

THE MATURE CHRISTIAN
Follow Christ
Banska Bystrica, 20th October 2018

αὐξάνετε δὲ ἐν χάριτι καὶ γνώσει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

2Pt 3:18 Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

ὄν ἡμεῖς καταγγέλλομεν νοουθετοῦντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον καὶ διδάσκοντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ, ἵνα παραστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ

Col 1:28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ

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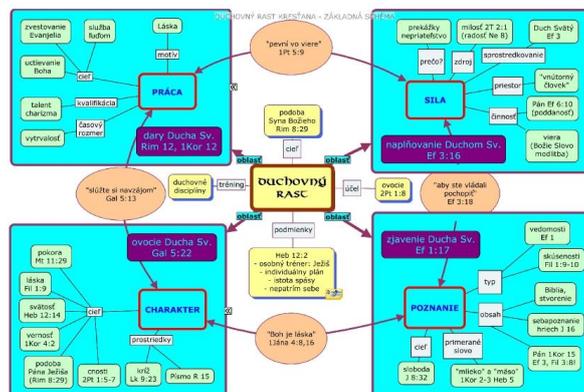
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3. TO REMEMBER

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b) Kázeň II. - Ako sa stať dospelým? (osvedčenosť) → Je to možné aj pre mňa? Kde má v tom všetkom začať?



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0. INTRODUCTION

- what are we talking about?
- **1Cor 3:1-4** But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh (ὡς πνευματικοῖς ἀλλ' ὡς σαρκίνοις), as infants in Christ (νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ). ² I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, ³ for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife (ζήλος καὶ ἔρις,) among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? (κατὰ ἄνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε) ⁴ For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human?

0.1. THE MOTIVE TO GROW

- Why should I grow and be mature??? → **Rom 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God (διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ), to present (προσστήσαι) your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God (εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ), which is your spiritual worship
- **Lk 7:47** But he who is forgiven little, loves little. (ὧ δὲ ὀλίγον ἀφίεται, ὀλίγον ἀγαπᾷ)
- **Heb 5:12-14** For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. (καὶ γὰρ ὀφείλοντες εἶναι διδάσκαλοι διὰ τὸν χρόνον, πάλιν χρεῖαν ἔχετε τοῦ διδάσκειν ὑμᾶς τινὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ γεγόνατε χρεῖαν ἔχοντες γάλακτος [καὶ] οὐ στερεᾶς τροφῆς. ¹³ πᾶς γὰρ ὁ μετέχων γάλακτος ἄπειρος λόγου δικαιοσύνης, νήπιος γάρ ἐστιν. ¹⁴ τελείων δὲ ἐστιν ἡ στερεὰ τροφή, τῶν διὰ τὴν ἕξιν τὰ αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα ἐχόντων πρὸς διάκρισιν καλοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ)

Auditores Evangelii,

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Νηπιοι.
<i>Suntque</i> | 2. Τελειοι.
<i>Suntque</i> |
| 1. Νωθροι ταις ακοαις,
<i>Opus habent</i> | 1. Φρονιμοι.
<i>Opus habent</i> |
| 2. Απειροι λογου δικαιοσυνης.
<i>Γαλακτος.</i> | 2. Τα αισθητηρια γεγυμνασμενα εχοντες.
<i>Στερεας τροφης.</i> |

0.2. THE GOAL: **TO BE LIKE JESUS**

- → **Rom 8:29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers
- → **Eph 4:15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the

head, into Christ

- → **Mt 10:24** "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for the **disciple to be like his teacher**, and the servant like his master.
- → **Gal 4:19** my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until **Christ is formed in you!**

0.3. THE PROBLEM

- **Eph 2:2-3** following the course of (1) this world, following the (2) prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience- ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out (3) the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
- **1Jo 2:15-16** Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world – the (1) desires of the flesh and the (2) desires of the eyes and (3) pride in possessions – is not from the Father but is from the world
- death; enmity; distractions; → Mt 13 *the Word of God*: (1) no interest; (2) shallowness; (3) other concerns...
- **2Tim 4:10** Demas, in love with this present world, (ἀγαπήσας τὸν νῦν αἰῶνα)

0.4. THE GUIDE

- God the Father → the Educator; (**Heb 12:8-9** If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?)
- Jesus: the Saviour; the Teacher; the Leader; (**John 13:13** You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ὑμεῖς φωνεῖτέ με· ὁ διδάσκαλος, καὶ ὁ κύριος, καὶ καλῶς λέγετε· εἰμὶ γάρ)
- The Holy Spirit → learn to hear him in the Bible; in your conscience; in the church; in life-circumstances (events) **Gal 5:16** walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh (πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίας σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε) **Gal 5:25** If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit (Εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν)
- **John 14:16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever (καὶ γὰρ ἐρωτήσω τὸν πατέρα καὶ ἄλλον παράκλητον δώσει ὑμῖν, ἵνα μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ᾦ)
- **Rom 8:14** For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. (ὅσοι γὰρ πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται, οὗτοι υἱοὶ θεοῦ εἰσιν)

1. DIMENSIONS OF CHRISTIAN MATURITY

The mature saint is just like a **little child**, absolutely simple and joyful and gay. Go on living the life that God would have you live and you will grow younger instead of older. There is a marvellous rejuvenescence when once you let God have His way. If you are feeling very old, then get born again and do more at it. (CHAMBERS, O. *The Psychology of Redemption*)

- **Balance** of all signs → not: just strength; just holiness; just knowledge; just service/ministry...
- Luke 2:52
 - And Jesus increased in wisdom → mind, ethics
 - and stature, → strength
 - and in favour with God → inward character (heart)
 - and man" → ministry ("usefulness")

[LLOYD-JONES *Revival*] If we are people who come to the Christian Church merely in order to get some personal help, and no more, then we are the veriest babes in Christ. If we have grown at all, then we must have a concern about the situation, a concern about the state of society, a concern about the state of the Church and a concern about the armour of almighty God.

1.1. STRENGTH (EPH 6:10)

- assurance; faith; peace;
- soldier → Eph 6; 2Tim 2;
- **Isa 30:15** "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your **STRENGTH**." (בְּשׁוּבוֹתָ וּנְחַת תִּשְׁעוּן בְּהַשְׁקֵט וּבְבִטְחָה תִּהְיֶה נְבוֹרַתְכֶם)

- **1Cor 16:13** Keep alert (γρηγορεῖτε), stand firm in your faith (στήκετε ἐν τῇ πίστει), be courageous (ἀνδρίζεσθε), be **strong** (κραταιοῦσθε).
- **Eph 6:10** ...be **strong** in the Lord and in the **strength** of his might (ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ κράτει τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ)
- **Neh 8:10** the **joy** of the LORD is your **strength** (מְצִיחַת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הִיא הַקֹּחַ)
- **Rom 4:20** No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith (ἀλλ' ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ πίστει) as he gave glory to God (δοῦς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ)
- **2Tim 2:1** ...be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus (ἐνδυναμοῦ ἐν τῇ χάριτι τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ)
- **2Pt 1:5-7** ...supplement your (1) **faith** with virtue, and (2) virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and (3) knowledge with self-control, and (4) self-control with steadfastness, and (5) steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and (6) godliness with brotherly affection, and (7) brotherly affection with (8) love. (ἐπιχορηγήσατε ἐν τῇ πίστει ὑμῶν τὴν ἀρετὴν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀρετῇ τὴν γνώσιν, ⁶ ἐν δὲ τῇ γνώσει τὴν ἐγκράτειαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐγκρατεία τὴν ὑπομονήν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ὑπομονῇ τὴν εὐσέβειαν, ⁷ ἐν δὲ τῇ εὐσέβειά τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ τὴν ἀγάπην)
- **2Tim 2:4-6** No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops (οὐδέις στρατευόμενος ἐμπλέκεται ταῖς τοῦ βίου πραγματείαις, ἵνα τῷ στρατολογήσαντι ἀρέσῃ. ⁵ ἔαν δὲ καὶ ἀθλῆ τις, οὐ στεφανοῦται ἔαν μὴ νομίμως ἀθλήσῃ. ⁶ τὸν κοπιῶντα γεωργὸν δεῖ πρῶτον τῶν καρπῶν μεταλαμβάνειν.)

1.2. CHARACTER (COL 1:28)

- → LOVE
- → HUMILITY
- **2Pt 1:5-7** ...supplement your (1) faith with **virtue**, and (2) virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and (3) knowledge with **self-control**, and (4) self-control with steadfastness, and (5) **steadfastness** with godliness, ⁷ and (6) godliness with brotherly affection, and (7) brotherly affection with (8) **love**. (ἐπιχορηγήσατε ἐν τῇ πίστει ὑμῶν τὴν ἀρετὴν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀρετῇ τὴν γνώσιν, ⁶ ἐν δὲ τῇ γνώσει τὴν ἐγκράτειαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐγκρατεία τὴν ὑπομονήν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ὑπομονῇ τὴν εὐσέβειαν, ⁷ ἐν δὲ τῇ εὐσέβειᾳ τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ τὴν ἀγάπην)
- **Col 1:27-28** the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone **mature** in Christ (τί τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου τούτου ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ὃ ἐστὶν Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς δόξης. ²⁸ ὃν ἡμεῖς καταγγέλλομεν νουθετοῦντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον καὶ διδάσκοντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ, ἵνα παραστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ)

[Mt 5:48 You therefore must be perfect (τέλειοι), as your heavenly Father is perfect (τέλειος).] The expression of Christian character is not good doing, but Godlikeness: If the Spirit of God has transformed you within, you will exhibit Divine characteristics in your life, not good human characteristics. (CHAMBERS, O. *My Utmost for His Highest*)

The test of a man's religious life and character is not what he does in the exceptional moments of his life, but what he does in the ordinary times when he is not before the footlights, when there is nothing tremendous or exciting on. (CHAMBERS, O. *The Place of Help*)

Character Education (Infobase Publishing): (1) Being a Leader and Making Decisions; (2) Being Fair and Honest; (3) Dealing with Bullying; (4) Dealing with Frustration and Anger; (5) Handling Peer Pressure; (6) Handling Teamwork and Respect for Others; (7) Managing Conflict Resolution; (8) Managing Responsibilities; (9) Overcoming Prejudice ...

- **Heb 12:14** Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord (Εἰρήνην διώκετε μετὰ πάντων καὶ τὸν ἀγιασμόν, οὗ χωρὶς οὐδεὶς ὄψεται τὸν κύριον)
- **Heb 12:7** It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons.

1.3. KNOWLEDGE (1COR 14:20)

- “science”; “reality”; “common sense”;

- → BIBLE STUDY
 - → GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
 - **John 16:7-8** the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment (ὁ παράκλητος οὐκ ἐλεύσεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐὰν δὲ πορευθῶ, πέμψω αὐτὸν πρὸς ὑμᾶς. ⁸ καὶ ἐλθὼν ἐκεῖνος ἐλέγξει τὸν κόσμον περὶ ἁμαρτίας καὶ περὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ περὶ κρίσεως)
 - **2Pt 1:5-7** ...supplement your (1) faith with virtue, and (2) virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and (3) knowledge with self-control, and (4) self-control with steadfastness, and (5) steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and (6) godliness with brotherly affection, and (7) brotherly affection with (8) love. (ἐπιχορηγήσατε ἐν τῇ πίστει ὑμῶν τὴν ἀρετὴν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀρετῇ τὴν γνῶσιν, ⁶ ἐν δὲ τῇ γνῶσει τὴν ἐγκράτειαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐγκρατεῖα τὴν ὑπομονήν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ὑπομονῇ τὴν εὐσεβείαν, ⁷ ἐν δὲ τῇ εὐσεβεία τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ τὴν ἀγάπην)
 - **Eph 1:16-23** I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him (δῶν ὑμῖν πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ), ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
 - **Eph 3:14-19** For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith- that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God
 - **1Cor 14:20** Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature (Ἀδελφοί, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσὶν ἀλλὰ τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε, ταῖς δὲ φρεσὶν τέλειοι γίνεσθε)
 - **1Cor 2:5-7** your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. ⁶ Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. ⁷ But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. (ὅτι ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾗ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ. ⁶ Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων· ⁷ ἀλλὰ λαλοῦμεν θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην, ἣν προώρισεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν)
- (Oxford English Dictionary) Intellectual acquaintance with, or perception of, fact or truth; clear and certain mental apprehension; the fact, state, or condition of understanding.
- **Col 3:16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly (Ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικεῖτω ἐν ὑμῖν πλουσίως), teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
 - **2Cor 8:7** you excel in everything- in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness (ἐν παντὶ περισσεύετε, πίστει καὶ λόγῳ καὶ γνῶσει καὶ πάσῃ σπουδῇ)
 - **Rom 15:14** ...you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another (καὶ αὐτοὶ μεστοὶ ἐστε ἀγαθωσύνης, πεπληρωμένοι πάσης [τῆς] γνῶσεως, δυνάμενοι καὶ ἀλλήλους νοθετεῖν)
 - **Heb 5:12** For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, (καὶ γὰρ ὀφείλοντες εἶναι διδάσκαλοι διὰ τὸν χρόνον, πάλιν χρεῖαν ἔχετε τοῦ διδάσκειν ὑμᾶς τινὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων)

τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ γεγόνατε χρεῖαν ἔχοντες γάλακτος [καὶ] οὐ στερεᾶς τροφῆς.)

1.4. SERVICE (1PT 4:10)

- French revolution: “Ni dieu ni maître” *No God, no master!*...
- **2Pt 1:5-7** ...supplement your (1) faith with virtue, and (2) virtue with knowledge, ⁶and (3) knowledge with self-control, and (4) self-control with steadfastness, and (5) steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and (6) godliness with brotherly affection, and (7) **brotherly affection** with (8) love. (ἐπιχορηγήσατε ἐν τῇ πίστει ὑμῶν τὴν ἀρετὴν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀρετῇ τὴν γνῶσιν, ⁶ ἐν δὲ τῇ γνῶσει τὴν ἐγκράτειαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐγκρατεῖᾳ τὴν ὑπομονήν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ὑπομονῇ τὴν εὐσέβειαν, ⁷ ἐν δὲ τῇ εὐσέβειᾳ τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ τὴν ἀγάπην)
- **Gal 5:13** you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another (διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις)
- **1Pt 4:10-11** As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹ whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies- in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (ἐκαστος καθὼς ἔλαβεν **χάρισμα** εἰς ἑαυτοὺς αὐτὸ **διακονοῦντες** ὡς καλοὶ οἰκονόμοι ποικίλης χάριτος θεοῦ. ¹¹ εἴ τις λαλεῖ, ὡς λόγια θεοῦ· εἴ τις διακονεῖ, ὡς ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός, ἵνα ἐν πᾶσιν δοξάζεται ὁ θεὸς διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ᾧ ἔστιν ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν)

Most of us live on the borders of consciousness—consciously serving, consciously devoted to God. All this is immature, it is not the real life yet. **The mature stage is the life of a child which is never conscious**; we become so abandoned to God that the consciousness of being used never enters in. When we are consciously being used as broken bread and poured-out wine, there is another stage to be reached, where all consciousness of ourselves and of what God is doing through us is eliminated. A saint is never consciously a saint; a saint is consciously dependent on God. (CHAMBERS, O. *Called of God*)

2. PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN GROWTH

When we are born from above and the Son of God is formed in us, it is not the passing of the years that matures His life in us, but our **obedience**. (CHAMBERS, O. *The Psychology of Redemption*)

2.1. FEAR OF GOD → SERIOUSNESS

- **Mt 6:24-25** "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. ²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? (Οὐδεὶς δύναται δυσὶ κυρίοις δουλεύειν· ἢ γὰρ τὸν ἓνα μισήσει καὶ τὸν ἕτερον ἀγαπήσει, ἢ ἐνὸς ἀνθέξεται καὶ τοῦ ἑτέρου καταφρονήσει. οὐ δύνασθε θεῷ δουλεύειν καὶ μαμωνᾷ. ²⁵ Διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν· μὴ μεριμνᾶτε τῇ ψυχῇ ὑμῶν τί φάγητε [ἢ τί πίητε], μηδὲ τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν τί ἐνδύσηθε. οὐχὶ ἡ ψυχὴ πλεῖον ἔστιν τῆς τροφῆς καὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ ἐνδύματος)

Determinedly take no one seriously but God, and the first person you find you have to leave severely alone as being the greatest fraud you have ever known, is yourself. (Chambers, O. *My Utmost for His Highest*)

The most seriously minded Christian is the one who has just become a Christian; the mature saint is just like a young child, absolutely simple and joyful and gay. Read the Sermon on the Mount—“Take no thought,” (i.e., no care), “for your life.” The word “care” has within it the idea of something that buffets. The Christianity of Jesus Christ refuses to be careworn. Our Lord is indicating that we have to be carefully careless about everything saving our relationship to Him. Fuss is always a sign of fever. A great many people mistake perspiration in service for inspiration in devotion. The characteristic of a man who has come to God is that you cannot get him to take anyone seriously but God. (CHAMBERS, O. *The Place of Help*)

The thing that interferes with the life with God is our abominable seriousness which **chokes** the freedom

and **simplicity** which ought to mark the life. The freedom and simplicity spring from one point only, a heart at rest with God and at leisure from itself. (Chambers, O. *Approved unto God*)

Oh, these terrible questions [Job 38] when God seems to laugh at the soul, destroying its serious self-importance, even while He upholds that soul (Chambers, O. *Christian disciplines*)

There is a subtle form of **carnal pride** that is set on my holiness; it is unscriptural and morbid and ends in experience rather than in character, in taking myself more and more seriously and God less and less seriously. The cultivation of holiness is impossible without the spiritual concentration which the Holy Spirit enjoins. (Chambers, O. *God's Workmanship*)

Paul refused to take anything or anyone seriously but Jesus Christ. That is Our Lord's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, viz., "Be carefully careless of everything saving your relationship to Me." We take everything else but that seriously. (Chambers, O. *He shall Glorify Me*)

Imagine anyone who has seen himself in the light of Jesus Christ thinking of his defects! Why **we are too filthy for words**, and to be concerned because of the spots upon us is absurd. Leave the whole miserable thing alone; we have the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves but in God, and there are no specks in God. **I have determinedly to take no one seriously but God**, and the first person I have to leave severely alone as **being the greatest fraud I have ever known is myself**. "Oh I am sick of myself"—if you really were sick of yourself you would go to your own funeral and for ever after let God be all in all. Until you get to that point you will never have faith in God. (Chambers, O. *Not Knowing Where*)

- distinguish: good from pleasant; humour from ridicule; temporary from eternal...
- **Tit 2:7** Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity (σεμνότητα)
- **Lk 9:57-62** As they were going along the road, (1) someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ⁵⁹ To (2) another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ⁶⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹ Yet (3) another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." ⁶² Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.
 - (1) no earthly wealth (freedom from things; possessions)
 - (2) no other agendas (freedom from people; society) → ONE thing is necessary (Lk 10)
 - (3) no regrets for the past (freedom from plans; longings)
- **Luke 14:25-35** Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple." ²⁷ Whoever does not bear his own **cross** and come after me cannot be my **disciple**. ²⁸ For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰ saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹ Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. ³³ So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. ³⁴ "Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? ³⁵ It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

2.2. RESOURCES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

2.2.1. GRACE → DAILY FORGIVENESS

- the same grace you received for forgiveness of your sins
- **2Pt 3:18** ...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (αὐξάνετε δὲ ἐν χάριτι καὶ γνώσει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα καὶ νῦν καὶ εἰς ἡμέραν αἰῶνος.)
- **2Tim 2:1** You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus (Σὺ οὖν, τέκνον μου, ἐνδυναμοῦ ἐν τῇ χάριτι τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ)

2.2.2. FAITH → KNOWLEDGE AND TRUST

- **Hos 4:6** My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. (לֹא יָדְעוּ מִכֶּהֱנֵן לְמַעַן תִּשְׁמַטְנֵם מִכֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה כִּי־רָצוּתָם הִרְעָה אֶת־יְהוָה וְעַתָּה יִרְדְּעוּ עַמִּי מִכֶּהֱנֵן לְמַעַן תִּשְׁמַטְנֵם מִכֹּהֲנֵי יְהוָה)
- **Ps 9:10** And those who know your name put their trust in you (יְיָ־בִטְחוּ בְךָ יְיָ־עֵי שֹׁמְרֵי),
- **Rom 1:16-17** For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." (Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι. ¹⁷ δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν, καθὼς γέγραπται· ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται)

2.2.3. LOVE → COMPLETE SUBMISSION TO JESUS CHRIST

- always; in everything; everywhere; **Jesus** → study his mind; his attitudes; his life...
- Get to know and obey Jesus's mind and will about everything in your life (**2Cor 10:4-5** We destroy arguments ⁵ and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ λογισμοὺς καθαιροῦντες ⁵ καὶ πᾶν ὑψώμα ἐπαιρόμενον κατὰ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντες πᾶν νόημα εἰς τὴν ὑπακοὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ)
- **1Cor 16:22** If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come!
- faith by love: **Gal 5:6** in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love (οὔτε περιτομή τι ἰσχύει οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη)
- **Rom 5:5** God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἀγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν)

2.2.4. ENDURANCE → DAILY ROUTINE & SUFFERING

- discipline; drudgery; ordinariness; hatred; persecution

It is in the sphere of humiliation that we find our true worth to God, and that is where our faithfulness has to be manifested. Most of us can do things if we are always at the **heroic** pitch; but God wants us at the drab, **commonplace** pitch, where we live in the valley according to our personal relationship to Him. (CHAMBERS, O. *The Love of God*)

- **Mk 13:13** And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved (καὶ ἔσεσθε μισούμενοι ὑπὸ πάντων διὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου. ὁ δὲ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος οὗτος σωθήσεται)
- **Rom 5:3-4** More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, (οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν, εἰδότες ὅτι ἡ θλίψις ὑπομονὴν κατεργάζεται, ⁴ ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ δοκιμὴν, ἡ δὲ δοκιμὴ ἐλπίδα)

2.3. MEANS OF GRACE

Have we any helps to keep us living a godly life? That is the risk. Slowly and surely God will purify our lives from props that separate us from Him. Immediately the means of grace are taken to be grace itself, they become a direct hindrance to our life with God. The means are simply scaffolding for the time being, and as long as they are in their right place they are an assistance, immediately we put them as the source, we give occasion to the enemy. Have we helped ourselves in work for God from any other source than God? "Ye are complete in Him" (Col 2:10). (CHAMBERS, O. *If Thou Wilt Be Perfect*)

2.3.1. THE WORD OF GOD

2.3.1.1. BIBLE STUDY

- **Luke 11:28** "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (μακάριοι οἱ ἀκούοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ φυλάσσοντες)
- Bible reading program (**Rev 1:3** Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near)
- Bible study program (**John 5:39** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you

have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,)

2.3.1.2. PREACHING

- The Word of God alive... (**1Cor 1:21** it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe)

2.3.2. PRAYER

2.3.2.1. PRAYING ALONE

- **Mt 6:6** But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (σὺ δὲ ὅταν προσεύχη, εἴσελθε εἰς τὸ ταμείον σου καὶ κλείσας τὴν θύραν σου πρόσευξαι τῷ πατρὶ σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ· καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι)

[MURRAY *The New Life*] Beloved young Christians, if there is one thing about which you must be conscientious, it is this: secret converse with God. → Alone with God → Count certainly upon an answer

- **1Thes 5:17** pray without ceasing (ἀδιαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε)
- constant prayer →

2.3.2.2. PRAYING IN FELLOWSHIP

- **Mt 18:19-20** Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. (Πάλιν [ἀμήν] λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐὰν δύο συμφωνήσωσιν ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς περὶ παντὸς πράγματος οὗ ἐὰν αἰτήσωνται, γενήσεται αὐτοῖς παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. ²⁰ οὗ γάρ εἰσιν δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα, ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν)

2.3.3. COMMUNION

- Lord's Supper (**1Cor 10:16** The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστίν;)
- Church fellowship (**Phil 2:1-2** So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind Εἴ τις οὖν παράκλησις ἐν Χριστῷ, εἴ τι παραμύθιον ἀγάπης, εἴ τις κοινωνία πνεύματος, εἴ τις σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί, ² πληρώσατέ μου τὴν χαρὰν ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ φρονῆτε, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγάπην ἔχοντες, σύμφυχοι, τὸ ἐν φρονοῦντες)

2.4. DAILY LIVING → WALKING BY FAITH

2.4.1. LOOKING AT THE INVISIBLE

- the Word of God
- **2Cor 5:7** we walk by faith, not by sight (διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ ἑδους)
- **2Cor 4:18** ...we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal (μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα· τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια).

2.4.2. THE FAITH OF MIRACLES

- **Luke 17:5-6** "Increase our faith!" ⁶ And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you

2.4.3. THE FAITH OF PATIENCE

- **Luke 18:8** Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?

2.4.4. THE FUTURE WORLD

- **Luke 20:35** those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage (οἱ δὲ καταξιοθέντες τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐκείνου τυχεῖν καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται)

3. TO REMEMBER

- Immature Christians live according to the flesh.
- The goal of maturity is to be like Christ.
- Christian maturity does not just happen with time. It requires full commitment and a lot of help.