

Growing in the Gospel

1 Introduction

1.1 Reflection:

How would you like to grow in Christ?

How have you tried in the past to accomplish this growth and why has it failed or succeeded?

What is the biggest obstacle to your growth in Christ?

1.2 Series: Growing in Christ

- Beholding and Becoming
 - We were created in the image of God, to reflect, relate, and reign as God does
 - The fall has shattered the image of God and we deserve eternal separation and condemnation from God
 - In the death and resurrection of Christ, we are reconciled to God and in Beholding Him more and more we become more and more like Him.
 - The gospel is central to all of Christian life, not just salvation but also sanctification and glorification.
- Idolatry and Desires
 - At the core of our sin is idolatry (the sin beneath the sin). We must deal with the root instead of the surface level sin.
 - Idolatry is sneaky, its subtle, its suffocating. We are called to identify our idols (follow our money, time, affections) and overcome them (repentance and faith, devotion to Christ).
- Gospel: Justification, Adoption, Transformation (Today)
- Tree Diagram: Heat and Thorns
- Tree Diagram: Cross and Fruit
- Decision Making: Sowing and Reaping
- Spiritual Disciplines; Meditating and Praying on Scripture
- Suffering: The Refiner's Fire
- Community: The Context and Means of Growth

1.3 Resources

- Tim Keller, "the Centrality of the Gospel".
 - http://download.redeemer.com/pdf/learn/resources/Centrality_of_the_Gospel-Keller.pdf.
- "Christ Formed in You" by Brian G. Hedges
- "Abide in Christ" by Andrew Murray and Bo Stevens

1.4 Pray

2 The Gospel Begins with God

2.1 The Gospel Begins with God

- Psalm 103
- Psalm 104
- Psalm 23: “The Lord is my”

2.2 Summary: What can we say about God?

3 Growing in the Gospel: John 15

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Election: Beginning with the End in Mind

- John 15:16

3.3 Justification: How We Become God’s Elect?

- John 15:1-6

3.3.1 The Vinedresser as Judge (15:1)

- God is Good and Just
- Condemnation for the Bad (2a, 6)
- Reward for the Good (2b, 5)

3.3.2 Apart from Christ

- Gen 6:5, 8:21
- Eph 2:1-3
- Joel 10:1-2
- Psalm 80:7-19

3.3.3 In Christ

- The True Vine
 - At the Cross
 - Substitution: 1 Peter 3:18
 - Propitiation. Rom 3:25
- The beauty of propitiation is that our just and holy God is more satisfied with the obedience and death of Christ than he is grieved and angered by our God-belittling sins. –Brian Hedges*
- Redemption. Eph 1:7-9
 - Reconciliation. Rom 5:9-11

- Turning and Trusting
- “Just be a Branch

3.4 Adoption: God's Favor Towards His Elect

- John 15:7-9
- Ask What You Will
 - Matthew 7:7-11
- Romans 8:13-17

3.4.1 The Father

3.4.2 Relationship

3.5 Transformation: Fruit Flowing from Election, Justification, and Adoption

- John 15:10-15, 17

The gospel is not just the minimum required doctrine necessary to enter the kingdom, but the way we make all progress in the kingdom. We are not justified by the gospel and then sanctified by obedience, but the gospel is the way we grow and are renewed. It is the solution to each problem, the key to each closed door, the power through every barrier.

Tim Keller .

- The Transformed Life (10-12)
- Because of What Christ has Done (13)
- Flowing from Who we are in Christ (14-15)
 - Friends Have Revelation
 - 2 Cor 3:16-18
 - 2 Peter 1:1—21
 - 2 Tim 3:14-17
- Flowing from election (16)

3.5.1 The Gardener

4 Application (What now?)

4.1 The Gospel Changes The Basis for Our Acceptance

- Believe that you are accepted based on Christ work, not your own
- Our sin against God is worse than we can fathom. God's love for us is greater than we can fathom
- Leading Metrics vs. Lagging Metrics

4.2 The Gospel Changes The Motivation for Growth

- Abiding in Christ means change Not to get acceptance, because we have been acceptance
- Abiding in Christ means change Not for Grace, from Grace

4.3 The Gospel Changes the Nature of Our Obedience

- No longer fearful slaves, Adopted as Son

4.4 The Gospel Changes our Heart for Christ

Without the engagement of the heart, we do not really worship. The engagement of the heart in worship is the coming alive of the feelings and emotions and affections of the heart. Where feelings for God are dead, worship is dead. True worship must include inward feelings that reflect the worth of God's glory. If this were not so, the word hypocrite would have no meaning. But there is such a thing as hypocrisy—going through outward motions (like singing, praying, giving, reciting), which signify affections of the heart that are not there. "These people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." –John Piper

- Prov 4:23-27
- Mark 7:20-23
- Psalm 51: 10
- Ezek 36:25-27
- Give God your Heart
 - Give God our Admiration in Christ
 - Give God our Hopes in Christ (Ps 33:18, 146:5)
 - Give God our Desires in Christ (Ps 27:4, 42:1-2)
 - Make God our Joy in Christ (Ps 33:1, 37:14, Phil 4:4)
 - Hate evil as God hates evil in Christ (Ps 97:10, 1 Cor 3:6)
 - Mourn over sin as God mourns over sin (Ps 34:18, 51:17, Matt 5:4)
 - Give God Thanks for His goodness in Christ (Col 3:15, Eph 5:20, 1 Thess 5:18)
 - Have Compassion as God has compassion in Christ (Col 3:12, Matt 5:7)
 - Have Zeal for God's work in Christ (Rom 12:11, Titus 2:14)
 - Love God and Others in Christ (Matt 22:37-40, Gal 5:14)

5 Summary

- Abide in Christ
- "Just Be a Branch"