April 3, 2022

Growing in Christ

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**Welcome, Welcome, Welcome😊**

**“Living and Loving Like Jesus”**

Living and loving like Jesus is only possible if Jesus is abiding in us and us in Him!!!

“…the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” **Colossians 1:27**

**Prayer**

Our Church Motto is: Love, **Grow,** Give,Go

Today we are going to focus on the concept of **Growing in Christ-likeness**.

Growing in Christ-likeness is to be on both a **personal** and a **corporate** level!

Please turn in your Bibles to **Colossians 2:6-7**

*“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”* **Colossians 2: 6-7**

Lt’s take a closer look😊

*“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him…*

A theme in Galatians, *“You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?”* **Galatians 3:1a**

*“…after beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?”* **Galatians 3:3b**



George Pardington, Outline Studies in Christian Doctrine, (A C&MA Theologian from the early 1900’s)

“It cannot be too strongly empathized that the Christian life is a Christ-life. It is not an imitation, but an incarnation. We do not copy Christ, we reproduce Him; or rather, He reproduces His own life within us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.” Page 232

It is not a matter of greater human effort, or striving harder, but rather an ever more complete surrender.

A Biblical Example: *“When they saw the courage of Peter & John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished, and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.”* **Acts 4:13**

An Historical Example: Thomas a Kempis, The Imitation of Christ, “The imitation of Christ emphasizes the inner life and withdrawal from the mundanities of the world, as opposed to the active imitation of Christ by other friars.” (Espin & Nickoloff p. 609)

Back to **Colossians** – *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him...* **From Jesus,** *“…If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit…”* **John 15:5**

**From Paul, the Apostle** *…the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”* **Colossians 1:27b**

So, it is not just trying harder, it is not receiving power to “Get-R-Done, it is literally Christ living His life in & through you!!!

**With that in mind…**It has been said that “the best predictor of future behavior is consistent past behavior.”

Question: So, what was Jesus’ batting average?

Jesus’ batting average was/is 1.000. (No misses or on base every time

“*Rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught,…”*

Spending time with…Meditating on the Scriptures

*“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”* **Psalms 119:11**

*“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”* **2 Timothy 2:15**

*“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation…”* **1 Peter 2:2**

A professor at Washington Bible College used to say: Keep your finger in the TEXT/BOOK!!!

“***Rooted and built up in him****, strengthened in the faith as you were taught,…”*

One of the best ways to grow is to be a part of a small group or Bible study group.

Are you a part of a small group or Bible study group?

Small Group Dynamics – Worship/Prayer/Fellowship – **Intimacy Accountability**

**“…***and overflowing with thankfulness.”*



What can we be thankful for?

An old hymn of the faith “Count Your Blessings Name Them One by One” or “Ton by Ton”

Audience Participation – What are you thankful for?



Thought? 

Wouldn’t it be nice/cool to know exactly what the Lord’s will is!?!

*“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”* **1 Thessalonians 4:16-18**

One of the names for Communion is **Eucharist** (Thanksgiving)

In preparing for Communion, please spend some time thanking God, then as the Holy spirit leads, come and REMEMBER.

**Prayer**

**Communion or Eucharist**

**Table Talk** (Discussion Points)

**Please Consider Sharing:**

* What are your overall impressions of Colossians 2:6-7?
* In our own words, how would you describe the difference between relying on the Holy Spirit and self-effort?
* Why is a person’s motive so important when it comes to studying Scripture?
* Why is it so critical to “Keep your finger in the Book”?
* What are your thoughts on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 and knowing God’s will?
* What do you think about Dr. Wardle’s Core Longings and how people tend to fill them?
* Who do you know that is close to you and far from God? How can you demonstrate Jesus’s Love to them this week?
* (OVERALL) Sharing what the Holy Spirit impressed upon you personally, during our time together.

**Benediction**