

grow up!
ross van niekerk



ephesians 4:11-16

[we should grow up] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine... Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ... [who] makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Ref: romans 8:29; *compare hebrews 5:12-14*

growing up in Christ

your understanding

1. What is spiritual growth?
2. How do you grow spiritually?
3. Why do you need to grow spiritually?
4. What is the most critical area in which you must grow?

grow in love

myths regarding spiritual growth

happens automaticly	deliberate decisions
<i>mystic for select few</i>	<i>aquired through habits</i>
need the right key	lifelong process
<i>measured by knowledge</i>	<i>proven through conduct</i>
private pursuit	happens in community
<i>only Bible study</i>	<i>various expereinces</i>

from: rick warren, purpose driven church

what is spiritual growth?

to renew the heart

*Spiritual growth is the process through which the reflective **will** takes on the character of Christ.*

dallas willard

[impulsive will – reflective will – embodied will]

purpose of spiritual growth

grow in love

luke 6:43-45

For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his **heart** produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the **heart** his mouth speaks.

purpose of spiritual growth

grow in love

To renew the inner person [heart] so that the believer has the desire and ability to walk in God's will.

[as opposed to the desires of the flesh].

verw: prov 4:20-24; rom 12:1-2; phil 2:12-13.

how to grow spiritually

disciplines that strengthens your spirit

- your will → will of God
- your character → character of Christ
- your will/ character lives in your body.

- spiritual discipline is a bodily exercise!
(either of abstinence or engagement)

- in cooperation with the Holy Spirit and with other people.

how to grow spiritually

disciplines that strengthens your spirit

1 corinthians 11:1

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

1 timoteus 4:7

...train yourself for godliness.

1 korintiërs 9:27

I discipline my body and keep it under control.

how to grow spiritually

what about grace?

Grace is not opposed to *effort*,
it is opposed to *earning*.

Effort is activity;
earning is attitude.

– *Dallas Willard*

spiritual growth

disciplines that strengthens your spirit

- study and meditaion of Word;
- prayer and solitude;
- thanksgiving and praise;
- fellowship;
- giving;
- serving;
- fasting;
- confession;
- witness.

the discipline of the word

study and meditation

psalm 119:11

I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

john 15:5-7

...abide in me, and my words in you...

blessings of meditation

1: longevity and consistency in character

psalm 1:2-3

But his delight is only in the Law of God; and in His Law he meditates day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivulets of water that brings forth its fruit in its seasons, and its leaf shall not wither, and all which he does shall be blessed.

ref: john 15:5-7

blessings of meditation

2: prosperity and success

joshua 1:8

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

blessings of meditation

3: preservation

1 timothy 4:13-16

Until I come, attend to reading, to exhortation, to teaching...

Meditate on these things; be in these things in order that your improvement may appear to all. Hold on to yourself and to the doctrine; continue in them, for doing this you shall both save yourself and those who hear you.

blessings of meditation

4: life and healing

proverbs 4:21-23

Let not [my words] escape from your sight;
keep them within your heart.

For they are life to those who find them, and
healing to all their flesh.

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it
flow the springs of life.

private meditation

proverbs 6:21-22

Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck.

When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you.

corporate meditation

colossians 3:16

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.