

# Growth – Part VII

## *Bearing Fruit*

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29 Sep 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 (Mark 3)*
- **Part IV – Good Ground:** *Parable of soils Cont. (Mark 3)*
- **Part V – Strong Roots:** *Rooted in Faith (2 Pet 1:1-9)*
- **Part VI – Building Strong Branches:** *Add to your faith...(2 Pet 1:1-9)*
- **Part VII – Bearing Fruit:** *(John 15:1-8)*

# 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, planted by the water (Holy Spirit - John 7:37-39)
- Healthy trees bear fruit according to their type.

# Growth Starts with Strong Roots of Faith

- *Rooted & Grounded in Love (Eph 3:17)*
- *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)*
- *Rooted & Grounded in Christ (Col 2:5-7)*

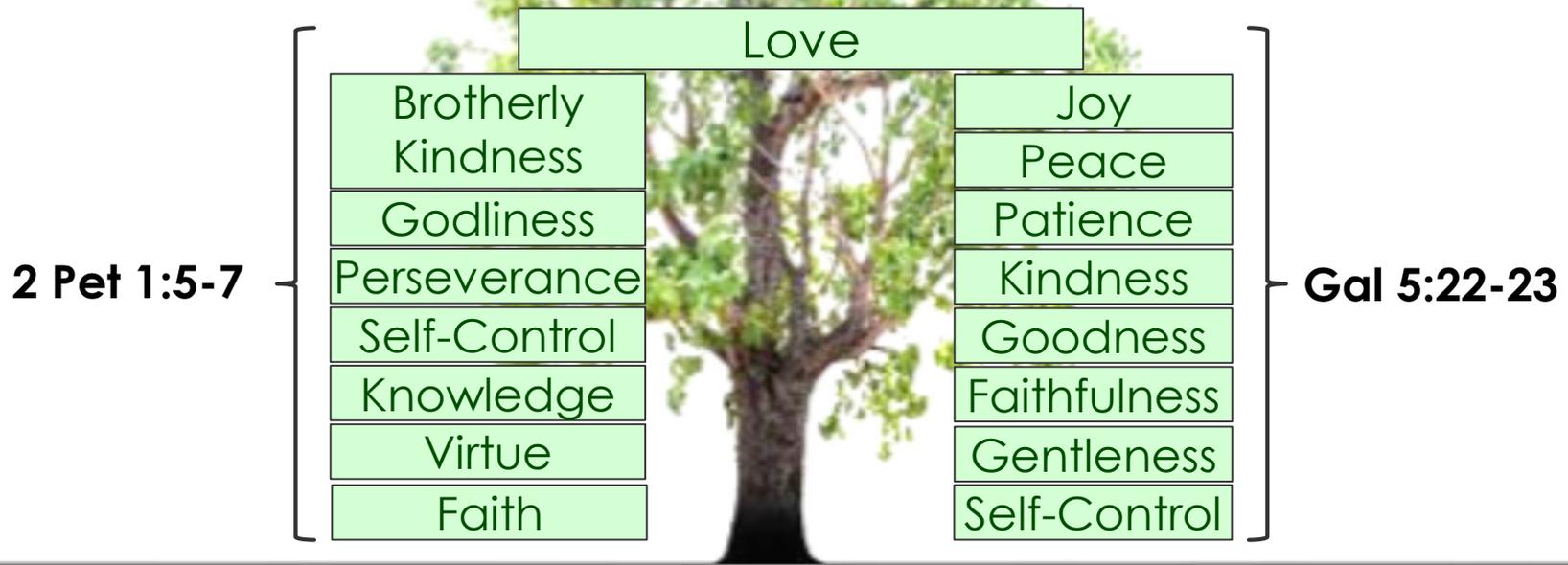


**Col 2:5** For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

**Roots of Faith**

# Review Part VI: Building Strong Branches

**2 Pet 1:3** 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...



# Summary Part VI: Healthy Branches

- ▶ Partake of God's divine nature and grow healthy branches!
  - ▶ 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.

- ▶ Healthy Branches Produce Healthy Fruit!

**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.

# Main Text John 15:1-8

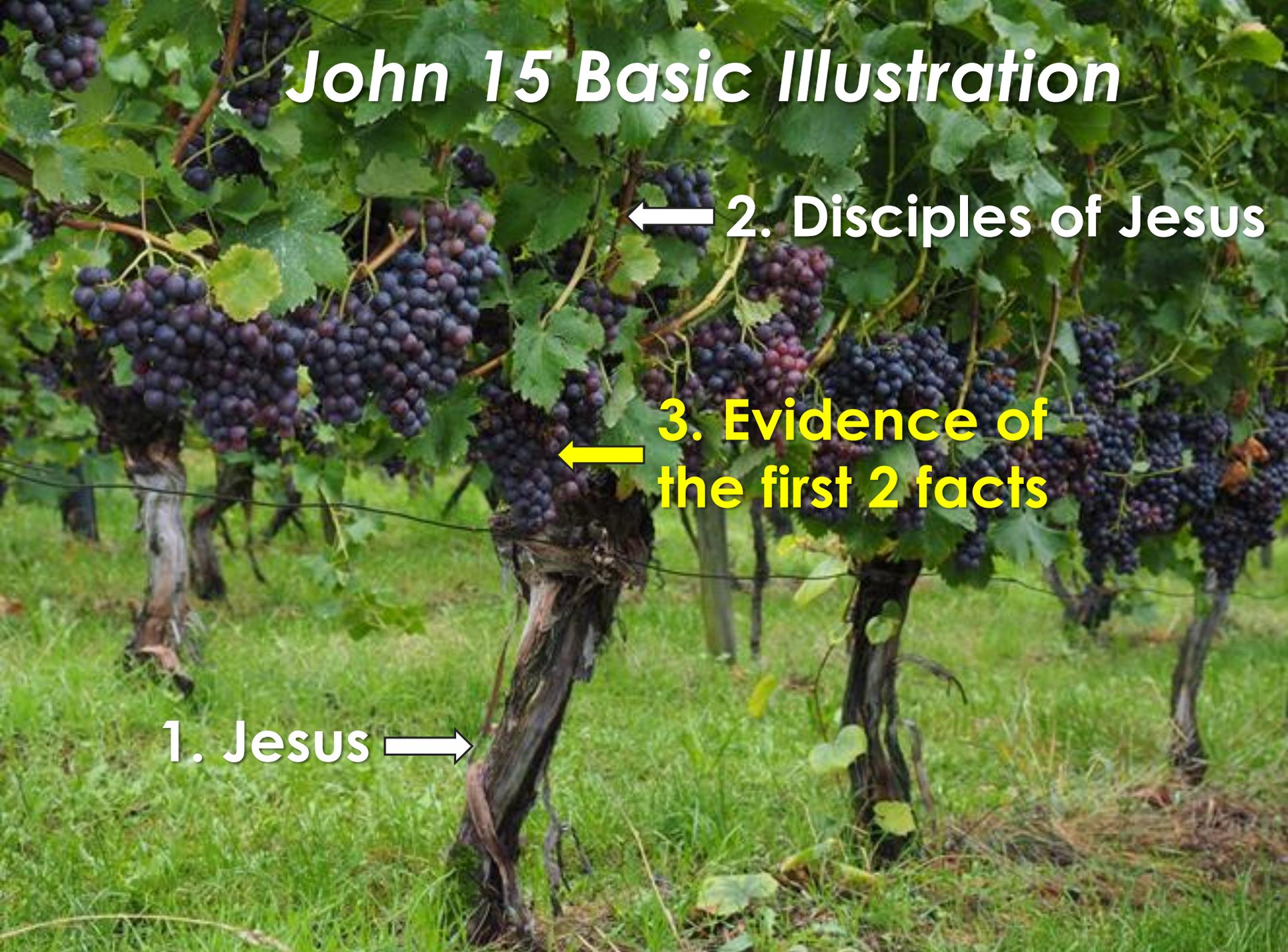
**John 15:1** "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 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. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

# *John 15 Basic Illustration*

← 2. Disciples of Jesus

← 3. Evidence of  
the first 2 facts

1. Jesus →



# John 15:1,2 & 6 – Judgment & Discipline

**John 15:1** "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

- Judgment of fruitless branches
- Discipline leads to increased growth and fruit

**Heb 12:11** Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

- God disciplines those he loves (Heb 12:6)
- Do not despise discipline!

# John 15:3 – Already Clean?

**John 15:3** You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

► Possibly referring to Lev 19?

**Lev 19:23** 'When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. It shall not be eaten. 24 But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD. 25 And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I am the LORD your God.

► The disciples had been with Jesus for 3 years, now they were ready to bear fruit that was "...holy, a praise to the LORD".

# John 15:4-5 – Abide in Me

**John 15:4** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 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.

- Branches do not bear fruit of themselves (exc. Aaron's rod)
- Abide: G3306 meno - To remain, abide, dwell, live.
  - Occurs 120 times in NT; 67 in John's letters
  - Vine and branches teaching only recorded in John
  - Possibly linked to John's unique relationship to Jesus as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:7)
- Aspects of Abiding in the Vine:
  - Connection: life-giving union
  - Dependence: branch derives food and power from vine
  - Continuance: branch must remain on the vine

# Abiding in Christ

- We died to ourselves → Live and dwell in Christ

**Col 3:3** For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

**Act 17:28** for in Him [the Lord] we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

**1John 4:12** No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

- Receive a new identity
- Through the Holy Spirit, we are in Him and He in us.

# John 15:7-8 – Bearing Fruit to Glorify

**John 15:7** If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

- Vs. 7 Abiding in Christ puts us in His presence and even our prayers are fruitful. This gives God even more opportunities for glory!
- **Joh 14:13** And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

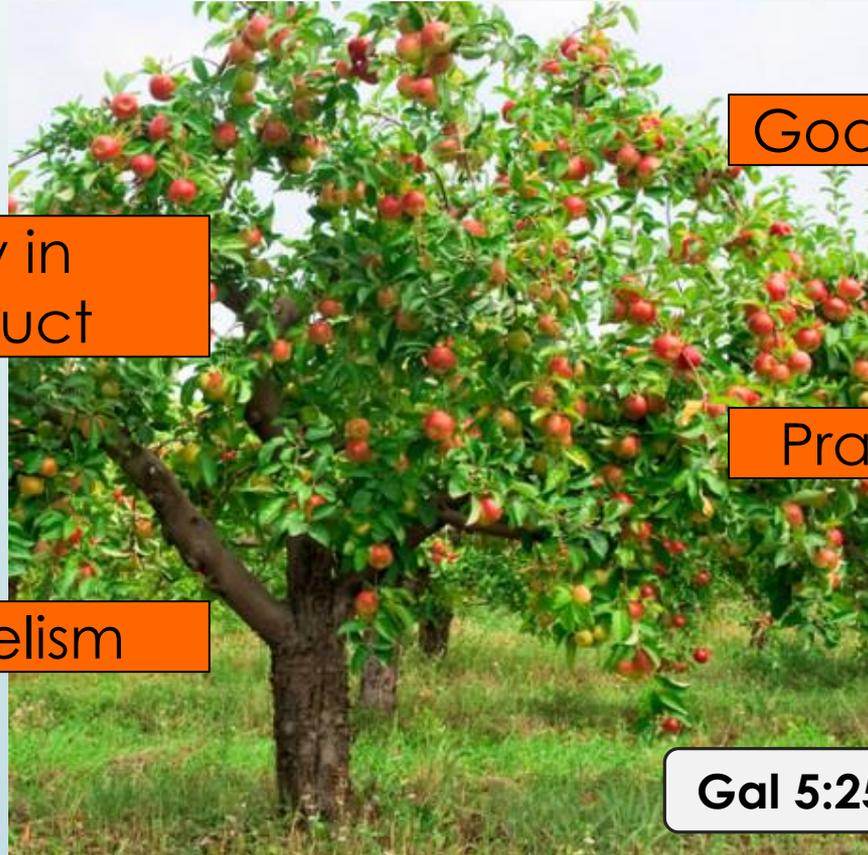
**John 15:8** By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

- The grand finale: God's glory!
- Bearing Fruit to God's glory the trademark of a disciple.

# Four Types of Fruit

- Recall that Man's Purpose (from Part II) is to Glorify God
- God choose good fruit to accomplish this

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



Godly Attitudes

Purity in  
Conduct

Praise to God

Evangelism

**Gal 5:25** "Walk" in the Spirit

# Types of Fruit – Godly Attitudes

**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.

► Fruit of Spirit become attitudes from which we act.

**John 13:35** By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.“

► Unity and love are testimonies to Jesus and his teachings

**Phil 2:3** Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus

► Humility & selflessness reflect mind of Christ

# Types of Fruit – Purity in Conduct

**1 Pet 2:11** Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

**James 3:13** Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.

**1 Pet 1:15** but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,

► Godly conduct reflects on God's holiness

# Types of Fruit – Praise

**Heb 13:15** Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

- ▶ Praise and thanksgiving a sweet sacrifice, pleasing to God
- ▶ One of the trademarks of God's people (OT & NT)
- ▶ Acts 16:25 Paul and Silas imprisoned...praying and singing, leading to the conversion of the Philippian jailer

**Col 4:2** Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;

- ▶ Constancy of prayer and thanksgiving

**1 Thess 5:16-18** Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

# Types of Fruit – Evangelism

- ▶ Parable of lost sheep

**Matt 18:13** And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. 14 Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

- ▶ God rejoices when even one sinner turns to Him
- ▶ Paul's evangelistic efforts referred as fruit

**Rom 1:13** Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles.

**1 Cor 16:15** I urge you, brethren; you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints

# Example Church: Thessalonians

**2 Thess 1:1** Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, 4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,...

11 Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, 12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Thessalonian church held up as an example;
- Faith growing, love abounding, powerful work from faith, God glorified

# Path to Glory

## Bear Fruit for God's Glory

**John 15:8** By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

## Partakers of the Divine Nature

**Eph 4:15-16** but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head, Christ,

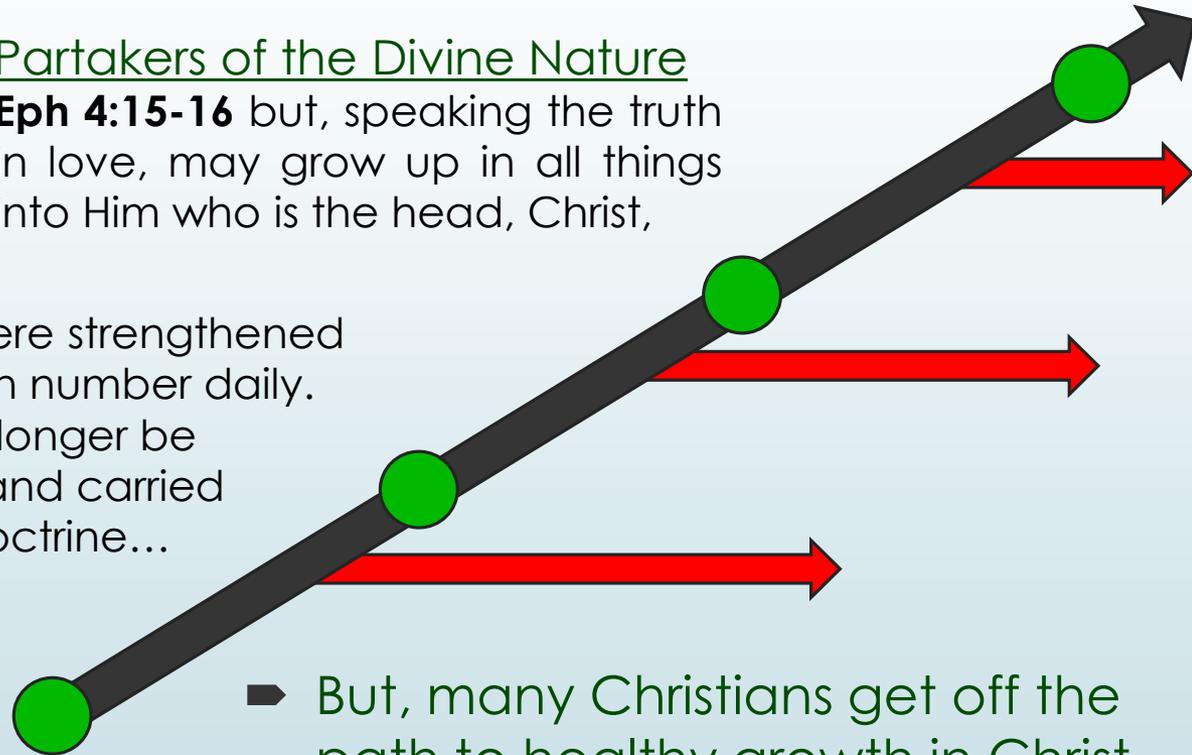
## Strengthened Faith

**Act 16:5** So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

**Eph 4:14** that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine...

## Conversion

**1 Pet 2:2** as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,



- But, many Christians get off the path to healthy growth in Christ.
- Fail to fulfill the purpose for which we were made

**Eph 2:10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

# Closing Thoughts

- Godly Fruit has many forms and types
- Ranging from Patience to Conversion
- Message is not “Gotta do more”, but rather...

**2 Pet 3:18** but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

- Personal growth in Christ; take responsibility for it

**Phil 2:12** 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;

- May God Receive the Glory!