

5. Testing of Difficult Experiences

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. James 1:2-5

To grow a person's faith, God will allow us to go through trials so that we are forced to look to Jesus Christ for help

It is through such experiences, that we have the opportunity to grow in our faith.

His (Jesus) divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our (growing) knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 1Peter 1:3-11

Growing in Faith

“Our purpose is to be a community where people become deeply rooted in Christ, consistently grow in faith, and actively reach out to all.”

I. “Rooted in Christ”

- **“I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. John 14:6**
- **“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. John 11:25**
- **Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his son... ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. 1John 5:1,5**
- **Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 1John 5:10-12**

II. “Growing in Faith”

Growing in faith is a biblical principle.

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ". 2Peter 3:18

The purpose for “Growing in our Faith” is so that you will not be carried away by the error of lawless people (false teachers) and fall from your secure position. (2Peter 3:17)

Here is what “Growing in Christ” is supposed to look like!

Peter tells new Christians:

"Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good." 1 Peter 2:2-3.

Paul tells mature Christians:

"In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

Hebrews 5:12-14

What the author is really saying in Hebrews 5:12-14:

- Growing, maturing Christians should be able to teach others what they believe about their faith in Christ.
- Growing, maturing Christians should be acquainted with teachings about righteousness, holiness and purity and be modeling it in their own life.
- Growing, maturing Christians have taught themselves, by constant use of God's Word, to be able to distinguish good from evil.

In one of the churches that Paul had started, that had been around long enough to be filled with growing Christians, he had to admonish them with these words.

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ²I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. 1Corinthians 3:1-2

5 ways the bible teaches us how to Grow in our faith:

1. Seek the Lord

**My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek.
Psalm 27:8**

Our faith will grow as we seek God.

The very first thing that will happen as we seek the Lord is that we will begin to recognize the issues that keep us from God.

Then, as we search for a better relation with the Savior, we will come to know God in a more personal and experientially way.

2. Confess our sin.

No Christian will live a sinless life, but God is constantly cleansing us through the blood of his Son.

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin" John 1:17.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1John 1:8-9

Every time we recognize sin in our lives and rid ourselves of its hindrance, we grow in faith.

3. Surrendering

The Christian must constantly surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ. We do this when we are saved, but there are also many other times in our journey that we need to surrender to Christ.

As we yield/surrender our lives to the Lord, we are growing in grace/faith.

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. Colossians 2:6

4. Constant Communion

If we want a growing faith we must have constant communion with Jesus Christ.

As we spend time with the Lord, we will become more Christlike in our faith.