

Are You Growing Spiritually?



Jim Cymbala July 20, 2019

God is not as interested in what we “do” for him as in our bearing spiritual fruit. And only his Spirit at work within us can produce the godly character he desires. Consider Paul’s prayer for the believers in Colossae: “We pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10).

If only Christians were as concerned about their spiritual growth as they are about their physical growth! When Paul entreated the believers to “live a life worthy of the Lord,” he simply meant that they should grow in grace and bear fruit to the glory of God. Fruitfulness, in fact, is the only evidence that someone is a genuine Christian.

How can we tell we are growing spiritually? Scripture offers the only standard by which we can measure ourselves. Jesus declared, “You must be born again” (John 3:7). Just as physical birth is a beginning point for physical growth, being born again is the beginning point for spiritual growth. We have the capacity to grow spiritually in much the same way that flowers, trees, and babies grow and develop. We are to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). Further, we are exhorted to “crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation” (1 Peter 2:2).

“God ... makes things grow” (1 Corinthians 3:7). If we fail to display signs of spiritual growth, either something is terribly wrong with us or we never experienced life from God to begin with. “The righteous will *flourish* like a palm tree ... they will still *bear fruit* in old age, they will stay *fresh and green*” (Psalm 92:12, 14). The goal of this growth process is that we *bear fruit*.

The Holy Spirit will help you recognize areas where you need to grow spiritually if you will humble yourself and ask him for discernment.

Jim Cymbala began the Brooklyn Tabernacle with less than twenty members in a small, rundown building in a difficult part of the city. A native of Brooklyn, he is a longtime friend of both David and Gary Wilkerson.

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