

MOSAIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Growing in Stature

Ephesians 4:13, Galatians 4:1-2

MATERIAL FOR GROWTH GROUPS

SEPTEMBER 2023 Week 1-4

CONTENT

1st Week: What is Spiritual Growth/Maturity?

2nd Week: Stages of Spiritual Growth

3rd Week: How to Grow Spiritually

4th Week: Benefits of Growing Spiritually

WEEK 1

What is Spiritual Growth?

Scripture: Ephesians 4:13-16

13. until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 **Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.**

Goal: To help us understand the meaning of spiritual growth and why every believer must grow up spiritually

Introduction:

Last month we talked about discipleship, and we learn that discipleship involves leading others to Christ and teaching and modeling Christ to them so that they may grow spiritually. This month, we are taking a deeper dive to examine what spiritual growth actually means. Our christian journey begins with spiritual birth at salvation, but this is just the beginning. There is still so much more to learn about the kingdom of God and there are many royal roles reserved for the spiritually matured [A]. Christ is our template, and the goal of every believer should be to become like Christ [B]. It is important to note that although spiritual growth involves the development of our spirit man, the growth affects every aspect of our lives because God is interested in every aspect, such as our emotions, our mind, our will, our body [C] etc. As we grow spiritually, we increase in discerning the voice of God, our knowledge of God, as well as our understanding of His will for our lives [D]. This is why the scripture says in Romans 8:14 that “as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.”

(A) Galatians 4:1-2 (B) Galatians 2:20 (C) 3 John 1:2 (D) Romans 12:2

Discussion

1. What does it mean to grow in the Spirit ?
2. What is the benefit of growing spiritually and dangers of not growing spiritually?
3. How does our Spiritual Growth affect other aspects of our lives such as emotions, finances, career, relationships etc?
4. How do you know if you are growing spiritually or not?
5. Have you seen any changes in your spiritual growth recently? Kindly share some testimonies on how you know you grew and the benefits of growing Spiritually.

Conclusion

Spiritual Growth also means allowing the word of God to transform our mind and our character to become Christ-like [E]. Spiritual growth is also a measure of a believer’s progress in becoming like Jesus Christ after experiencing spiritual birth . When we grow spiritually, we produce fruits and manifest the fruits of the Spirit; love, joy, peace etc [F], and not growing spiritually keep us away from inheritances that are rightfully ours [G]. Our Spiritual growth affects every aspect of our life. Do you remember the time Jesus was sleeping in the boat during a storm, while all the other disciples were panicking? This is one of the ways spiritual growth can affect the quality of our lives. Grace and peace can be multiplied to us in areas of life where natural people experience struggle, such as in our career, health, finances, relationships etc.

However, this grace comes through the knowledge of God and that of our Lord Jesus Christ [H]. A tree is known by the fruit, so we know if we are growing spiritually by the fruit we are bearing. You can do a spiritual assessment by visiting Galatians 5:16-22. If you are growing in Patience, Kindness, Love, Peace and so on, you are producing spiritual fruits and growing. If you are struggling with the flesh, with bitterness, anger, jealousy, drunkenness, sexual immorality and other works of flesh, then you need to grow up spiritually in these areas. Next week, we will consider some of the different stages of spiritual growth.

[E] Romans 12:2, (F) Galatians 5:22-23 (G) Galatians 4:1 (H) 2 Peter 1:2

Prayer

Dear Father, I ask that you will open my eyes to see the things hindering my spiritual growth to the next level, and grant me strength that Christ may formed fully in me in this month. Help me to grow more in maturity to the full stature of Christ.

WEEK 2

Stages of Spiritual Growth

Scripture: Ephesians 4:14-15 NIV - Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

Goal: To identify stages of spiritual growth so that we will understand the areas we need to grow and continue to grow unto perfection.

Introduction

A growing church has different categories of people, some are unbelievers who are either coming to the church for the first time or those who have not yet received Salvation. These people are also called natural men because this is the natural state of all men before the new birth. The goal of the church is to introduce Jesus to the natural men, and baptize them into the body of Christ through Salvation. Another category of people in church are the newly saved [A]. These people are spiritual babies, and they need to be fed with the milk of God's word which is the elementary doctrines of Christ such as repentance from dead works, faith in God etc [B]. Another category are believers in the childhood stage. These childhood believers have began learning Christ, but their convictions are not yet strong enough so they are easily tossed back and forth by winds of doctrines as mentioned in our opening scripture [C]. And we have matured believers, who are able to eat strong meat. They are ready to sanctify themselves and lay down their wills for God to have His way [D].

[A] 2 Corinthians 5:17 [B] Hebrew 6:1-3 [C] Ephesians 4:14 [D] Romans 8:14 (KJV).

Discussion

1. What are the stages of spiritual growth *according to the Introduction section*?
2. What are the characteristics of believers mentioned in these stages?
3. Why is it important to be aware of the different stages of spiritual growth?
4. What should be our response to immaturity in other believers we meet?
5. Which fruits of the Spirit do you think you currently have, and which ones do you wish to produce more?

Conclusion

As mentioned in the discussion, the stages of spiritual growth from new birth is the babyhood stage, childhood stage and matured believers stage. Like babies in real life, believers in the spiritual babyhood stage are new to so many things about Christianity, such as the doctrines of Christ and the mysteries of the kingdom of God [E]. As a result, they may experience a lot of struggle with the flesh unless they are taught God's word. Also, the fruits of the spirit may not be well developed and they may easily become anxious instead of peaceful, annoyed instead of kind and manifest more fruits of the flesh than that of the Spirit [F]. Maturity in Christianity is measured by the degree of conformity to the image of Christ and how much of the characters of Christ has been formed in you [G]. For believers who are in the babyhood and childhood phase, Jesus is their Saviour but they have not accepted him fully as Lord. Like a quote says, God has many children, but he has few sons [H].

According to Romans 8:14, kingdom sonship means absolute submission to the Lordship of Jesus because as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God. We need to know our spiritual location so that we can become more intentional about growing towards maturity of the full stature of Christ. If we meet other believers who are younger than us spiritually, we should be considerate enough not to judge them but to pray for them as Jesus prayed for Peter during his weak point. Inspire them to love God more by modelling the love of God to them.

[E] 2 Corinthians 5:17 [F] Galatians 5:16-25 [G] Galatians 4:19-20 [H] Matthew 22:14

Prayer

Dear Father, thank you for today's teaching. Please open my eyes to see the areas of life I need to experience growth, and grant me the grace and strength to grow and produce the Characters of Christ in this area. Let Christ be fully formed in me O Lord.

WEEK 3

How to Grow Spiritually

Scripture: Galatians 5:1-2: 1. Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2. but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.

Goal: The goal of this study is to give practical ways by which believers can grow spiritually.

Introduction:

There is an assumption that spiritual growth is only meant for Pastors or leaders in Church. This is an unhealthy misconception because God wants all His children to grow and to produce fruits [A] as well as to operate in the gifts of the spirit [B]. According to our opening scripture, the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all. Consequently, many things that rightfully belong to us may be outside our accessibility unless we grow up spiritually. Hence, God has provided growth provisions for every believer, irrespective of your current level of Growth, there is still much more in God. Jesus said, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word from the mouth of God. Hence, God's word is the food of our spirit being. As we eat it, we grow in spiritual strength and stature. And God has provided various ministry gifts such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to help believers grow in maturity [C]. To babies and newly born believers, they need the milk of God's Word, whereas, as you keep growing, a time comes you have to move from milk to stronger meat to grow to another level [D].

(a) John 15:5 (b) 1 Corinthians 14:5 (c) Ephesians 4:11-12 (d) 1 Peter 2:2, Hebrews 5:11-12

Discussion

1. What are some of the misconceptions about Spiritual Growth?
2. What are some of the ways you can grow Spiritually according to the bible?
3. Can attending church affect Spiritual Growth? If yes/no, how?
4. What are some of the things hindering Spiritual Growth in people?
5. What are some of the ways you have experienced growth spiritually?

Conclusion

Some of the misconceptions about Spiritual growth is using physical age or how long a person has been a Christian to gauge their spiritual maturity. Spiritual growth is not measured by physical time, but by how much the character of Christ is formed in you and how submitted you are to the leading of God [A]. While feeding on God's word is the primary way of growing spiritually [B], there are several systems recommended by the scriptures to help us grow in maturity. One of them is becoming planted in a bible believing and bible teaching Church because Jesus gave gifts to men for the perfecting (growth, edification, maturity) of the church [C]. Some of the things hindering spiritual growth is merely attending church without submitting to the Lordship of Jesus through the scriptures. Until you submit to the Lordship of Jesus, you will not be able to receive certain nourishment you need for growth[D]. Other important ways of growing spiritually includes spending time with God through the study of His Word and in Prayers. The longer the time you spend with God, the more the characters of God rubs off on you. Also, having mentors who can model the character of Jesus and hold us accountable for our commitment to growing spiritual can greatly help us in our growth. Finally, it is important to note that spiritual growth is not an optional thing for believers, there is no room for stagnancy or lukewarmness. It is either we are growing up and producing fruits or we are getting lukewarm and experiencing a harder life. Stagnancy or lukewarmness is not encouraged in the kingdom of God, this is why Jesus cursed the unproductive fig tree.

(a) Romans 8:14 (b) 2 Timothy 3:16 (c) Ephesians 4:11-13 (d) John 15 : 5

Prayer

Dear Father, I surrender my life to you, I rebuke everything stunting my spiritual growth. Help me to be planted and rooted in Christ Jesus, so that I may grow in maturity and produce the Fruit of the Spirit.

WEEK 4

Benefits of Growing Spiritually

Scripture: **Daniel 11:32:** But the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.

Goal: The goal of this study is to help believers understand the purpose and benefits of Spiritual Growth

Introduction:

Every believer needs to put a high priority on growing up spiritually because as we grow spiritually, we know God better, we grow in strength and we are able to command more results in the physical realm [A]. As we grow spiritually, we also grow in wisdom to discern the will of God. This implies that we make fewer mistakes because the mind of God becomes more and more activated in us [B]. This can make a huge difference, especially in moments when we face important decisions and we have to choose between our desires and seeking God's will. As we grow spiritually, our desires are re-calibrated to align more and more with those of God. As you grow, you increase in your submission to His will and God works in you, giving you strength to desire righteousness and to do His good will [C]. Therefore, you can actually desire the same things God desires as you grow up spiritually. In addition, as we grow spiritually, our life shines more light and we become a blessing to the body of Christ and people within our spheres of influence. When people come around us, they see Christ and they fall in love with Jesus; rather than being dragged into sin by our looks, words, or actions [D], they are convicted by the Holy Spirit unto Salvation and unto good works.

[A] Matthew 12:29, Matthew 16:19 [B] 1 Corinthians 2:16 [C] Philippians 2:13 [D] Matthew 5:14-16

Discussion

1. What have you learned about Spiritual Growth this month?
2. Give examples of people who experienced spiritual growth in the Bible.
3. What benefits of Spiritual Growth have you personally experienced in your life?
4. Is it possible for someone to be growing spiritually and not see the benefit physically?

Conclusion

We have learned that the purpose of spiritual growth is to grow unto maturity, unto the full stature of Christ. As we conform to the image of Christ, we know God better and experience greater fulfillment and victories. The dangers of not growing spiritually are enormous. The chief is ignorance concerning the will of God. This can lead to destruction in one way or the other; as the bible says, my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge [E]. Another consequence of not growing spiritually is fear and weakness which come as a result of weakness in the spirit. God has not given us the spirit of fear but of power, love, and of sound mind. Spiritual weaknesses can lead to physical afflictions, oppression, and losses areas of life God intended for believers to experience victory [F]. As we look at some bible characters that walked with God, we can see the benefits of growing spiritually. Through the decisions they made and the dealings of God with them, men like Abraham walked with God by faith, Moses was a friend of God, David was a man after God's own heart, and many others lived and trans-generational impacts [G]. The longer the time you spend with God, the more you grow spiritually and the more the characters of Christ are produced in you. As we grow spiritually, our physical lives will also be impacted, either directly by physical transformation or indirectly by an inward assurance of peace. God is interested in every aspect of our lives; our health, our family, our emotions, our career, our finances, our relationships, etc. And He has made adequate provisions for them all, which accessible as we grow

up spiritually. Although God loves you and He wants His glory to shine through our lives [H], but are you willing to pay the price of becoming a carrier of God's glory?

[E] John 8:32 [F] James 4:7 [G] Hebrews 6:12 (d) 3 John 1:2

Prayer

Dear Father, I surrender my life to you, Help me to be planted and rooted in Christ Jesus, so that I may grow in maturity and produce the Fruit of the Spirit.
