**INTRO** – The Bible is filled with commands, warnings and principles by which we should live. How can we build upon our biblical foundation in Christ after we have been saved? There are basic principles that we must follow.

### II. Time

**Psa 90:2** Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

**John 8:58** Jesus said unto them, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

**Time is something we deal with every day, and something that everyone thinks they understand. However, a definition of time has proved to be remarkably tricky and elusive.**

**St. Augustine famously encapsulated the experience of so many of us, when he observed: "What then is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I wish to explain it to one that asks, I know not".**

- The indefinite continued progress of existence and events in the past, present and future regarded as a whole (Oxford Dictionary)
- The measured or measurable period during which an action, process or condition exists or continues (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)
- A non-spatial system in which events appear to happen in irreversible succession (WordSmyth Dictionary)

**God is never in a hurry and He is never late. He is working from the perspective of eternity.**

**Infinite, eternal without beginning of days**

**A. Fruitfulness is dependent upon growth**

**2 Pe 3:18** But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

(Not just struggles and experiences)

- **Progress is not always swift or immediate**
- **God may slow our progress or even set us aside to make us stronger.**

**Moses was forty years in the wilderness**

**Paul was several years before his missionary journeys**

**Peter's growth was not immediate and he writes:**

We must get to know ourselves and our weaknesses before God can use us.

**There are no shortcuts to spiritual growth.**

**1 Co 10:12** Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

**A. H. Strong was asked by a student, "Is there a shorter course I may take?" Oh yes, he replied. It depends upon what you want to be. When God makes an oak it takes 100 years, when he grows a squash it takes only a few months." Growth in the tree or the Christian is not uniform. There are times of solidification. A tree experiences most of its growth during 4 to 6 weeks in the summer.**

**B. Growth is dependent on reliance upon God**

**There is the temptation to run to experiences and blessings without experiencing the solidifying process of growth that makes us strong. That person is doomed to foolishly being led by the whims of the world and the experiences of the emotions.**

**"God cannot use a man greatly until He first wounds him deeply" A W Tozer**  
**Trials alone cannot produce growth it is reliance upon God through trials that produces growth!**

**1. We must learn to wait upon God**

**Psa 27:13-14** I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

**To taste the grace and goodness of God is one thing, to be established in it is to manifest character and habit of the Christ-life.**

**Exo 23:29-30** I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. 30 By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.

**Fruit ripens slowly - days of sunshine and days of storms each add to the process until the fruit comes to maturity.**

**Isa 40:31** But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

**True spiritual growth involves pain as well as joy, suffering as well as happiness, failure as well as success, inactivity as well as service, death as well as life. The temptation to take a shortcut is especially strong unless we see the value of and submit to the necessity of the time element.**

**Php 1:6** Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

**Spiritual growth is from measure to measure- thirty-fold, sixty-fold, hundred-fold. It is from stage to stage- first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. It is from day to day.**

## 2. We must learn to be conformed to His will

**Php 3:14** *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

### Flow to Know God's Will

When I was crossing the Irish Channel one dark starless night, I stood on the deck by the captain and asked him, "How do you know Holyhead Harbor on so dark a night as this?" He said, "You see those three lights? Those three must line up behind each other as one, and when we see them so united we know the exact position of the harbor's mouth." When we want to know God's will there are three things which always concur—the inward impulse, the Word of God, and the trend of circumstances! God in the heart, impelling you forward. God in His Book, corroborating whatever He says in the heart; and God in circumstances, which are always indicative of His will. Never start until these three things agree.—*F. B. Meyer.*

**Rom 12:1-2** *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

### C. Growth is certain if we remain faithful

**Php 3:10** *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

**The one thing we can all do is be faithful!**

### When the Bird Stopped Struggling

Wordsworth, in one of his poems, tells about a bird that was carried from Norway by a storm. It fought hard against the gale in its effort to win its way back to Norway, but all in vain. At last it yielded to the wind, and instead of being carried to destruction it was borne to the warm shores of England, to the green meadows and forests. So when we try to fight against God's will we are making efforts which will come to naught, and are doing so to our own injury and loss. But if we willingly accept God's will, it will be for our good; we shall be borne on to blessedness and joy.—*John T. Montgomery.*

**CONCL-** **Through the means of time the Lord enlarges our capacity to accept his plan for our lives and that we might receive His blessings.**