

Growth – Part VI

Building Strong Branches

Chad Cogburn

25 Aug 2019

Spiritual Growth: Outline

- **Part I – Introduction:** *What is a biblical model for growth?*
- **Part II – Purpose:** *What is the biblical purpose for growth?*
- **Part III – Hindrances to Growth** *(Parable of soils)*
- **Part IV – Good Ground** *(Parable of soils Cont.)*
- **Part V – Strong Roots:** *Rooted in Faith*
- **Part VI – Building Strong Branches:** *Add to your faith...*

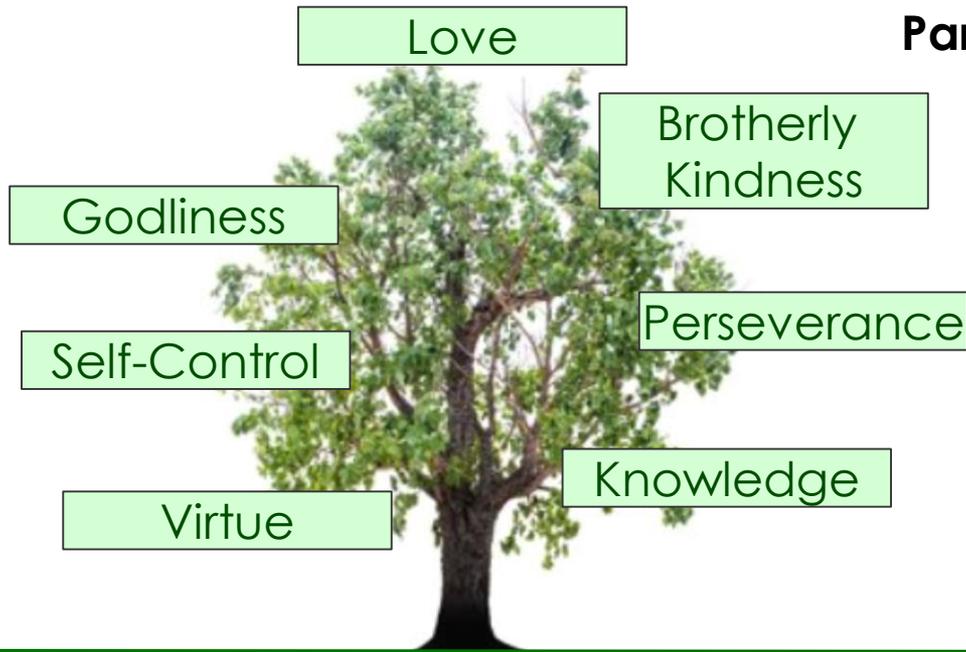
Biblical Model of Growth

Psalm 1:1-4 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

- Righteous are like a tree; strong, growing, rooted
- Planted next to water, the life giving stream of the Holy Spirit flows out(John 7:38)



Review Part V: Strong Roots



Part VI: Building Strong Branches

2 Pet 1:8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Roots of Faith

Rooted & Grounded in Love (Eph 3:17)

Rooted & Grounded in Christ (Col 2:7)

Jesus the Living Water (John 4:10-14)

Power of God (1 Cor 2:5)

Partakers of His Divine Power/Nature (2 Pet 1:3-4)

Main Text: 2 Peter 1:1-9

Partakers of the Divine Nature

2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

Tree Known by its Fruit

Matt 12:33 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. 34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

- ▶ A tree is know by what type of fruit grows on it
- ▶ Before good fruit can grow, the tree must first be “made” good; (sanctification & purification)
- ▶ “Good treasure of his heart” – spiritual bank account of the person
- ▶ 2 levels of fruit
 - ▶ That which the Spirit produces and given to people
 - ▶ That which people produce to be seen by others

2 Levels of Fruit

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

- ▶ Fruits of the Spirit are sown into our lives (live in the Spirit)
- ▶ That fruit is then evident through our conduct (walk in the Spirit)
 - ▶ The fruit of the Spirit changes the nature of the person

Same pattern in **Col 2:6** As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

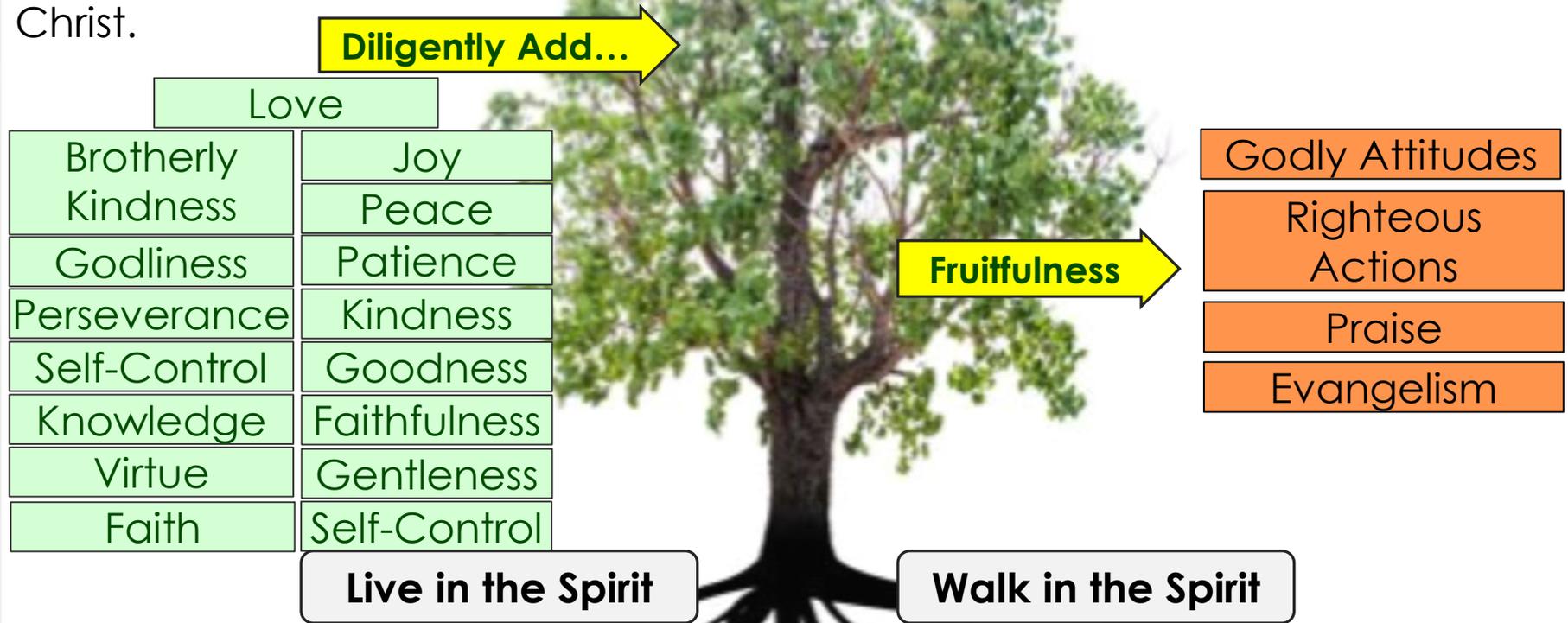
- ▶ *Received* – taken in Jesus
- ▶ *So walk* – outward conduct

Divine Nature to Fruitfulness

Building Strong Branches

2 Pet 1:8 (ERV) If all these things are in you and growing, you will never fail to be useful to God. You will produce the kind of fruit that should come from your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matt 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.



Giving all Diligence...

2 Pet 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

- ▶ “giving all diligence”: That is, making maximum effort. The Christian life is not lived to the honor of God without effort. Even though God has poured His divine power into the believer, the Christian himself is required to make every disciplined effort alongside of what God has done. (see also Phil 2:12-13; Col 1:28-29).

- MacArthur commentary

Short Discussion of God's Power vs. Man's Effort

- ▶ There's no shortage of singular topical passages
- ▶ **God's Power**

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Heb 13:20 Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Short Discussion of God's Power vs. Man's Effort

- ▶ There's no shortage of singular topical passages

- ▶ **Human Effort**

2 Tim 3:14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

Jude 1:20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

- ▶ Is the Christian life by God's Power or Human Effort?

Balance Passages

	Human Effort	God's Power
Col 1:29	To this end I also labor, striving	according to His working which works in me mightily.
Phil 2:12-13	12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling	13 <u>for it is God</u> who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.
2 Pet 1:2-5	Vs 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith...	Vs 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness
Phil 1:6, 22	Vs 22 But if <i>I</i> live on in the flesh, this <i>will mean</i> fruit from <i>my</i> labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.	Vs 6 He who has begun a good work in you will complete <i>it</i> until the day of Jesus Christ;

Practical Example of God's Power Working through Man's Effort

Luke 5:1 So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, 2 and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. 3 Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. 4 When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." 5 But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." 6 And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. 7 So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" 9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." 11 So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

Power
Power

Effort

Effort

Glory

Summary Passage

God's Power vs. Human Effort

Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

- ▶ The distinction (in perspective) between human effort and God's power begins to fade as we abide in Christ more every day.

Phil 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- ▶ Now, how does this apply to building strong branches?
 - ▶ God has already given us his divine power...everything we need for life and Godliness...to be partakers of his divine nature. 2 Pet 1:3-4.
 - ▶ Now we have a part! 2 Pet 1:5

Giving all Diligence, Add to your Faith...

2 Pet 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

- **Add-**to furnish fully, to give lavishly and generously
- **Virtue-**moral excellence which is demonstrated in life
- **Knowledge-**truth properly comprehended and applied
- **Self-Control-**restrained, disciplined thought and actions, as with athlete's training
- **Perseverance-**endurance in doing what is right; spiritual staying power that will die before it gives in
- **Godliness-**to live reverently, loyally, and obediently toward God
- **Brotherly Kindness** (Phladelphía)- brotherly affection, mutual sacrifice for one another
- **Love** (agape)- Unconditional love; see 1 Cor 13

How do we Add to our Faith?

1 Tim 4:6 If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed. 7 But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

1. Be nourished in the words of faith (vs6)
2. Reject deception (vs7)
3. Exercise Godliness (vs7-8)
4. Profitable in all things, both now and later (vs8)

1 Tim 6:6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

How do we Add to our Faith?

1 Tim 6:11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

1. Flee wickedness
2. Pursue righteousness, godliness, etc.
3. Fight the good fight

How do we Add to our Faith?

Seek and it will be Given

Matt 7:7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

- ▶ God is faithful to give
- ▶ We must ask, seek & knock!
- ▶ Be specific, be intentional, be focused. For example:
 - ▶ September: Virtue
 - ▶ October: Knowledge
 - ▶ November: Self-control

How do we Add to our Faith?

Sow → Reap

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

- ▶ Sow = plant the seeds
- ▶ Reap = pick the fruit/produce
 - ▶ The way we live life now determines where we spend eternity
 - ▶ Pay attention to the seeds we are sowing today
 - ▶ Flesh or spirit?
 - ▶ Eternal value?
 - ▶ Opportunity cost?

Final Admonitions

2 Pet 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

- Vs. 8 is a promise! Growth in these graces will produce growth and fruit (barren = idle, lazy)
- Vs. 9 Do we lack of these graces? Warning!

2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? - unless indeed you are disqualified.

Summary Healthy Branches

- ▶ Partake of God's Divine Nature and Grow!
 - ▶ Add to you faith...
 - ▶ Exercise...
 - ▶ Pursue...
 - ▶ Ask, Seek, Knock



Matt 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.