

The Triumphant Life: Growing in Christ

Now that Christ is our new life, we must continue growing into maturity.

Review: Alive with Christ (Spiritual Birth)

.Summary

- ***God is a spirit, and the way He gave birth to spiritual children was through the birth, death, burial, and resurrection of His son, Jesus Christ.***
- ***The Holy Spirit was responsible for placing Jesus inside the womb of Mary; it was a supernatural birth from God above.***
- ***When we're born again, it's also a supernatural birth from God above.***
- ***Christ is our life; outside of Him, there is only death.***
- ***All who believe in and confess Jesus as Savior are saved by faith through grace, and then called to follow Him as Lord by adhering to His teachings and obeying His commands.***

2 Corinthians 5:14-21 New Living Translation

14 Either way, Christ's love controls us.[a] Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life.[b] 15 He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them. 16 So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! 18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. 19 For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. 20 So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin,[c] so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Beautiful Evidence of the New Birth

1 John 3:8-10 New Living Translation

8 But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. 9 Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life[a] is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God. 10 So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers[b] does not belong to God.

Christ the Center of our Lives

Since Christ is our life, we will share many similar experiences with Him and find patterns within His life on earth that will also be present in ours. First, he was born by the Spirit of God, as are we when we're born again. Next, we will follow Him through His youth as He grows into adulthood. When we're born again, no matter what age, we are just babes in Christ who must go on to maturity. But if we skip the maturing process, we'll never come into the full knowledge of the truth. Maturity allows us to leave the basic milk of scripture found in the foundational teachings and go on to consume the meat within God's word.

Christ in His Youth

Luke 2:41-52 New Living Translation

41 Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover festival. 42 When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual. 43 After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn't miss him at first, 44 because they assumed he was among the other travelers. But when he didn't show up that evening, they started looking for him among their relatives and friends. 45 When they couldn't find him, they went back to Jerusalem to search for him there. 46 Three days later they finally discovered him in the Temple, sitting among the religious teachers, listening to them and asking questions. 47 All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 His parents didn't know what to think. "Son," his mother said to him, "why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere." 49 "But why did you need to search?" he asked. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"[a] 50 But they didn't understand what he meant. 51 Then he returned to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. And his mother stored all these things in her heart. 52 Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.

- Lingering, learning, listening, and asking questions.
- Focused on the Father's business.
- Submitted to authority.
- Grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people.

Being Alive with Christ in Our Youth

Our youth doesn't just refer to our natural age but our spiritual maturity after the new birth.

A warning from the Lord.

Mark 4:21-25 Amplified Bible

21 He said to them, "A lamp is not brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed, is it? Is it not[brought in] to be put on the lampstand? 22 For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been kept secret, but that it would come to light [that is, things are hidden only temporarily, until the appropriate time comes for them to be known]. 23 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear and heed My words." 24 Then He said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear. By your own standard of measurement [that is, to the extent that you study spiritual truth and apply godly wisdom] it will be measured to you [and you will be given even greater ability to respond]—and more will be given to you besides. 25 For [a]whoever has [a teachable heart], to him more [understanding] will be given; and whoever does not have [a yearning for truth], even what he has will be taken away from him."

The focus of our spiritual maturity process in Christ.

- Lingering, learning, listening, and asking questions.
- Focused on the Father's business.
- Submitted to authority.
- Grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people.
- Learning, lingering, listening, asking questions.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 New Living Translation

14 But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. 15 You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in

our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17 God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Hebrews 5:11-14 New Living Translation

A Call to Spiritual Growth

11 There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don't seem to listen. 12 You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word.[a] You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. 13 For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right. 14 Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

2 John 1:9 New Living Translation

9 Anyone who wanders away from this teaching has no relationship with God. But anyone who remains in the teaching of Christ has a relationship with both the Father and the Son.

3 John 1:11 New Living Translation

11 Dear friend, don't let this bad example influence you. Follow only what is good. Remember that those who do good prove that they are God's children, and those who do evil prove that they do not know God.[a]

- Focused on the Father's business.

Matthew 6:9-13 New King James Version

9 In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts,

As we forgive our debtors.

13 And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

[a]For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

- Submitted to authority.

Hebrews 13:17 New Living Translation

17 Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.

- Grew in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and people.

Hebrews 13:20-21 New Living Translation

20 Now may the God of peace—
 who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus,
 the great Shepherd of the sheep,
 and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood—

21 may he equip you with all you need
 for doing his will.

May he produce in you,[a]
 through the power of Jesus Christ,
every good thing that is pleasing to him.
 All glory to him forever and ever! Amen.

Colossians 2:6-10 New Living Translation

6 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. 7 Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. 8 Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers[a] of this world, rather than from Christ. 9 For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.[b] 10 So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

Galatians 5:16-17 Amplified Bible

16 But I say, walk habitually in the [Holy] Spirit [seek Him and be responsive to His guidance], and then you will certainly not carry out the desire of the [a]sinful nature [which responds impulsively without regard for God and His precepts]. 17 For the sinful nature has its desire which is opposed to the Spirit, and the [desire of the] Spirit opposes the [b]sinful nature; for these [two, the sinful nature and the Spirit] are

in direct opposition to each other [continually in conflict], so that you [as believers] do not [always] do whatever [good things] you want to do.

Galatians 5:22-23 New Living Translation

22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

The Triumph of Being Alive with Christ in Our Youth

2 Peter 1:3-11 New Living Translation

3 By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life.

- We have been given not only the power to be born again, or to be resurrected from the dead, but also to live a godly life!

We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. 4 And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. 5 In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. 8 The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins. 10 So, dear brothers and sisters,[a] work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away. 11 Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

