

Spiritual Growth Moments

A New Life through Spiritual Birth

Spiritual growth is difficult and elusive. Many seem to have grown very little, even after years of being Christians. The main obstacle to growth of course is simply not doing the basics: See the ["Big Five" Connectors](#) and the ["Quick Start" Guide](#). Like anything else in life we have to master the basics first in order to have fun and be fruitful in pursuing each new avenue of endeavor. You won't become a good tinker, tailor, soldier, or sailor if you don't master the basics and keep honing your skill with them. The spiritual life is no different.

Nevertheless, true spiritual growth opportunities are often not what we think. This makes them easy to miss. It helps to understand what spiritual growth is not, in order to keep our eyes peeled for the God-orchestrated moments that will help us grow from baby steps to walking and even running with the Lord. Then, with "constant practice" we can grow towards maturity.

But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. Hebrews 5:14 ESV

What Spiritual Growth Is Not

Spiritual growth can be blocked by having wrong ideas about what it is. To recognize times when the call to spiritual growth is upon us, we will need to understand what spiritual growth is NOT. Spiritual growth is not pleasure in reading the Bible or in worshiping—that is the result of past growth. Spiritual growth is not knowledge of the Bible or spiritual things—that is head growth, not heart change.

Here's what a true spiritual growth moment looks like: It is in a moment of trouble or conflict when you decide to handle things differently — the Lord's way, not your old way. Let me explain. Here's an article I wrote about it for our Newsletter: (Use this link to sign up if you'd like: [Sign up for eNews](#))



I Love the River of Peace!

I love being carried through my days upheld and guided by the Spirit with a peaceful, easy feeling and divine synchronicity working upon all my appointments, phone calls and chores. It is so beautiful when that happens--and it has been happening a lot lately. But that is not spiritual growth: It is spiritual delight. It is the result of spiritual growth, not the growth itself.

Then there's Bible time in the morning with tea and my favorite reading chair, or teaching sessions at conference when the speaker carries you to new horizons. I said in



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seminary, "Just lock me in the library for a year and send in pizzas and I'll be happy." But that is not spiritual growth: It is spiritual knowledge. You only have to look at the Pharisees to see they spent way too much time growing their brains, while their hearts were shrinking! That's reverse growth through excess knowledge.

What about be grafted into the fullness of church life? When "new recruits" first come to the Old Savannah City Mission where I work in addiction recovery, they typically think that now that they are with a bunch of committed, like-minded believers everyone is going to get along marvelously and show Christian character as we seek to serve Jesus. But that's not spiritual growth: That's spiritual death. We will only find that kind of perfected community once we've died and gone to heaven!

OK, What Is Spiritual Growth?

I have to "break it down" for the guys coming in off the streets into our addiction recovery program that their spiritual growth is going to come to them in the moments that they least expect to find it and in times that look more like the devil than the Lord. Say what? Yes, there are moments here and there of genuine growth by revelation, by impartation or by healing: times when God downloads into you a transforming perspective; or releases a gift of the Spirit; or helps you mend from a deep root of bitterness or fear. These times are real and are definitely worth seeking so that we can get the breakthrough.

But, but, but there are other times, times we don't have to seek, times we would rather run from, times that don't happen occasionally, but every day. Times of trouble, times of offense, times of need, times of temptation, times of being rebuked or rejected, times of failure, etc. Any moment you don't like has the potential of being a spiritual growth moment. These are the bread and butter times when spiritual growth is an ever-present opportunity just waiting to happen.

If we handle the moment according to past emotional reflex and deal with it stressed up (anxious) or stressed down (despairing) the old nature has taken over and we get no growth. To get the growth we have to [act fast to reconnect](#) with the Lord and quickly give the fear, anger and guilt, etc. to Him so that we can keep floating in the river of peace. That means there is a lot we have to learn how to handle differently. See any need for growth? Don't worry. Between God and the devil, you will have plenty of opportunities to practice!

Your Steps to True Growth

The three main areas where spiritual growth is needed (in addition to learning how to trust and obey Jesus):

- 1) Forgive anyone who hurts, offends or wrongs you or your loved ones, forgiving them "from the heart."
- 2) Speak the truth in love, even when it is not well-received, even when you don't want to.



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3) Respect the authority structure He has placed over you and learn to rest under it without complaint.

It's a tall order to make progress in these areas, yet this is where the rubber meets the road. If we want to grow in the direction of becoming like Jesus, we will have to learn to overcome these challenges. Running from them doesn't work. It is impossible to avoid these situations. In fact, for many of us, they happen daily. Sadly, I have seen many Christians stumble at these hurdles, never getting the growth. Don't let that be you! Once you learn how to make progress, the growth always feels worth it.

Keep Growing!

Spiritual Healing Spiritual healing goes deepest of all. Even though the reality of our spirit lies beyond the ability of our five senses to experience, it nevertheless holds the answer to all that affects our lives. Every breakdown in heart, mind or body traces back to this deepest of all roots. God begins our spiritual healing through the gift of faith in Christ. Only this one thing can complete it.

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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