



"Growing in Spiritual Maturity"

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I. The Danger of _____ Faith

1 Timothy 3:6 "He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil."

1 Timothy 5:22a "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands"

1 Timothy 3:10 "And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless."

A. Pride as an Unseen _____

1 Timothy 3:6a "He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit"

1. Inflated by _____ (τυφόθεις)

1 Kings 19:5b "Arise and eat"

1 Kings 19:10b "I, even I only, am left"

1 Kings 19:14b "I, even I only, am left"

2. Spiritually _____ and Lacking Discernment

1 Timothy 6:4a "he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing"

2 Timothy 3:1-5 "But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholly, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people."

3. A Warning of 'Devil-Like' _____ (Isaiah 14:12-15; Proverbs 16:18; Ezekiel 28:16b-17a)

1 Timothy 3:6 "He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil."

1 Timothy 3:7 "Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil."

• Satan's Original Sin - Pride

Ezekiel 28:13a "You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering"

James 4:6b "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Philippians 2:6b-7 "did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

B. God's Call to Grow Into Maturity

Hebrews 5:12-13 "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child."

Hebrews 5:14 "But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."

1. Growth Rooted in the _____

Psalm 1:1-3 "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers."

2. Growth Shaped by _____

James 1:2-4 "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

Romans 5:3-4 "Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope"

3. Growth Proven Through _____ Over Time

Luke 16:10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much"

4. Growth Strengthened in _____ and Accountability

Proverbs 27:17 "Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another."

Hebrews 10:24-25 "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

5. Growth Sustained by _____

Psalm 51:2 "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!"



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BACKGROUND:

In today's passage, 1 Timothy 3:6-10, we see that as disciples we should continually grow in our spiritual maturity. Integrity is critical to our walk with God, especially when you consider we are entrusted to hold onto the gospel message and sound doctrine. Characteristics such as our meekness, selflessness, self-control, and sober mindedness should increase as we grow closer to God and become more Christlike through the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

DIGGING DEEPER:

God desires us to be blameless and without blemish (Philippians 2:12-13). Our integrity is both internal and external. Internally, it refers to God working within us to fulfill His purpose. Externally, it refers to a pattern or lifestyle of good works that blesses others and glorifies God. We should be eager to do good and willing to suffer for what is right (1 Peter 3:13-18). Someone who is spiritually mature is not hypocritical in that their outward behavior lines up with their inner belief in God. In 1 Timothy 3:6 Paul states that an overseer "must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit".

1. Why does Paul tell Timothy to seek out mature believers?
2. How has a more mature believer helped you with your spiritual walk?
3. How can spiritual maturity prevent us from becoming conceited?
4. Read Proverbs 16:18. How can becoming conceited cause someone to fall? (Think of Lucifer, Pharaoh, and King Saul)

Paul spoke of humility in Colossians 3:12 when he said, "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience". Christians are to live out their humility because Jesus is humility personified.

5. Humility can be defined as "lowliness of mind". Rick Warren writes in his book, A Purpose Driven Life, "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less." Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3).

6. What should lowliness of mind, thinking of yourself less, and being poor in spirit look like for a follower of Christ?

7. What does it this look like in your life? (Be specific)

8. In what area of your spiritual walk do you need to think and behave more humbly?

In 1 Timothy 3:9-10 Paul writes that deacons must hold the mystery of faith, be tested, and prove themselves blameless.

9. What does it mean to hold onto the mystery of faith with a clear conscience?

10. What is a biblical definition of a mystery and why is it applied to faith?

11. The apostle Paul spoke of many mysteries in the Bible. Which ones can you recall? (If you need help, read: Matthew 13:11; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Colossians 1:26-27; 4:3; Ephesians 3:4-6; 1 Timothy 3:16)

12. What has it looked like in your life to be tested in regard to your faith?

13. How does one prove themselves blameless?

TAKING IT HOME:

Disciples should continually grow in spiritual maturity. We should grow in our knowledge of God with each passing day. As we grow closer to God so should our humility, dignity, compassion, patience, and meekness. These are not only qualifications of church leaders, but of everyday followers of Christ.

14. God's plan for salvation has been revealed through Jesus and His gospel. How do you hold onto that message?

15. Why is it so important to protect the truth of the gospel and sound doctrine that your faith and the church are built upon?

16. How do the qualifications of an overseer and deacon parallel your life as a disciple?