

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINARS

SESSION 6 NOTES: GROWTH

Grow your life in the Spirit through prayer, study, service, and community.

I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

In order to grow in the life of the Spirit, we have to make use of the basic means of growth

- Being baptized in the Spirit is only a beginning; the power that comes from the Holy Spirit makes us grow, but we need to keep in contact with Christ in order for the Holy Spirit to keep strengthening us. Prayer, study, service and community are means to growth, ways of staying in contact with Christ.
- The Christian life is not something we live on our own, but with the rest of the Christian people. Among other things, this especially means regular participation in the liturgy of the church.



The Christian life can be pictured as a wheel. The rim of the wheel represents the Christian's daily life. The hub of a wheel is the source of power and direction for the whole wheel. It holds the wheel together. The hub of the Christian life is Christ himself (on the throne, the center). In order to transmit the power and direction from the hub to the rim, spokes are needed. Some spokes in the Christian life are prayer, study, service and community. These are means to put our whole life in contact with Christ, so that he can transform it with his power and directions.

We should spend time in prayer every day

- Personal relationships (friendships) don't grow without two people spending time together, so we have to spend time with the Lord to grow in our relationship with him. We can expect the Lord to speak to us and reveal himself to us if we give him a chance.
- Set aside time every day for prayer and scripture reading: decide on a particular time and place. The Church's Daily Office of prayer can be helpful

We should be part of a Christian community/prayer group

- We have to get together regularly with a group of Christians with whom we can grow in what we've found. Community is not an optional extra, it is essential to the life of the Spirit.
- God's plan is for us to come to him with others, in a body. The Holy Spirit works through others to build us up—this is what spiritual gifts are. The result of Pentecost was to create a community of Christians (Acts 2:41-47).
- Church life as it exists in most parishes is not enough. To grow in the life of the Spirit we need to get together with Christians who have experienced the same thing we have. The Lord does not want us to leave the Church, but to become more active, better members.
- Although Parish liturgies may leave much to be desired, we can have confidence that, as the church is renewed, the parish and the liturgy can become all that they are meant to be. We are not to become critical, but we should participate as servants, looking for the ways that the new life in us can be shared with others.

We should share with others what we have found

- One main form of service is to share with others what we have found ourselves.
- With our friends and family we should begin by showing them the kind of love that they can experience, by showing them the fruit of our changed lives.
- We should then share with them about the Lord as they seem open, not being too pushy or frightening them unnecessarily but not being unwilling to talk with them about the Lord.

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DAILY SCRIPTURE & REFLECTION WEEK SIX: GROWTH

Day 1

“The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call” Acts 2:39

Perhaps we still think that this promise was just for the apostolic times like a sale “For limited time only” or only for certain people. But Peter makes it clear it is for them and succeeding generations and not only those close by but those far off – we definitely qualify there! This gift is both for us... and for our families.

Day 2

“‘The time has come’ He said, ‘The Kingdom of God has come near, Repent and believe the good news!’” Mark 1:15

Repentance literally means to realize you are travelling in the wrong direction and to stop, turn around and head back the way you have come... begin to walk in a new way, a new direction. Once you have received the Holy Spirit you should no longer walk in the way you did before. The good news here is that you have been given a gift which will change your life, if you let it!

Day 3

“...no good thing does He withhold from those whose walk is blameless” Psalm 83/11

Just in case we were still not convinced that He wants to bless us with good stuff! And don't worry about that “blameless” walk, as a forgiven sinner is entirely blameless! But the experience of the Holy Spirit is just the start of all that God wishes to give you.

Day 4

“So is My word that goes out from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it” Isaiah 55:11

The Holy Spirit teaches us that we can rely on the word of God. Now as we study it, He will reveal its meaning in a whole new way: we will begin to recognise its power and life in a way we have never seen before.

Day 5

“Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go throw yourself into the sea’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen; it will be done for them” Mark 11:23

Jesus is giving us the key to working miracles here – if we believe and speak with this faith, it will be accomplished. This is because we have the God who created the universe with a word, living inside us now in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Day 6

“And these signs will accompany those who believe; In My Name they will drive out demons: they will speak in new tongues: they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all, they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well” Mark 16:17-18

This list isn't a qualifications list, i.e. “if you don't do one of them you are out” but rather something to encourage us that these things are possible now for us. Jesus is saying “The Holy Spirit makes impossible things possible for you.” But you have to give it a try - you can see why we encourage people to speak in tongues now, I hope.

Day 7

“‘Come’ He said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus.” Matthew 14:29

If we want to walk in a supernatural life then we have to get out of our boat of our comfort and security and obey Jesus when He calls us to come to Him.