

GROWING IN CHRIST

Part 1: Being Rooted Matters

- ❖ Growing in Christ calls for more than surface Christianity
 - What is surface Christianity?
 - Outward appearance but lacking depth
 - Incomplete understanding of faith in Christ
 - Unwillingness to listen – Heb. 5:11-14 (Read vs. 11 in MSG), 2 Tim. 4:3
 - May be more familiar with traditions, phrases and sayings than knowing Christ – Mark 7:7-13
 - Faith that is easily blown away by obstacles, trials and everyday life experiences – Mat. 13:6
- ❖ Being rooted (firm foundation) is very important – John 15:1-8
- ❖ We must be careful what kind of foundation we are laying for others as they come to Christ
 - Are we rooting them in Christ or something else? Col. 2:6-7
- ❖ Likewise, we are responsible for what we take root in
 - Are we taking root with the ungodly? Psa. 1:1
 - Are we rooted in love? Eph. 3:16-19
 - Are we rooted in the Word of God? Deut. 6:6-7; James 1:22
- ❖ God will uproot you from ungodliness in order for you to take root in Christ – Col. 1:21-23
- ❖ We must be willing to go deeper in Christ – Heb. 6:1-3
 - Questions from Psalm 1:1-3
 - What does it mean to meditate day and night? – Psa. 119:11-15; Psa. 77:12, **1 Tim. 4:14-16**
 - What does the positioning of the tree in vs. 3 tell us about how we should be positioned?
 - What are some streams we feed from?
 - What are 3 expectations of the tree planted by the rivers of water in vs. 3?
 - 1:
 - 2:
 - 3:

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Part 2: Transformation is the Goal - Renewing Your Mind is the Key

Key Passage: Romans 12:1-2

The Goal of Transformation

- ❖ How would you define transformation?
 - A thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance; a metamorphosis during the life cycle of an animal; in physics, the induced or spontaneous change of one element into another by a nuclear process – *Oxford Languages Dictionary*
- ❖ Our ultimate goal as Christians is to be transformed into the image of Christ – 2 Cor. 3:18, Rom. 8:29
 - To be more Christ-like – Phil. 2:5-8; 1 Cor. 11:1
 - To have deep roots in Christ – Eph. 3:17-18
- ❖ We all have work to do towards meeting the goal – Eph. 4:20
- ❖ I've got to take off the old man so I can put on the new man – Eph. 4:22-24

Conformity Is Not Always Your Friend

- ❖ Romans 12:1 lays out that the way to transformation is through mind-renewal
- ❖ We are cautioned about conforming to:
 - Old passions – 1 Pet. 1:14
 - The wrong circles – Psalms 1
 - Everything that says it's spiritual – 1 John 4:1
 - The world – Rom. 12:2; James 4:4

Renewing My Mind

- ❖ Romans 12:1 lays out that the way to transformation is through mind-renewal
- ❖ The importance of the mind
- ❖ To renew my mind, I've got to deal with my thoughts, beliefs, and actions
- ❖ How do I renew my mind?
 - It is the work of the Word, the Holy Spirit and your will
 - I must submit to God's standard – Rom. 12:2
 - I must take responsibility for where I allow my thoughts to linger – Phil. 4:8
 - I must arrest them – 2 Cor. 10:3-5

Questions to ponder:

- ❖ What does conforming to the world look like?
- ❖ What can happen when you linger on ungodly thoughts?
- ❖ Likewise, what happens when you think on what God told you to? Phil. 4:8
- ❖ Identify a negative thought or mindset you are dealing with and find Biblical truth to replace it with.

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Part 3: Fruitfulness – The Evidence of Growth

Key Passage: Galatians 5:22-23

The Connection Matters

- ❖ Just as Jesus tells us in John 15:1-8 about abiding, what you connect to will determine what type of fruit you bear – John 15:1-8
- ❖ We are warned in scripture about our connections – Psalm 1; Eph. 5:11; Rom. 16:17-18
- ❖ We produce what we are – Gen. 1:11, 26; John 8:44
- ❖ Learn to watch what is in your garden – Song of Solomon 2:15

The Evidence Matters

- ❖ We are not known by our aspirations but by our fruit – Mat. 7:16-23; Mat. 12:33-45
- ❖ Production is a result of process and not pretense – Heb. 12:11-16; 2 Tim. 2:21

The Fruit we should be bearing

- ❖ Gal. 5:22-23
- ❖ There is more than Gal. 5:22-23
 - Goodness, righteousness, truth – Eph. 5:9
 - Obedience – Phil. 2:12-18
 - Good works – Mat. 5:16; Col. 1:10; Eph. 2:10
 - Evangelism – Mat. 28:19; Acts 1:8
 - Repentance – Mat. 3:8-10
 - Righteousness and Justice – Isa. 5:1-7

Questions to ponder:

- ❖ What kind of fruit have you been producing?
- ❖ What is limiting your production of Godly fruit?

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Part 4 : Going Through Growing through

Key Passages: James 1; 2 Pet. 1:3-8; Phil. 1:6

There is no progress without process

- ❖ Note Paul's confidence in God completing the work He has begun in the believers in Philippi – Phil. 1:6
 - Confidence in God completing what He has started, not man – Isa. 55:11
 - It is God that is doing a work in the believer – 1 Thes. 5:24; Heb. 13:21; Psa. 138:8
- ❖ It's important to remember that it is God who oversees the process
- ❖ What does the process look like? 2 Pet. 1:3-11
 - Vs. 3: We have been given all we need to live godly
 - Vs. 4: The promises enable us to be partakers of the divine (god-like) nature
 - We have the opportunity to partake but have to make the choice to partake.
 - Vs. 5-8: We must be diligent about this process

God expects us to grow up

- ❖ Don't skip the milk (1 Pet. 2:2) but don't get stuck on milk forever – Heb. 5:12-14

God is calling for us to persevere

- ❖ God wants us to change our perspective on the adversity – James 1:1-12; Romans 5:1-5
 - Crowns aren't cheap – Rev. 2:10
- ❖ Don't neglect the importance of prayer while your are persevering – Eph. 6:18; Rom. 12:12
- ❖ Remember the testimonies of those before you – James 5:11; Heb. 12:1-2
- ❖ God rewards perseverance – Rev. 3:10

We are able to endure when we operate in love and are led by faith

- ❖ 1 Cor. 16:12-13; Heb. 12:2; Rom. 5:3-5

The growth from it

- ❖ It will work for our good – Rom. 8:28; Gen. 50:20; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Pet. 5:7-11
- ❖ Learning to simply trust Him – Psa. 46:10

The ministry from it

- ❖ The opportunity for God to show Himself mightily – Judges 7:2
- ❖ From the failure and from the trial – Luke 22:31-34

Questions to ponder:

- ❖ What challenge are you facing that God is using to mature you?
- ❖ What have you learned from what you have been through?
- ❖ How can you help others now that you've been through?