



progress



Pastor Mason Phillips | March 1, 2026

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Day 1: The Journey from Death to Life

Devotional: Before Christ, we were spiritually dead—cut off from the source of all life. But God's grace awakened us and invited us into a journey of becoming. Salvation isn't just a destination; it's the beginning of transformation. When God finds us, He doesn't leave us as we are. He breathes life into our souls and calls us to grow into the fullness of Christ. Today, reflect on where you were when God found you and where He's bringing you. Don't despise small beginnings or slow progress. You're alive in Christ, and that means you're meant to grow. Embrace the process of becoming who God created you to be, knowing that His work in you is both complete and continuing.

Reading:

Ephesians 2:1-10 NKJV

And you He made alive, who're dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works I the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have bene saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Reflection: How does the concept of being spiritually dead before salvation change your perspective on the urgency of sharing the gospel with others?

Day 2: Refusing to Settle

Devotional: The apostle Paul had an impressive spiritual resume—miraculous encounters, powerful ministry, deep revelation. Yet he declared, "I have not already attained." Paul refused to settle on past victories or assume his journey was complete. He pressed forward, forgetting what was behind and reaching toward what was ahead. What past failures are holding you back? What past successes are you camping on? Both can hinder your progress. God has more for you than yesterday's shame or yesterday's glory. Today, make a conscious decision to leave the past behind—whether it's guilt that disqualifies you or achievements that make you complacent. Press on toward the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Reading:

Philippians 3:12-16 NKJV

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the price of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

Reflection: Paul says he has not yet attained perfection despite his impressive spiritual resume. What past achievements or spiritual experiences might you be tempted to settle for instead of pressing forward?

Day 3: Making the Decision to Grow

Devotional: You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink. Similarly, God provides everything necessary for spiritual growth, but you must choose to partake. The writer of Hebrews challenges believers to move beyond spiritual infancy and press toward maturity. Growth doesn't happen accidentally; it requires intentionality. Are you still feeding on spiritual milk when you should be eating solid food? Maturity means taking responsibility for your spiritual development—reading Scripture, practicing obedience, exercising godliness. Today, ask yourself: What decision am I making about my spiritual growth? Am I waiting passively for something to happen, or am I actively pursuing Christ-likeness? Make the choice today to reach forward, to train yourself in godliness, to become who God is calling you to be.

Reading:

Hebrews 5:11-6:3 NKJV

Of Whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to

teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their sense exercised to discern both good and evil. Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptism, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits.

Reflection: In what ways have you personally experienced the difference between celebrating spiritual gifts versus cultivating spiritual maturity in your own life or church community?

Day 4: The Fruit of Patient Growth

Devotional: Trees in a healthy forest don't grow quickly; they grow slowly and strong. When mature trees block most sunlight from reaching seedlings, they're not hindering growth—they're ensuring resilience. Fast growth produces weak wood filled with air pockets that snap under pressure. Slow growth produces dense, resilient wood that bends but doesn't break. God isn't interested in speed; He's interested in strength. Your spiritual growth may feel slow, but God is building something lasting in you. The goal isn't to rush to ministry or display gifts quickly; it's to develop Christ-like character that withstands storms. Don't despise the season of patient formation. Trust that God is making you resilient, fruitful, and mature—capable of bearing lasting fruit for His glory.

Reading:

Luke 8:4-15 NKJV(Parable of the Sower)

And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable:

“A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, rang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.” When He had said these things He cried, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”

Then His disciples asked Him, saying, “What does this parable mean?” And He said, “To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that

*‘Seeing they may not see,
And hearing they may not understand.’*

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

“Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

Reflection: The pastor compares spiritual growth to how trees must grow slowly to develop resilience. Where in your spiritual journey have you rushed growth instead of allowing God to develop deep roots in you?

Day 5: Pressing Toward Christian Perfection

Devotional: Jesus commanded, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." This isn't about flawless performance but mature love—becoming complete in character as God is complete. Spiritual maturity moves through stages:

from spiritual infants to children to young adults to parents who raise others. Where are you in this journey? Are you still focused on your own needs, or are you helping others grow? Christian perfection means pressing toward God's ideal—becoming people in whom Christ is fully formed. This requires daily exercise: putting off the flesh, taking up the cross, walking in love. Don't settle for salvation alone; pursue transformation. Train yourself in godliness. Practice the presence of Christ. Live like Jesus, not just talk about Him. Today, commit to pressing on toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Reading:

1 John 2:12-14 NKJV

*I write to you, little children,
Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.
I write to you, fathers,
Because you have known Him who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young men,
Because you have overcome the wicked one.
I write to you, little children,
Because you have known the Father.
I have written to you, fathers,
Because you have known Him who is from the beginning.
I have written to you, young men,
Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you,
And you have overcome the wicked one.*

Matthew 5:43-48 NKJV

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

“For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

Reflection: The pastor describes different stages of spiritual maturity from babies to parents. Where would you honestly place yourself on this spectrum, and what would moving to the next stage require?