

In This World (Pt.7)

How in This World Can I Grow Up Spiritually?

(2 Peter 3:18)

Introduction: When a medical prognosis is given, a patient is better able to prepare himself for what is ahead or if possible, even correct himself. Peter is similarly, giving a spiritual prognosis in (2 Peter 3:17,18). To paraphrase, Peter is saying; “*Growing up spiritually*” is the best defense against falling down in this world”

If we are to benefit from his advice, we must see three things that are revealed in this passage.

I. **There is a command to grow up: (v18a)**

Peter ends his letter as he began it, ...notice he says, “Grow in grace.” To grow in grace, we must understand grace. We know...

A. **Grace is something God initiates for our salvation**

1. God takes the initiative to provide salvation for us by His grace because we are unable to earn it. (Rom 3:10-12)
2. God takes the initiative to provide salvation for us by His grace because we are undeserving of it - (Rom 3:23)
3. God takes the initiative to give us the gift of eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord – (Rom.5:8; Eph 2:8-9)

2. **God initiates the grace for our sanctification –.**

- a. Sanctification is - the separation of men from their sin and separating themselves to God
- b. Sanctification is - the work of God. (1Thes 5:23)
- c. Sanctification is - today the continual work of the Holy Spirit. (Gal 5:16-23)
- d. Sanctification is – something we are to pursue (Rom 6:19)

3. **Grace is something God initiated for our continuation** – Peter says, “Grow in grace” – lit. “Be continually growing.” But what does that mean? (Matt. 5:48)

- a. The Greek word translated “perfect” does not mean without blemish; it represents maturity, completeness, having the ability to function.
- b. Growing in grace – then, is to keep on growing more & more like Christ. (Jn 1:16-17; Eph 4:15) It involves things such as... (1Tim. 6:11; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 7:1; Phil. 3:14; Col. 2:7; 2 Cor. 3: 18)

But Peter also says “grow in grace and knowledge...”

B. **Knowledge is something God illuminates –**

1. Knowledge is not just intellectual; it is experiential also. (It is spiritual truth applied to believer’s life for growth.)
2. Spiritual growth comes through understanding and practicing the principles that are given in the Word of God. (Heb 5:12-6:1) In the Spiritual world – Food, exercise and rest are the essentials,
 - **Food** – is the Word of God; (1 Pet 1:23; Rom 10:17; 1 Pet 2:2; Ps 119:11; Ps 119:104-105)
 - **Exercise** – is adding to or building, your faith (2 Pet 1:5-8; Col 1:10; Js.4:2: 1 Thes.5:17,18; 1 Pe.5:7; Js. 5:16; 1 Thes. 5:17; (Ac. 1:8; 8:4)

We are commanded to Grow, in grace – that which God initiates and in Knowledge that which God illuminates.

II. **There is a condition to grow up: (v.18b)**

H.A. Iornside said: “It is one thing to know Christianity as a system: it is quite another to know Christ as savior and Lord.”

A. **We must acknowledge Jesus as Lord** – Simply calling Jesus Lord, does not make Him our Lord.

1. Jesus said many will call Me Lord – (Mt 7:22-23)
2. Paul tells us, one day every knee will bow and every tongue confess He is Lord (Phil 2:10-11)
3. Jesus asks, - (Luke 6:46)
4. So, what does it mean for me to acknowledge Jesus as Lord? (Phil 1:21)

Paul’s life was summed up in the interest of Christ, He was his reason for his being. (1 Cor 1:9) In this verse Paul says that the primary purpose of life is to have fellowship with Jesus Christ. Knowing Jesus Christ, personally as a friend and having fellowship with Him as a friend, as Savior, and as Lord of our life.

B. **We must accept Jesus as Savior –**

1. Before Jesus can become Lord of your life, Jesus must first become the object of your faith before He will ever become the object of your affection.
2. “Jesus said – If you love Me you’ll keep My commandments.”
3. In fact, Paul tells us, (1 Cor. 12:3)
4. This means faith in Christ as our Savior must come first, then the Spirit filled man will be led by the Spirit to make Christ Lord of his life in profession and practice.

III. **There is a conciliation to grow up: (v.18c)**

A. **The first conciliation of my spiritual growth is Christ is glorified –**

1. There are many forces which will try to keep you from growing up spiritually –
 - a. Our flesh desires - (Gal 5:17)
 - b. This present world – (1 Jn 5:4; 4:4)
 - c. The devil and his demons - (Eph 6:12; 1 Pet 5:8)
- James encourages us - submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

B. **The second conciliation of our spiritual growth is to glorify Christ here & now.** How? (Ps 16:8; 1 Cor.10:31; Josh 7:19a; Phil 4:19; Jn 15:8, 11)

C. **The third conciliation is Christ is glorified there and forever when I grow spiritually** – Peter says Jesus’ glory will last forever. (Phil.2:9-11)

Peter is expressing to us – that we should grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus our Lord and Savior because we will be judged for it – (2 Pet 3:11-14)

- a. For those who are in Christ, we will share in His glory there – (Rom 8:17)
- b. We’ll share in His glory as we are rewarded by Jesus for our service to Him – (1 Cor.9:25; 2 Tim. 4:8; Js.1:12)

Conclusion: As a Christian if we will grow up spiritually, we will experience what the Psalmist describes, (Ps 1:3; Ps 92:12-14) “*Growing up spiritually*” is the best defense against falling down in this world.”