

## RCMI L-Path Teaching

March 12, 2023

**TITLE: Grow Holistically**

**TEXT: 2 Peter 1:5-8**

**Big Idea: The evidence of genuine spiritual growth is a changed personality, a conscientious pursuit, and confirmed progress in Christ-like character.**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

- We must not just go through life, we all must grow through life.
- “Maturity in the Christian life is measured by only one test: how much closer to His character have we become?” -Elyse Fitzpatrick
- Spiritual maturity is that moment when you see yourself for who you are and realize all the things you need to change.
- In his second epistle, as Simon Peter painted a picture of what a spiritually mature Christian should look like.

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; <sup>6</sup> and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; <sup>7</sup> and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. <sup>8</sup> 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.” – 2 Peter 1:5-8

- Growth is evidence of new life, Peter gives three pieces of evidence of genuine spiritual life.

### **I. A Changed Personality**

- Now that you’ve been made new, live like it. Once you’re converted, you’re not the same—you’re made new. [2 Corinthians 5:17]
- When you become a Christian, you are a new creature with a new heart, with the indwelling Holy Spirit who produces Christlike fruit—you are a new person.
- When you are in Christ, you are a new person—verse 5, “*Now for this very reason also*” describes the transformation of verses 3 and 4.

### **II. A Conscientious Pursuit**

- Now that Christ has suffered, died, and risen from the dead to save you. Now that Christ did all the work to save you, who were helpless, hopeless—yet now transformed. Now there is an expectation for you to work for Him.

- Read verse 5 and see if you can pick up the intensity of this command. NIV, “For this very reason, make every effort to **add** to your faith...” The NASB translation says, “Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith **supply**...” There are words here that together scream intense commitment, dedication, and service.
- The Greek word translated *supply* and/or *add* is the main verb in these verses. It’s a general command to grant, give, furnish, and support. This main verb *supply* comes from the term “choirmaster”. In ancient choral groups, the choirmaster was responsible for supplying everything needed for his group—so the term choirmaster came to refer to a supplier.
- The men who undertook these duties out of their pocket and out of love for their city were called *chorēgoi*—suppliers, the word that is used here in verse 5.
- And this supply has a certain lavishness in it. It never means to equip in any miserly way—it means to lavishly pour out everything necessary for a noble performance.
- To intensify this command, Peter adds another Greek word—a noun, **diligence**, which means to be eager and zealous with a strong sense of urgency, making every effort in your faith supply.
- Growth is evidence of life, so how is that growth seen?

### III. A Confirmed Progress

- Now that Christ has given you everything you need now and later, including Himself, the response by anyone with a Christ-like nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit would be to make progress in becoming just like Christ Himself. So Peter describes the character of a born-again Christian with seven Christlike qualities, plus one necessary step. What’s that?
- Read verse 5 again, “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your **faith**...” With one word Peter reminds you, you can’t live for Christ in your own strength. You and I need to exercise dependent faith.
- Faith is your confidence in the Lord and His Word. God gave you faith in salvation, now live by faith in sanctification.
- All the other character qualities that follow are unattainable unless you live by faith.
- **Here is the list of Christlike character virtues that will be true of us as we grow:**
- **Goodness** — *moral excellence*, which means that we change from the inside out.
- **Knowledge** — growth in our knowledge of God.
- **Self-control** — the ability to restrain ourselves from sinful desires.
  - 1 Corinthians 9:27, “I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I will not be disqualified.”

- **Perseverance** — to stay faithful not just for a short time, but over the long haul.
- **Godliness** — living a godly life.
- **Mutual affection** — ties in closely with the last virtue which is love.
- **Love** — the virtue that sums up all other virtues
  - 1 John 4:16, *“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.”*
  - There is more to Christian growth than brotherly love—we must also display the sacrificial love that our Lord displayed when He went to the cross.

### **CHALLENGE**

- “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.” - 2Peter 1: 8
- “Spiritual maturity is not reached by the passing of the years, but by obedience to the will of God.” - Oswald Chambers
- These qualities are essential. Without them, we can’t say that we belong to Jesus. But they’re gradual. We don’t need to be perfect. We just need to stay close to Jesus and make every effort to add these virtues to our lives.

### **DISCUSSION:**

- What evidence can you show to prove that you are spiritually growing as a true believer in Jesus Christ?
- Has your heart and priorities more inclined toward Christ over worldly concerns? Share.
- What’s the pace in your pursuit of Christ-like character? Are you sitting, standing, walking, running, or sprinting to be Christlike? Share.
- Are you growing in the Christlike qualities mentioned in 2 Peter 1:5-7? If yes, share why do you think you’re maturing in your faith. If no, what qualities mentioned are you having difficulty with?