

Are You Growing?

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- I. How do we know if we are growing in grace and knowledge of the Lord?
- A. It should be something that we are concerned about.
 - B. If one of our children stopped growing and developing we would be looking into what was wrong pretty quickly and with much concern.
 - C. The Christian life should be a work in progress that is continually developing and growing in things spiritual.
 - D. There should be a diminishing of our focus on earthly carnal things and an increase and enlargement of our focus on spiritual things.
 - E. As our understanding of God and the world around us increases we should be getting a larger and broader and deeper view of all things.
 - F. As a result, the things we value and esteem as important should be changing, too.
 - G. We should continually be becoming a better, more spiritual, and more godly person in our mind, heart, and conversation.
- II. Are you growing in love, knowledge, and judgment?

[Philippians 1:9](#) And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;

- A. Love for each other; and for all men – are you getting better at it? Do you love people more now than you did a year ago? Is your love more real – not just the emotional kind?

[1 Thessalonians 3:12](#) And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:

- 1. Do you really care more now than you did a year ago?
 - 2. Love that suffers long, and is kind (in the process).
 - 3. Love that envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.
 - 4. Love that seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked.
 - 5. Love that beareth all things, endureth all things; hopeth all things.
 - 6. Love that never fails.
 - 7. Can you answer yourself honestly that you are you improving in these areas?
- B. Knowledge – are you increasing in the right kind of knowledge?
 - 1. From the time we are able to talk we seem to think we know more than others, but when we are born again a process begins to renew our knowledge after the image of Him that created this new man.

[Colossians 3:10](#) And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

- 2. Knowledge of God and his Son

[2 Peter 1:2](#) Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3. Knowledge of his Will

Colossians 1:9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

4. Knowledge of the Word of God
5. Knowledge of men
 - a) How to deal with them
 - b) Understand better about their condition without God

C. What about judgment? Is your judgment (discernment) improving?

Hebrews 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

1. Are you better at discerning people? Or are you still often deceived by the first impression they make on you?
2. Are you better at discerning right and wrong according to the Word of God and the mind of the Spirit?
3. Do you see merit and virtue in certain things that you didn't see before?
4. Do you see the evil in things that you didn't see evil in before?
5. Do you value and cherish things more that you used to take for granted?
6. Have you lain aside things that you have realized to be worthless, even though you once put great value on them?

III. What about strength? Are you growing in strength?

Colossians 1:10-11 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

- A. Are you stronger, more settled, more unmovable in the things of God.
 1. We are not talking about our willful determination to serve God, or any kind of resolve that comes from a carnal mind and heart.
 2. I'm speaking of the noble desirable qualities of character and faith that God instructs us to pursue – patience, faith, charity, etc.
 3. These things work a peace in our inner man that yields strength – not resolve or determination that is of our own accord.
- B. Are you more able to stand against temptation and sin?
- C. Are you more able to deny yourself and your carnal desires?
- D. Are you more able to talk to sinners about the Lord?
- E. Are you more able to endure being falsely accused and abused by others?

IV. Are you growing in faith?

1 Thessalonians 3:10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?

2 Thessalonians 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;

2 Corinthians 10:15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

- A. Saving faith is not all we are supposed to have.
 - B. Faith should increase and strengthen with time, experience, and learning.
 - C. When faith grows, love, strength, and all these other qualities grow also.
- V. Can you tell a difference in yourself from this time last year?
- A. Are you weaker, or stronger?
 - B. Are you more aware of the unseen world, or less aware?
 - C. Is the desire to see the coming of the Lord on your mind more, or less?
 - D. Are you more concerned about doing right, or more indifferent?
 - E. If we are not growing we are dying.
 - F. If we are not getting stronger we are getting weaker.
 - G. If we are not increasing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord we are decreasing.