

FAQ — 1 John: Spiritual Growth (Lesson 32)

Date: August 20, 2025

1. What are the three stages of spiritual growth described in the sources?

The three stages of spiritual growth are:

- **Spiritual Children (Babies)**
- **Spiritual Young Men**
- **Spiritual Fathers**

These stages are not chronological. A Christian may remain spiritually immature for many years, while a new believer may quickly progress. The key factor is the believer's **desire and effort to grow in their faith**.

2. How are spiritual children characterized?

- **Acknowledgment:** Recognize God as Father and Christ as Lord.
 - **Relationship:** Primarily relational, not theological.
 - **Discernment:** Very poor, leaving them vulnerable to false teachers and doctrines.
 - **Experience:** They delight in their relationship with the Lord and experience His unconditional love.
-

3. What defines a spiritual young man?

- **Transition:** Move beyond relational experience to embrace knowledge and sound doctrine.
 - **Strength:** Described as strong because *“the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one”* (1 John 2:14, NKJV).
 - **Victory Over the Evil One:** Equipped to overcome Satan's deceptions, particularly false religious systems.
 - **Vulnerability:** Still susceptible to the flesh and sin, but less vulnerable to false teaching because of grounding in the Word.
 - **Growth:** Rooted in being strong in Scripture.
-

4. What is the ultimate stage of spiritual development, and how is it characterized?

The highest stage is becoming a **spiritual father**.

- **Knowledge:** Goes beyond knowing doctrine to intimately knowing the God who revealed it.
 - **Worship:** Life becomes a profound experience of worship and joy in God.
 - **Relationship:** Rich, deeply informed by sound doctrine, leading to intimacy with God Himself.
 - **Aspiration:** To know God as Christ knows Him (*John 17:3*).
-

5. What is the “power word” that drives spiritual progress, and why is it essential for all stages?

The **Word of God** is the power that drives spiritual progress.

- **Spiritual Young Men:** Strengthened by the Word, enabling victory over the evil one.
 - **Spiritual Fathers:** Truly know the God who authored the Word by deeply understanding what He wrote.
 - **Description of the Word:**
 - Life-giving.
 - Imparts spiritual vitality.
 - Sanctifies, nurtures, and transforms.
 - Renews the mind (*Romans 12:2, NKJV*).
-

6. What kind of love does God hate, and why?

God hates the **love of the world**:

- Defined as “*the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*” (1 John 2:16, NKJV).
 - Reason: Because of His perfect love, God perfectly hates what is contrary to His holy nature. The world’s system draws people away from Him.
 - Warning: “*If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him*” (1 John 2:15, NKJV).
-

7. Besides loving the world, what specific things does God hate (Proverbs 6:16–19 and other Scriptures)?

- **Pride:** “A proud look” or haughty eyes; the fountainhead of all sin.
- **Lying Tongue:** God hates lying because He is truth.

- **Hands that Shed Innocent Blood:** Refers to murderers and those who destroy innocent lives.
- **A Heart that Devises Wicked Plans:** Scheming and corruption.
- **Feet Swift in Running to Evil:** Those who deliberately pursue wickedness.
- **False Witness Who Speaks Lies:** Perjurers and those who destroy truth and justice.
- **One Who Sows Discord Among Brethren:** Divisive people and troublemakers.

Other Examples from Scripture:

- Divorce (*Malachi 2:16*).
- Idolatry (*Jeremiah 44:3–4*).
- False Religion (*Amos 5:21; Revelation 2:6, 15*).
- Hypocrisy (*Amos 5:21*).

All are hated because they oppose God's holy nature.

8. How does the Epistle of 1 John help believers determine their spiritual standing?

1 John provides **tests** to affirm salvation and distinguish true faith from false claims.

- **Doctrinal Tests:**
 - Affirming the deity of Christ.
 - Acknowledging one's own sinfulness.
- **Moral Tests:**
 - Obedience to God's Word.
 - Love toward other believers.
 - Hatred of the world's system.

If these indicators are present, the believer can be assured of eternal life (*1 John 5:13, NKJV*).

Greek Word Usage

No Greek terms are present in this FAQ document.