

FAQ – 1 John Lesson 30

August 6, 2025

1. How does spiritual growth relate to a believer's standing with God and God's love for them?

Spiritual growth has no bearing on a believer's standing before God or God's love for them. Once a person is covered by the blood of Jesus Christ and His righteousness through faith, their position before God is fixed and they are positionally sanctified. God's love for a believer is perfect and already established; He does not love someone more or less based on their spiritual maturity. Even immature disciples were loved "unto perfection" by Jesus.

2. What common misconceptions about spiritual growth are addressed in the provided text?

The text debunks several common misconceptions about spiritual growth: Time: Spiritual growth is not measured by calendar years. A new believer can be more mature than someone who has been a Christian for decades, and vice versa. Knowledge/Information: While understanding God's truth is crucial, simply accumulating biblical information or theological knowledge does not equate to spiritual maturity. This knowledge must be pure and applied to one's life to conform to Christ. Activity: Engagement in church activities, ministries, or busyness does not signify spiritual maturity. Some of the most active individuals can still be spiritually immature. Temporal Success/Prosperity: Material goods, influence, or the size of a church or ministry are not indicators of spiritual maturity. Paul's contentment in suffering and with nothing is presented as a sign of his maturity.

3. What is the distinction between "absolute" and "relative" spiritual maturity, and how do they interact?

Spiritual maturity is described as "relative" in its overall development, meaning it's not a static state but a process of growth. However, at any given moment, a believer is "absolutely" either in the spirit or in the flesh. This means one is either functioning in obedience to God and walking in the spirit, or functioning in disobedience and walking in the flesh. These momentary states are absolute and can fluctuate. Spiritual growth, the overall relative development, only occurs during the accumulated times of walking in the spirit; when in the flesh, one either remains stagnant or falls back.

4. What is the fundamental process through which spiritual growth occurs?

Spiritual growth is a process of feeding one's spirit by taking in and responding to the truth of God's word. It is directly related to an increase in understanding God's revelation, whether through scripture, life circumstances, or prayer. Just as physical growth comes from eating, spiritual growth comes from consuming "every word that comes out of the mouth of God." This process is not mystical, sentimental, devotional, psychological, or

event-driven, but a continuous development based on understanding and applying divine truth.

5. Why did John write his epistle, and how does it relate to discerning one's salvation?

John wrote his epistle (1 John) not to create doubt about a believer's salvation, but to affirm it and help readers discern their own salvation and identify false professors and teachers. He provides "tests of true Christianity" – doctrinal tests (belief in Christ, recognition of sin), moral tests (obedience, love for others). By acknowledging sin, confessing Christ, desiring to obey God, and loving others, believers can confirm their salvation and expose those who deny Christ, deny sin, hate others, disobey God's word, or love the world.

6. How does John's addressing of "little children" in 1 John 2:12 relate to salvation and spiritual maturity?

When John addresses "little children" (teknia, meaning "born ones" or "little darlings"), he is referring to all believers, regardless of their age or stage of spiritual growth. His primary message to them is that "your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." This emphasizes that the forgiveness of sins is a foundational reality for all who believe, a settled aspect of salvation that is independent of one's spiritual maturity level. This forgiveness is for God's glory, not because of human merit, and it is a central reality of salvation.

7. What is the core reality of salvation according to the text?

The core reality of salvation is the forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness is complete, eternal ("Once forgiven, always forgiven"), and based entirely on Christ's payment for sins and God's grace. It is "according to the riches of His grace," which God "lavished" upon believers. Scripture constantly affirms that salvation means receiving remission or forgiveness of sin through belief in Jesus Christ. This forgiveness is "for His name's sake" and "for His glory," as it displays God's grace and enables believers to glorify Him.

Greek Words Used

teknia (TEK-nee-ah): "Little children" or "born ones"; a term of endearment used to refer to believers, emphasizing familial relationship and affection.