



Spiritual Growth

After one believes in the Lord Jesus Christ and receives eternal life, they are never to stop believing. They are mandated to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” To accomplish this, the day by day walk in the spiritual life must be initiated by faith. 2 Peter 3:18; Heb. 11:6.

"but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." (2 Peter 3:18, NASB)

"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6, NASB)

Minimum Requirements for Spiritual Growth

The first requirement for spiritual growth is to confirm that you are in fellowship with God and filled with God the Holy Spirit. This is absolutely essential for spiritual growth and to learn any Bible doctrine. To confirm you are in fellowship with God and filled with the Holy Spirit, you must apply God's promise of confession of sin biblically contained in 1 John 1:9.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, NASB)

The second requirement for spiritual growth is to understand your relationship with God and Jesus Christ as a Church Age believer. You should know the doctrine of Positional Truth - both Retroactive Positional Truth and Current Positional Truth which give stability in eternal security. See category on [Positional Truth](#).

The third requirement for spiritual growth is to understand the only mechanism God has provided for learning Bible doctrine or the Word of God. This grace mechanism is called the Grace Apparatus for Perception. See category on the [Grace Apparatus for Perception](#).

The grace apparatus for perception has the following stages;

Stage 1 - the communication of Bible doctrine from a prepared pastor-teacher,

Stage 2 - receptive comprehension of what is being communicated while in fellowship under the ministry of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer understands the spiritual information (Bible doctrine) being taught by the pastor-teacher,

Stage 3 - faith-perception where God the Holy Spirit converts *gnosis* Bible doctrine into *epignosis* Bible doctrine and transfers that believed spiritual knowledge into the right lobe of the soul,

Stage 4 - application of *epignosis* Bible doctrine to life's situations and decisions. *Epignosis* doctrine is the only divine viewpoint that can be applied to life, and

Stage 5 - spiritual growth in the fulfillment of the plan of God for the believer's life. Only *epignosis* Bible doctrine results in spiritual growth and occupation with the person of Christ.

The accumulation of *epignosis* in the soul's frame of reference and application of *epignosis* Bible doctrine to life's situations and decisions results in the construction of an edification structure or complex in the right lobe of the soul. See category on [The Edification Complex of the Soul](#).



The fourth requirement for spiritual growth is to understand how to use God's promises, techniques, doctrines and principles - in that order. See category on [The Faith Rest Life](#).

Objectives of Spiritual Growth

The objectives of spiritual growth are to develop spiritual discernment, to become spiritually self-sustaining, to stop scar tissue build-up, to develop a consistent intake and application of Bible doctrine, and to construct an edification complex of the soul from the accumulated *epignosis* Bible doctrine in the right lobe of the soul.

Growth in the Christian life does not remain static. There is progression and retrogression. One of the great objectives in the Christian life is to get the newly born-again believer to grow spiritually. Zeal without the filling of the Holy Spirit is unfruitful. Learned Bible doctrine in the left lobe of the soul (*gnosis*), but not believed is not spiritually applicable. Even a mature believer with maximum *epignosis* Bible doctrine in their soul who is out of fellowship (in carnality) has no Bible doctrine that is spiritually applicable because they are not filled with the Holy Spirit. Their spiritual life in carnality is unfruitful. Rom. 10:2-4; 2 Tim. 3:7.

"For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (Romans 10:2-4, NASB)

"always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Timothy 3:7, NASB)

These two passages refer to *gnosis* in the mind, the left lobe of the soul - head knowledge only, but no *epignosis* in the right lobe of the soul. Thus, the faith principles are not usable. Bible doctrine is learned and spiritually understood in the filling of the Holy Spirit and is transferred to the left lobe of the soul as *gnosis*. This is only a staging area for positive volition or belief in that doctrine to allow the Holy Spirit to convert *gnosis* into *epignosis* and to transfer that *epignosis* to the right lobe of the soul (heart) for application in the spiritual life.

Developing Spiritual Discernment

Discernment is applying *epignosis* Bible doctrine to teaching and finding out if it is true or false. Spiritual discernment means that the believer is able to review and evaluate what they see, hear, and read and compare that to the *epignosis* Bible doctrine in their soul to determine whether that information is of Satan's world system of evil or consistent with the Word of God. The believer is also able to evaluate the Bible doctrine taught and to correlate it with the Bible doctrine they have already believed.

This does not mean that the believer is to criticize the pastor-teacher. Criticism of the person doing the teaching falls into the category of judgment and is wrong. The principle is that it is not the man, but the message. This principle applies to both good and bad teaching. 1 John 4:1; Matt. 7:1-2; 2 John 1:7-9.

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1, NASB)

"Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you." (Matthew 7:1-2, NASB)

"For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. Anyone who goes too far and does not



abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.” (2 John 1:7-9, NASB)

All believers are commanded to grow spiritually. Spiritual stability and discernment come from the application of *epignosis* Bible doctrine in the Christian way of life. 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18; Isaiah 33:6.

“like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,” (1 Peter 2:2, NASB)

“but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18, NASB)

“And He will be the stability of your times, A wealth of salvation, wisdom and knowledge; The fear of the LORD is his treasure.” (Isaiah 33:6, NASB)

In Colossians 1:9-10, Paul prayed that the Colossians might get more *epignosis* Bible doctrine into the right lobe of their souls. The resultant frame of reference allows the believer in fellowship to apply Bible doctrine to experience. The pity is that many believers are stuffed with *gnosis*, but have never believed what they have learned, thus it has no spiritual application.

“For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;” (Colossians 1:9-10, NASB)

The young person has very little true capacity for enjoying life as God intended it, unless they have gained some *epignosis* Bible doctrine in their soul. One of the chief applications of Bible doctrine will be waiting or having greater patience. We are to wait for the right kind of man or right kind of woman for marriage. We must gain the discernment to wait for the right situations to develop. This can only be accomplished by the building of an edification complex in the right lobe of the soul.

The young person should cut down on social life and build up in the spiritual realm because decisions made in the teenage years are usually decisions of ruin. But at age 21 or maybe a few years older and if they have taken in Bible doctrine, they will have gained some discernment and can tell a jerk from a real man or woman. Now they have the capacity for the right kind of social life. They have a concept of true freedom and some spiritual discernment. They can gain enough Bible doctrine to carry them along through difficult times and have some satisfaction in times of prosperity. Teenagers get into the mad scramble and can't handle themselves socially. If they get into the “fast crowd,” they may get into drugs and other illegal activities. Their parents need the courage to keep their teenagers out of this type of rat race and be able to openly communicate.

Becoming Spiritually Self-Sustaining

To be spiritually self-sustaining means the believer has enough Bible doctrine in their soul to deal with life's situations and decisions apart from dependence on others. Their thinking is more and more divine viewpoint rather than human viewpoint. The believer begins to rely on what is in their soul over what others advise them to do or think. They look to the counsel of the Word of God in the right lobe of their soul under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit rather than the counsel of other people.

Stopping Scar Tissue Build-Up

All believers are free of scar tissue at the moment of salvation. Because scar tissue is formed through mental attitude sins and negative volition to Bible doctrine, the believer's consistent intake of Bible



doctrine from a pastor-teacher who is prepared and application of that *epignosis* Bible doctrine keeps the believer from scar tissue buildup. Isaiah 44:22; Prov. 6:32; 2 Tim. 3; Eph. 4:17-20. See category on [Scar Tissue of the Soul](#).

"I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud And your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you." (Isaiah 44:22, NASB)

"The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it." (Proverbs 6:32, NASB)

"So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way," (Ephesians 4:17-20, NASB)

Developing a Consistent Intake and Application of Bible Doctrine

Developing a routine of consistent intake of Bible doctrine from a prepared pastor-teacher is crucial to spiritual growth. This must be accompanied by a consistent confession of known sins to God the Father to be filled with the Holy Spirit and thereby spiritually equipped to learn the Word of God as taught. Maintaining a state of spirituality a maximum amount of the time also results in a consistent application of the *epignosis* Bible doctrine.

Learning and believing Bible doctrine results in increasing *epignosis* Bible doctrine in the right lobe of the soul. The believer learns awareness of Christ and who and what He is in the self-consciousness of their soul. The believer learns divine viewpoint in their thinking and begin to understand and appreciate the will of God and His plan for their life. The believer also develops divine norms and standards. Rom. 8:16; Eph. 3:18; Eph. 4:23; Psalms 42:1; Psalms 119:131.

"The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God," (Romans 8:16, NASB)

"may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth," (Ephesians 3:18, NASB)

"and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind," (Ephesians 4:23, NASB)

"For the choir director. A Maskil of the sons of Korah. As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God." (Psalms 42:1, NASB)

"I opened my mouth wide and panted, For I longed for Your commandments." (Psalms 119:131, NASB)

Constructing an Edification Complex of the Soul

As the believer grows spiritually, the edification complex is being built in the right lobe of the soul from the believed *epignosis* Bible doctrine. As the believer grows, they reflect more of the glory of God. 1 Cor. 6:20; Luke 8:16-18; Matt. 5:13-16.

"For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." (1 Corinthians 6:20, NASB)

"Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. So take care how you



listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him." (Luke 8:16-18, NASB)

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:13-16, NASB)

Residual doctrine in the right lobe of the soul or *epignosis* is used as a frame of reference. From that you become oriented to grace. As you grow further, you begin to master the details of life which produces a more consistent relaxed mental attitude. With this doctrinal thinking you have fewer mental attitude sins, the flow of *agapao* love produces a capacity to love. This includes *phileo* love, a rapport love with God, wife, children, and others. Finally, as you mature further, you gain an inner happiness that is a mark of spiritual maturity. Eph. 4:12; Eph. 4:16.

"for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;" (Ephesians 4:12, NASB)

"from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:16, NASB)

Bible Doctrine Divisions

There are four basic divisions of Bible doctrine which all overlap. They are promises, techniques, doctrines, and principles.

Promises

They are great in number of God's promises in Scripture. There are several thousand promises of salvation, about seven thousand promises for the Christian life, and about three thousand promises for eternity. The believer while filled with the Holy Spirit claims by faith that the promises in the Word of God are true and trusts that God will do exactly what the verse says He will do. This is relying on the faithfulness of God is the spiritual life.

Taking Romans 8:28 by faith, the believer can think, "Since all things work together for good, I know God has a plan for my life. Not everything may be good, but it will work together for good that God's plan intends if I remain in fellowship and apply the Bible doctrine that I have learned."

"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28, NASB)

Taking 1 Peter 5:7 by faith, the believer can rest on the fact that by casting their concerns on Him or trusting in God's perfect handling of any situation before they even happen, the believer can give thanks for every happenstance, good or bad because of God's perfect character and plan.

"casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7, NASB)

Taking 1 Samuel 17:47 by faith, the believer can have confidence in the fact that the battle is the Lord's because He is faithful. The believer does not need to have a spirit of fear because God provides divine power, love, and soundness of mind when they continue in fellowship believing God's promises.



“and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands.” (1 Samuel 17:47, NASB)

Taking Romans 8:31 by faith, the believer can trust in the fact that their mental attitude is stabilized by knowing that if God is for me, who can be against me? After all, God did the big thing by sending His Son to die on the Cross for the sins of mankind and providing eternal salvation to those who believe in our Lord's work, therefore, He can easily take care of the situations that come up in my daily living.”

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?” (Romans 8:31, NASB)

Techniques

Techniques are used to grow spiritually and include techniques such as confession of sin biblically where the believer names or cites known or remembered sins to God the Father via 1 John 1:9. Confessing sin biblically gets the believer back into fellowship with God. The filling of the Holy Spirit keeps the believer in a state of fellowship or spirituality.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9, NASB)

The Faith-Rest Life is knowing, believing, and applying God's promises, principles, and doctrines of the Word to experience and to the situations you encounter in life. Faith-rest is maintaining one's fellowship. Faith-rest is related to the other basics of the spiritual life especially needful for the new believer. Faith-rest is habitually claiming the promises of God with the resultant inner peace and stability that God provides. Heb. 4:1-2. See category on [The Faith-Rest Life](#).

“Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.” (Hebrews 4:1-2, NASB)

Living in the Word is growing in fellowship and is a technique based on 2 Timothy 2:15. To properly grow spiritually and use the promises, techniques, doctrines and principles from the Word of God, you have to have the right mental attitude. This is not a warmed-over version of the power of positive thinking. This is a biblical technique for believers only. It has to do with fellowship with God through your thinking processes. Rom. 12:2; Psalms 119:11; Isaiah 28:10; Psalms 1:1-2.

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15, NASB)

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2, NASB)

“Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.” (Psalms 119:11, NASB)

“For He says, 'Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.'” (Isaiah 28:10, NASB)

“How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.” (Psalms 1:1-2, NASB)

Occupation with Christ is the utilization to the full of divine viewpoint of God's Word in the thought



processes and mental attitude. Occupation with Christ is the expression of the believer's mental attitude in fellowship. Believers are what they think. This opens the whole realm of mental attitudes. A believer's success life and spiritual growth depend on what they think. Many equate a tough person with a profane vocabulary or someone with a strong physical stature, but toughness is a mental attitude. You are not beaten until you give up mentally. Prov. 23:7.

"For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, 'Eat and drink!' But his heart is not with you." (Proverbs 23:7, NASB)

Doctrines

Don't be afraid of the word doctrine. It is the term for Bible teaching in categories. The application of *epignosis* Bible doctrine to life's situations while filled with the Holy Spirit makes for maximum spiritual stability in the soul. One example is understanding the basic doctrines that occurred at salvation. See category on [The 40 Things Received at Salvation](#).

Another example is understanding the application of the doctrine of the Essence of God to your spiritual life. See category on the [Essence of God](#).

Another example is understanding the doctrine of the grace apparatus for perception that describes the only way for the believer to grow spiritually. See category on the [Grace Apparatus for Perception](#).

The adolescent believer utilizes promises, techniques, and doctrines and handles them with more skill.

Principles, Laws and Commands

In the Word of God, there are thousands of principles and are sometimes called laws or commands. Three principles or laws that pertain to other believers include the law of love in 1 Corinthians 8:1, the law of liberty in 1 Corinthians 8:9, the law of expediency in 1 Corinthians 6:12, and the law of supreme sacrifice in 1 Corinthians 9:3-6, 1 Corinthians 9:12, and 1 Corinthians 9:18-19. See category on the [Laws for Doubtful Things](#).

"Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies." (1 Corinthians 8:1, NASB)

"But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak." (1 Corinthians 8:9, NASB)

"All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything." (1 Corinthians 6:12, NASB)

"My defense to those who examine me is this: Do we not have a right to eat and drink? Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working?" (1 Corinthians 9:3-6, NASB)

"If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ." (1 Corinthians 9:12, NASB)

"What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more." (1 Corinthians 9:18-19, NASB)



Stages of Spiritual Growth

From the standpoint of spiritual growth, all believers fall into three categories - the babe or the “little children,” the adolescent or sophomore believer or the “young men,” and the mature believer or the “fathers.” The range of spiritual growth depends upon the amount of time spent taking in Bible doctrine using the grace apparatus for perception and living in the spiritual life. *Gnosis* has to be converted to *epignosis* by faith while filled with the Holy Spirit. Bible doctrine must be properly absorbed. 1 John 2:12-14; Heb. 5:13.

“I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name’s sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been 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 evil one.” (1 John 2:12-14, NASB)

“For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.” (Hebrews 5:13, NASB)

The Babe - the New Believer

For the new believer or a babe in Christ, the first stage of spiritual growth is to claim the promises of God. There are promises that deal with salvation, with the Christian life and with eternity. There are also promises that the new believer or babe can absorb and make a part of their soul. John 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:18; Rev. 21:4.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, NASB)

“in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NASB)

“and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:4, NASB)

The babe or “little children” can produce divine good through the filling of the Holy Spirit, but spend quite a bit of time out of fellowship. The babe is not yet oriented to the grace of God or the plan of God, often has a maximum amount of human viewpoint thinking, and very little divine viewpoint thinking. The babe is unstable. The babe cannot talk about or communicate Bible doctrine intelligently, as they do not yet have a doctrinal frame of reference. The babe has to be entertained, amused, and must receive the maximum attention of others. The babe cannot eat solid food (advanced Bible doctrines), but can take in Bible doctrine basics. 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:4.

“like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,” (1 Peter 2:2, NASB)

“For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.” (2 Peter 1:4, NASB)

The new or babe believer will be primarily interested in using God's promises, if they are progressing normally in Bible truth. Taking a number of Scriptures, they may reason this way, “Since all things work together for good (not all things are good), but since everything works together for good for the believer,



I can cast all my cares upon Him. After all, the battle is the Lord's and if God be for me, who can be against me?" Rom. 8:28; 1 Peter 5:7; 1 Sam. 17:47; Rom. 8:31.

"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28, NASB)

"casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you." (1 Peter 5:7, NASB)

"and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not deliver by sword or by spear; for the battle is the LORD'S and He will give you into our hands." (1 Samuel 17:47, NASB)

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" (Romans 8:31, NASB)

Primarily the babe believer positive to Bible doctrine is overjoyed at claiming God's promises. They are great in enablement. Using God's promises pleases Him. A babe begins by using the promises and developing the techniques. 2 Peter 1:3.

"seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." (2 Peter 1:3, NASB)

Each of us begin the Christian life as babes. The faith used in salvation was very, very minute. It is described in the Word as a mustard seed of faith. Immediately, we should begin to grow. The babe needs to be taught. They need to learn to understand how to claim promises and how to apply the Word to everyday life. To get the facts of Bible doctrine, they need to attend all the services of a Bible teaching church that teaches the whole counsel of the Word of God. Daily face to face teaching will enable them to grow spiritually. This is done using the local church as the classroom with the pastor-teacher being the authority. Luke 13:19.

"It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES." (Luke 13:19, NASB)

In Hebrews 5:11-14, some of the Corinthians had not grown spiritually as expected in the length of time since they had been saved. They were still "milk" Christians, just babes. 1 Cor. 3.

"Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary 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 not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil." (Hebrews 5:11-14, NASB)

Where do you stand in your spiritual growth? Do you know how to check your spiritual growth biblically? What are you depending upon to reach others in your periphery for Christ? A program of some type? Organization? Administration? Hustle? What? Well, the mature believer depends upon Bible doctrine and application of that doctrine to experience to reach out. Certainly the above are necessary, but the priority is the Word - knowing the Word and letting it control the organization, administration, and so on.

The Adolescent - The Growing Believer

The adolescent believer or "young men" in 1 John 2:13 uses God's promises, but also uses techniques as well. The adolescent believer produces some divine good through the filling of the Spirit and application of Bible doctrine. The adolescent believer is learning more and more about how to confess sin, how to



have inner peace and stability, how to live in the Word, how the Spirit of God controls the believer, and how to think divine viewpoint.

The adolescent believer often gets out of fellowship, can be a potential troublemaker, but does use 1 John 1:9 consistently to maintain fellowship. The adolescent believer is starting to get *epignosis* Bible doctrine into the right lobe of the soul with a growing frame of reference. They are applying Bible doctrine, but still have much growing to do. The adolescent believer thinks they more mature than they actually are.

"I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father." (1 John 2:13, NASB)

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, NASB)

They have their ups and downs, of course, but it is usually quite apparent when they are in fellowship and when they are out. The growing believer is breaking into doctrine and is beginning to realize that the "blessed hope" can have an effect upon their life right now. They may understand basically how the doctrine of the Angelic Conflict can help them in witnessing to their neighbor.

The Adult or Mature Believer

The adult or mature believer has been exercising the promises, techniques, and doctrines of the Word, but also use principles as well. The spiritually mature believer produces a maximum amount of divine good in their spiritual life. They reflect more and more the character and thinking of Christ even conforming to His image. Gal. 5:22-23; Gal. 4:19; Rom. 8:28-29.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23, NASB)

"My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you—" (Galatians 4:19, NASB)

"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;" (Romans 8:28-29, NASB)

The mature believer is able to biblically handle the area of doubtful things. The babe or growing believer may "taboo" a certain doubtful thing, but the mature believer would arrive at their mode of conduct through principles. The laws of doubtful things include the Law of Liberty, the Law of Love, the Law of Expediency, and the Law of Supreme Sacrifice.

The Law of Liberty means the believer has liberty to do a certain doubtful things in their life that are not listed in the Bible as sins. The Law of Love means that the believer uses their liberty do a certain doubtful thing, but if it will it be a stumbling block to another believer, then they chose to not do it in their presence. The Law of Expediency means that all things are lawful, but they are not expedient. All things are not fitting, or proper to be a testimony for Jesus Christ in the culture in which we live. The Law of Supreme-Sacrifice means that the higher the leadership, sometimes the greater the limitation in order to be the more effective. Example, the Apostle Paul. See category on [Laws for Doubtful Things](#).

While the growing believer has some *epignosis* Bible doctrine knowledge in the right lobe of their soul and may still act at times like they know it all, the mature adult Christian will have gained the following



characteristics.

The spiritually mature believer has a maximum knowledge of Bible doctrine - the facts from the Word of God. Their soul is saturated with the Word of God. You can't apply doctrine to experience unless you know doctrine.

The spiritually mature believer has divine wisdom. This is having the discernment to apply the right doctrine to experience. The adult in growth has a maximum ability to do this.

The spiritually mature believer has a greater level of faith or trust in God's Word. This is the ability in maximum measure to habitually mix the promises, techniques, doctrines and principles of the Word of God to any situation in life, whether it is a situation that involves pressure, deception, a fiery trial, or disaster of some type.

The spiritually mature believer has a maximum appreciation of the grace of God. They have the discernment to know when to keep their mouth shut and when to talk.

The spiritually mature believer has maximum impact and testimony. Their level of divine good production in the exceeding abundantly category. The Lord can make maximum use of them and their spiritual gifts in His plan.

Divine Viewpoint

There are two ways of thinking - divine viewpoint and human viewpoint. Divine viewpoint is the way God thinks. Human viewpoint is the way man thinks. Isaiah 55:7-9.

"Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:7-9, NASB)

The only source of divine viewpoint is the Bible. The Word of God is the mind of Christ, therefore, we must know the Word of God to know His mind and apply it to realize His will. The Word of God in the right lobe of the soul is a critic of the believer's thoughts and intentions. 1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 2:5; Heb. 4:12.

"For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:16, NASB)

"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus," (Philippians 2:5, NASB)

"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12, NASB)

Our thinking in the spiritual life must line up with divine viewpoint. You can't have peace in our soul without it. You are what you think. Isaiah 26:3; Prov. 23:7.

"The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You." (Isaiah 26:3, NASB)

"For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you." (Proverbs 23:7, NASB)

The believer needs a mental attitude of divine viewpoint and they can't get it without Bible study and



attending services where the Bible is taught word for word, verse by verse. Bible study is being put down today and so the Christian public has stopped thinking because they have stopped studying. It is interesting when believers habitually attend Bible class and regular services, they learn to concentrate, to think, and become more and more stable.

When an individual accepts Christ as their Savior, they do so by faith in Jesus Christ. That faith is only a mustard seed of faith. At that instant, how much divine viewpoint do they have in their soul? Almost none! This is just a mustard seed of divine viewpoint. All they know is that they have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. They must now learn Bible doctrine to begin to understand the thinking of Jesus Christ, the Word of God. Human viewpoint needs to be displaced by divine viewpoint. How? By the renewing your mind! Luke 13:19; 2 Peter 3:18; Rom. 12:2.

“It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES.” (Luke 13:19, NASB)

“but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18, NASB)

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2, NASB)

You need divine viewpoint to please God and to fulfill His plan for your life. Human viewpoint never pleases God no matter how cultured or intelligent the thinking might be. The unsaved person carries human viewpoint over from their work to their religion. They say, “I work for what I get. The harder I work, the more I get.” The doctrinally oriented believer knows that they have been saved by grace and they keep walking after salvation on a non-meritorious system called “faith.” Eph. 2:8-9. See category on [Divine Viewpoint vs. Human Viewpoint](#).

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9, NASB)