

## ARE YOU GROWING IN FAITH?

In **2 Thessalonians 1:3** Paul commended the church for its growing faith. He said, **“your faith growth exceedingly and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth.”** Even in the midst of trouble and trials, these newborn babes were making spiritual progress. Wouldn't it be great if this could be said of you and me? Growing in faith is necessary and vital to our salvation. But, what does it mean to grow in faith? Growing in faith involves at least three basic elements.

**FIRST, growing in faith demands that we listen to the Will of God.** Paul wrote that faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17), and so to grow in faith one must study the pages of Holy Writ. We will never possess assurance or confident trust in God if we do not participate in a proper and diligent study of the Bible. We will never grow if we do not desire to be fed with the Word. As milk is essential to the growth of a baby, so is the milk and meat of the Word essential to the growth of a Christian (I Peter 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14). Saving, active, and growing faith cannot be sustained without a steady diet of Bible study. The Christian who is growing in faith has abundantly filled his life with the words of Christ (Col. 3:16). The weak Christian lacks the strength to quench the fiery darts of the wicked because he has neglected to take up the shield of faith (Eph. 6:16). Faith is the victory that overcomes the world (I John 5:4), but it is only victorious when it grows (2 Peter 3:18); and it grows by the means of the knowledge of God's Will.

**SECOND, growing in faith demands that we live the Will of God.** Faith apart from works is barren, useless, and dead (Jas. 2:14-26). It will never save. If you want to make your calling and election sure, then your faith must grow by adding to it the Christian graces (2

Peter 1:5-7). You must acquire knowledge and learn to use it wisely and with all patience, godliness, and brotherly kindness. A growing faith is active, doing, and responsive. Only the man who believes and obeys can be blessed in his deeds (Jas. 1:25). Only the man who exercises his faith can be said to possess a growing faith (I Tim. 4:7-8). Only when one acts upon what he reads can it be said that he possesses a growing faith.

**THIRD, growing in faith demands that we love the Will of God. “Perfect love casteth out fear”** (I John 4:18), and each of us should grow in faith enough to serve God because we love Him, instead of being entirely motivated out of a fear of going to hell. A Christian who has grown in faith does not view the commandments of God as grievous or burdensome, but as an honor and a privilege (I John 5:3). He keeps the commandments because he loves God and seeks to please Him (2 Tim. 2:4). Those who keep the commandments of God out of convenience or for the favor of man (e.g., an individual who attends worship merely to please his spouse or parents) or simply to avoid hell, do not possess a faith that grows exceedingly. Growing faith learns the joy and happiness of serving God. It loves the Will of God and will hunger and thirst for its precepts (Mat. 5:6). It yearns for its decrees and finds solace in its instruction. A growing faith discovers peace and strength inexplicable to the world (Phil. 4:7). A growing faith is manifested by the one who can, like the psalmist, say **“Oh, how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day.”** (Psa. 119:97).

Have you progressed in your faith enough to say that you listen to, live, and love the Will of God? Has your faith grown exceedingly? If not, why not begin today to awaken your dormant faith. Study again the Word of God that it might cut to the thoughts and intents of your heart and motivate you to experience, once again, the graciousness of God (I Peter 2:3). May your faith grow

exceedingly. May you then **“continue in the faith, grounded and settled...not moved away,”** so that on that great and final day, Christ may present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouable before our grand and glorious Judge (Col. 1:23).

**John W. Moore from *Handley Herald***

## NEW TESTAMENT FAITH

Christianity is a system of faith, and in that arrangement the individual who is converted to Christ undergoes a change by his acceptance of the Gospel of Christ. God's scheme of salvation is based upon man's response to the truth.

Our word *faith* comes from a Greek word which can be translated as faith or belief. The root word for faith is *peitho* which means to persuade, to confide in, or to trust. One person defined faith in this manner: “To acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and devote oneself to Him. To believe and embrace what God has made known, and to live one's life thereby.” Faith is not just belief as some would have us think. Belief alone will not save! Notice **James 2:19: “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”** Question: Will the devils be saved? If it takes belief alone, they would! But we realize that this cannot be the case. Faith must be active and based upon God's Word. **“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”** (Jam. 2:26).

Thus, we can clearly see that God expects us to do something. We must hear (Rom.10:17), believe (Mark 16:16), repent (Luke 13:3), confess (Rom. 10:9-10), be baptized for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16), and then live faithfully (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 John 1:7). **This is the faith that saves!**

**Author Unknown**

## **ANNIVERSARIES**

Tom & Cindy Bright, 06-21; John & Louise Dodson, 06-22; Ted & Julia Thrasher, 06-22.

## **BIRTHDAY**

Monica Nemechek, 06-20.

## **ILL**

**Sunday:** Dee Adams; Linda Thomas; Gary Cole (PM).

**Wednesday:** Gary Cole. Kathleen Camp will have foot surgery on June 20th. Carol Tigner was admitted to the hospital in Louisville, KY last week. Millie Robertson's sister is in Room 4709 at Overland Park Regional.

**Those battling cancer:** Jamal Abyad, Diane Cannon, David Cole, and Ledgia Campbell. Please remember these in your prayers, as well as: Meredith Greer, Millie Robertson, Allen Scott, and Ralph and Helen Franklin.

## **HOME BOUND**

Bob Adams resides at Room D-4 of the Johnson County Nursing Center in Olathe. Marion Stone is at home. Please remember these in your prayers and visitation.

## **OUT OF TOWN**

Debra Gragg returned from her vacation on Sunday PM. Robin Brown was out of town on business on Wednesday. Gary Cole is in Arizona caring for his son. The Parish family is in Iowa for a wedding this weekend.

## **FBS MEETING**

There will be a meeting at 5 PM on Sunday afternoon in the auditorium for all those who wish to teach and assist in our upcoming Family Bible Studies on July 23-27.

## **PHOTO DIRECTORY**

If you have not had your picture taken yet, please see Steve Brown as soon as possible!

## **ATTENDANCE**

Sunday AM, 46; Sunday PM, 40; Wednesday PM, 41.

## **Those To Serve**

June 17, 2007

**BUILDING AND COMMUNION..... Parish**

### **MORNING WORSHIP**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS..... Joel Nelson**

**SONG LEADER..... George Thomas**

**OPENING PRAYER .....Steve Brown**

**PRESIDE..... John Carter**

**ASSIST.....Allen Scott**

**ASSIST.....John James**

**CLOSING PRAYER..... Gary Cole**

### **EVENING WORSHIP**

**OPENING PRAYER ..... John Cody Carter**

**CLOSING PRAYER..... John Dodson**

**LORD'S SUPPER..... John Carter**

### **WEDNESDAY 20th**

**SONG LEADER..... John Cody Carter**

**INVITATION ..... Trent Thrasher**

## **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

### **Sunday**

Bible Study ..... 9:30 AM

Morning Worship ..... 10:30 AM

Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### **Wednesday**

Ladies Bible Study ..... 10:00 AM

Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

**Preacher: Ted J. Thrasher**

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