

# EVERYDAY DISCIPLESHIP

AN ORIGINAL CREW SERIES

## PART 4 - STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

### **BIG IDEA**

AS YOU'RE GROWING, YOUR VIEW OF GOD SHOULD BE EXPANDING AND FORTIFYING AS YOUR REVELATION DEEPENS.

### **OPENING PRAYER & INTRODUCTION**

BEGIN BY ASKING GOD TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSION AND OPEN HEARTS TO HOW HE WANTS TO GROW EACH PERSON TO KNOW HIM IN A MORE PROFOUND WAY.

### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

1. *SPIRITUAL GROWTH INVOLVES PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION WHERE THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS THINGS OUT OF US AND INTO US*
2. *THERE ARE FIVE STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH: SPIRITUALLY DEAD, INFANT, CHILD, YOUNG ADULT, AND PARENT*
3. *KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT HUMILITY LEADS TO PRIDE; MATURE BELIEVERS SHOULD GROW IN DEPENDENCE ON GOD, NOT SELF-SUFFICIENCY*
4. *TRUE SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS DEFINED BY THEOLOGY SHAPING WORLDVIEW RATHER THAN EXPERIENCES DEFINING WORLDVIEW*
5. *MATURE BELIEVERS NEVER GRADUATE FROM HUMILITY OR THE NEED FOR ACTIVE REPENTANCE*
6. *AS BELIEVERS GROW, THEIR VIEW OF GOD'S HOLINESS SHOULD INCREASE, WHICH IN TURN INCREASES THEIR AWARENESS OF THEIR NEED FOR A SAVIOR*
7. *SPIRITUAL PARENTS SHOULD MULTIPLY AND POUR INTO OTHERS WHILE MAINTAINING HUMILITY AND AVOIDING LEGALISM*
8. *THE GOAL IS TO DECREASE WHILE CHRIST INCREASES—DYING TO SELF WHILE RELYING MORE ON JESUS*

### **KEY SCRIPTURE**

1. **JOHN 8** - THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY NARRATIVE
2. **1 CORINTHIANS 8** - "KNOWLEDGE PUFFS UP"
3. **PROVERBS 3:7** - "DO NOT BE WISE IN YOUR OWN EYES; FEAR THE LORD AND DEPART FROM EVIL"
4. **2 PETER 1:5-8** - ADDING TO FAITH: GOODNESS, KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONTROL, PERSEVERANCE, GODLINESS, MUTUAL AFFECTION, AND LOVE
5. **1 PETER 2:2** - "LIKE NEWBORN BABIES, CRAVE PURE SPIRITUAL MILK SO THAT YOU MAY GROW IN YOUR SALVATION NOW THAT YOU HAVE TASTED THAT THE LORD IS GOOD"
6. **1 THESSALONIANS 2:10** - (MENTIONED BUT NOT QUOTED IN FULL)
7. **1 JOHN 2:12** - "I'M WRITING TO YOU, DEAR CHILDREN, BECAUSE YOUR SINS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN ON ACCOUNT OF HIS NAME... I'M WRITING TO YOU, YOUNG MEN, BECAUSE YOU HAVE OVERCOME THE EVIL ONE"
8. **1 JOHN** (GENERAL REFERENCE) - "THOSE WHO CLAIM TO BE WITHOUT SIN DECEIVE THEMSELVES" (LIKELY 1 JOHN 1:8)
9. **2 PETER 3:18** - REFERENCED AS A DISCUSSION QUESTION ABOUT GROWING IN GRACE
10. **1 CORINTHIANS 3:1-2** - THE CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL MILK VS. SOLID FOOD FOR MATURE BELIEVERS

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### GROUP DISCUSSION

#### BREAKING IT DOWN

1. HOW DO YOU PERSONALLY DEFINE SPIRITUAL MATURITY, AND WHAT MARKERS OR EVIDENCE DO YOU LOOK FOR IN YOUR OWN LIFE TO MEASURE GROWTH?
2. IN WHAT WAYS MIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF SCRIPTURE LEAD TO PRIDE RATHER THAN HUMILITY, AND HOW CAN WE GUARD AGAINST BECOMING LIKE THE PHARISEES?
3. REFLECTING ON THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY IN JOHN 8, WHY DO YOU THINK THE OLDER, MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE LEFT FIRST, AND WHAT DOES THIS TEACH US ABOUT TRUE SPIRITUAL MATURITY?
4. WHAT DOES IT MEAN PRACTICALLY TO DECREASE WHILE CHRIST INCREASES IN YOUR DAILY LIFE, AND WHERE DO YOU FIND THIS MOST CHALLENGING?
5. HOW DOES UNDERSTANDING GOD'S HOLINESS MORE DEEPLY AFFECT YOUR VIEW OF YOUR OWN SINFULNESS AND NEED FOR A SAVIOR?
6. WHAT ARE THE DANGERS OF DEFINING YOUR WORLDVIEW BY YOUR EXPERIENCES RATHER THAN BY BIBLICAL THEOLOGY, AND HOW HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLAY OUT IN YOUR OWN FAITH JOURNEY?
7. IF YOU WERE TO HONESTLY ASSESS YOURSELF, WHICH STAGE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH ARE YOU IN RIGHT NOW, AND WHAT EVIDENCE SUPPORTS THAT PLACEMENT?
8. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GROW IN GRACE ACCORDING TO 2 PETER 3:18, AND HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM SIMPLY GROWING IN KNOWLEDGE?
9. HOW CAN SPIRITUALLY MATURE BELIEVERS POUR INTO YOUNGER BELIEVERS WITHOUT FALLING INTO JUDGMENT, LEGALISM, OR PRIDE?
10. WHAT IS ONE SPECIFIC SIN OR DEPENDENCY THAT GOD HAS WORKED OUT OF YOUR LIFE OVER TIME, AND WHAT IS HE CURRENTLY WORKING ON IN YOU THROUGH PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION?

#### DIVING DEEPER

1. READ 2 PETER 1:5-8 TOGETHER. DISCUSS THE PROGRESSION PETER OUTLINES: FAITH → GOODNESS → KNOWLEDGE → SELF-CONTROL → PERSEVERANCE → GODLINESS → MUTUAL AFFECTION → LOVE. HOW DOES THIS PROGRESSION RELATE TO THE FIVE STAGES DISCUSSED IN THE SERMON?
2. THEOLOGY VS. EXPERIENCE: THE SERMON STATES, "EXPERIENCES ARE NOT DEFINING YOUR WORLDVIEW. YOUR THEOLOGY IS DEFINING YOUR WORLDVIEW." WHAT DOES THIS MEAN PRACTICALLY? CAN YOU SHARE A TIME WHEN YOU HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN WHAT YOU FELT AND WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS?
3. READ 2 PETER 3:18 (SUGGESTED IN SERMON). WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "GROW IN GRACE"? HOW IS GROWING IN GRACE DIFFERENT FROM JUST GROWING IN KNOWLEDGE?