

# Growing Pains

# I. Hazardous Growth

# Growth pains

Mt.13:30, incompatible differences

Mt.21:19, profession without practice

The worst of all deceptions  
is self-deception

The greatest deception men suffer  
is from their own opinions

# Growth pains

Mt.13:30, incompatible differences

Mt.21:19, profession without practice

Mt.24:12, cold as ice (Rv.2:4)

Gal.6:9, weary (lose heart / motivation / be discouraged)

2 Tim.2:16, progress in perversion

I. Hazardous Growth

II. Hindrances To Growth

# Growth drains

- Ignorance, Ac.18...

...<sup>25</sup> This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. <sup>26</sup> So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately

- Mature: attitude, ability, courage
- IF 'off' on salvation, all is lost. 19:1-6

# Growth drains

- Ignorance, Ac.18:25-26...
- Immorality, 1 Co.3:

1: And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.

merely human; made of flesh, Hb.7:16  
UNspiritual

3: for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

characterized by flesh; carnal, 1 Pt.2:11  
ANTIspiritual

# Growth drains

- Ignorance, Ac.18:25-26...
- Immorality, 1 Co.3:1, 3
- Immaturity, 1 Co.14:20 (13:11)

Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature – 1 Co.14:20

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things – 1 Co.13:11



# Growth drains

- Ignorance, Ac.18:25-26...
- Immorality, 1 Co.3:1, 3
- Immaturity, 1 Co.14:20 (13:11)
- Indifference, Hb.5:11-14

# Growth drains

- Ignorance, Ac.18:25-26...
- Immorality, 1 Co.3:1, 3
- Immaturity, 1 Co.14:20 (13:11)
- Indifference, Hb.5:11-14
- Independence, Hb.10:24-25

I. Hazardous Growth

II. Hindrances To Growth

III. Heavenly Growth

# Growth gains

- Grow up. Ep.4:15
  - Supply, 16
  - Stop, 17
  - Study, 20-31
  - Stand, 6:10-11, 13, 14

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out. Mk.4:31-32

<sup>31</sup> It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds on earth; <sup>32</sup> but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.”

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in. Mk.5:...19-20, gratitude

<sup>19</sup> However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.” <sup>20</sup> And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that **Jesus had done for him**; and all marveled.

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in. Lk.17:5, faith

<sup>5</sup> And the apostles said to the Lord,  
Increase our faith.

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- **Grow in.** 2 Pt.1:5, maturity

Virtue, excellence: outstanding goodness

(LN)

Not content to stay on bottom rung...

Manly qualities: manhood, valor, prowess

Rv.21:8, opposite of cowardice



# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in. 2 Pt.1:5

Knowledge: protects against error (ch.2).

1 Pt.2:2

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in. 2 Pt.1:6

Self-control: self-mastery, restraint (2:14f.)

Aristotle: four states in life –

a. passion is entirely subjected to reason.

b. reason is entirely overcome by passion.

c. reason fights passion; passion prevails.

Ro.7; Ac.24:25.

d. reason fights passion, prevails. Ga.5:23

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- **Grow in. 2 Pt.1:6**

Perseverance: many quit during the marathon ...

3:14, finish line.

“The Queen of the virtues”

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in. 2 Pt.1:6

Godliness: piety

3:11, cure for worldliness: otherworldliness  
– preparation for Judgment

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in. 2 Pt.1:7

Brotherly kindness (brother-love).

1 Pt.1:22, fervently; Mt.5:46; 1 Pt.4:8

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in. 2 Pt.1:7

Love: v.8. Pr.31:10-31

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in.
- 2 Pt.3:18 . . .
  - Grace (favor). Lk.2:52
  - Knowledge.

Study to perceive truth, meditate to possess it, obey to be protected

## World class expert in 20 minutes a day

“Is it possible? Not only possible, but almost a sure thing if you pick a very small subject in which you are extremely interested.”

1. Love is the key
2. Narrow the subject down (bite-size)
3. Spend 20 minutes a day – every day – learning every detail about that subject...
  - then go after it like a starving dog goes after a juicy steak – Earl Nightengale



# Surprise

- Even adversity can produce results.
- “Strength doesn’t come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn’t.”
- Pr.24:10, if you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.
  - <sup>1</sup>Take the long view.
  - <sup>2</sup>Don’t quit.

## In an epidemic – grow?

- For one man who can stand prosperity, there are a hundred that will stand adversity – Thomas Carlyle
- Nu.13:30
- Christians excelled under persecution...

# Struggle of sword and cross

- Aiming to exterminate, it purified
- Jews enjoyed special protection since time of Julius Caesar. Christianity was regarded as sect of Judaism . . . Then, *religio illicita* – “You have no right to exist.”
- Maecenas counselled Augustus: “Honor the gods according to the custom of our ancestors, and compel others to worship them. Hate and punish those who bring in strange gods.”

# Struggle of sword and cross

- Slanderous rumors: incest, cannibalism.  
N. Africa: “If God does not send rain, lay it to the Christians.” At every drought...  
“Away with the atheists. To the lions with the Christians.”
- Even Pliny applied the rack to tender women

# Struggle of sword and cross

- Ponticus, boy of 15 years, could not be deterred by any sort of cruelty from confessing his Savior.
- Symphorinus, young man, refused to bow before image of Cybele; condemned to be beheaded. On way to place of execution his mother called to him, “My son, be firm and fear not that death, which so surely leads to life. Look to Him who reigns in heaven. Today is your earthly life not taken from you, but transferred by a blessed exchange into the life of heaven.”

# Struggle of sword and cross

- Clement of Alexandria wrote in period of 193-211: “Many martyrs are daily burned, confined, or beheaded before our eyes.”
- Potamiaena, after cruel tortures, slowly burned with her mother in boiling pitch.
- When Cyprian received his sentence of death, he calmly answered, “Deo Gratias!”
- Men, women of all classes met their executions with self-possession, humble resignation, gentle meekness, cheerful faith, triumphant hope, and forgiving charity.

# Struggle of sword and cross

- Tertullian taunted heathen governors: “rack, torture, grind us to powder: our numbers increase in proportion as you mow us down. The blood of Christians is their harvest seed. For who is not incited by the contemplation of it to inquire what there is in the core of the matter? And who, after having joined us, does not long to suffer?”
- Acts 7

# Growth gains

- Grow up.
- Grow out.
- Grow in.
- Grow down. Jn.3:30

“He must increase, but I must decrease”

- We cannot be number one...or even two
- Ph.2:3