
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES
Institute in the Foundations of Church Leadership
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ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN GROWTH – PART 1

Session 2

INTRODUCTION

Accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is the first step in a great journey towards becoming more like Christ. This session will focus on the different elements of becoming more like Christ as listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7:

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith, goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.”

The reason we want these things (v 8):

“For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

I. FAITH—Accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior

A. “Faith” means to have a trusting commitment to God. (Romans 10:8-9)

B. How to become a Christ follower: “That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” (Romans 10:9-10)

1. Who is Jesus?

- a. God told the virgin Mary the name of His son (Luke 1:31)
- b. Jesus is God (John 1:1; 10:22-30)
- c. God required a blood sacrifice for sin. (Genesis 3:21; Leviticus 1:3-5; Matthew 27:27-44)
- c. Jesus loves you so much that he took God’s wrath for our sin upon himself. All you must do is accept him as your Lord.
 - i. None are righteous (Romans 3:10)
 - ii. For all have sinned (Romans 3:23)
 - iii. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)
 - iv. Christ died for us (Romans 5:8)
 - v. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. (Romans 10:9-10)

C. “Lord” means one who has power.

1. Jesus is Lord. (Philippians 2:6-11)
2. Through him all things were made. (John 1:1-5)
3. A person must believe in their heart that God raised Jesus from the dead.
 - Many people saw Jesus after he was raised from the dead.
 - i. The Roman guards
 - A guard was posted at the tomb to ensure no one could steal Jesus’ body. (Matthew 27:62-66)
 - The guards reported to the chief priests that Jesus was alive. (Matthew 28:11-15)
 - ii. The women who went to the tomb the next morning were told that Jesus was alive.
 - An angel of the Lord told them. (Matthew 28:1-10)
 - Mary Magdalene was told by two angels and Jesus.

(John 20:11-18)

- iii. Jesus appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. (Luke 24:13-35)
- iv. Jesus appeared to the disciples and many more people.
 - o John 20:24-29
 - o John 21:1-23
 - o 1 Corinthians 15:6
 - o Acts 7:55
 - o Acts 9:3-6
 - o Revelation 1:10-19

II. GOODNESS

“...add to your faith, goodness;...”

A. “Goodness” means to recognize the good things God has done and is doing in the lives of His people, and then do what He does.

- 1. Scripture affirms that God is and does good.
 - a. Only God is truly good. (Mark 10:18-22)
 - b. God works for the good of those who love him. (Romans 8:28)
 - c. God is continually working in us. (Philippians 1:6)

B. Doing good things for others:

- 1. We should practice goodness so God is praised. (Matthew 5:16)
- 2. We should do good things because it pleases the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 6:7-10)
- 3. God created us to do good works. (Ephesians 2:10)
- 4. God rewards those who serve Him (Ephesians 6:5-8)
- 5. God is pleased when we help other people. (I Timothy 2:1-4)

C. Serving Others

- 1. To do good means to seek out and serve the needs of others. (1 Corinthians 10:23-24)
 - a. Tell other about the good news of Jesus. (Acts 18:24-28)
 - b. Choose to love those who hate you. (Luke 6:27)
 - c. Use the gifts God has given you to help others. (Acts 9:36-39)
 - d. Use your resources to help others. (1 Kings 17:7-16)
- 2. Choose who you will serve
 - Joshua 24:15
 - 1 Samuel 7:3
 - Matthew 6:24
- 3. Choose how you will serve
 - Matthew 20:26-28
 - Psalm 2:11
 - 1 Samuel 12:20-21
- 4. Choose your attitude
 - Philippians 2:5-8
 - Ephesians 4:22-24
 - 2 Timothy 2:24-26

III. KNOWLEDGE

“...and to goodness, knowledge;...”

A. “Knowledge” means to learn more about God.

- Psalm 119:65-68
- Psalm 139:5-6

B. Study God’s word to gain knowledge

- 1. How to study God’s word.
 - a. Pray
 - i. Pray continuously (Ephesians 6:18)
 - ii. Pray in the Spirit (Jude 1:19-20)

- iii. Ask God for wisdom (James 1:5-6)
- b. Read/listen to the Bible (Exodus 24:7; Deuteronomy 17:18-20; Matthew 21:16, 42)
 - i. Read/listen to the Bible from cover to cover
 - ii. Read/listen to it again ☺
- c. Study the Bible (Ezra 7:10; Ecclesiastes 1:13)

There are 66 books in the Bible. When you are studying scripture, find out the following things:

 - i. Who wrote the book?
 - ii. Who were they writing to?
 - iii. When was the book written?
 - iv. Why were they writing the book?
 - v. What is the main theme of the book?
- iv. Read the scripture verses before and after the scripture verse you are interested in so you understand what the writer is intending to say.
- d. Meditate on the Bible (Psalms 1: 2; 7:12; 119:15, 27, 99, 148; 143:5)
 - i. Set aside time in each day to study and think about the scripture passage.
 - ii. Ask God for his wisdom and insight into that passage of scripture.
 - iii. If you have the opportunity, read what others have written about that passage.
 - iv. Pray again, for God's wisdom and insight into the passage.
- e. Obey the Bible (Luke 11:28; John 14:23-25; Romans 2:12-13)
 - i. Ask the Lord to show you what you need to change in your life.
 - ii. Make the change.
- f. Share what you have learned.
 - i. Use your knowledge to help others. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)
 - ii. Learning takes a lifetime. (Ephesians 4:11-13)
 - iii. Have the right attitude. (Philippians 2:1-5)

IV. SELF-CONTROL

“...and to knowledge, self-control;...”

A. “Self-control” means to have a calm approach to life by controlling your personal desires.

- Galatians 5:22-23
- 1 Peter 1:13
- 1 Peter 5:8

B. Personal desires

1. “Desire” is something you want for yourself (James 1:13-15)

- Temptation

i. Temptation comes from the devil. (Matthew 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:5)

ii. God does not tempt us. (James 1:13)

1) Matthew 6:13 says, “...And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” God can *test* us (Exodus 16:4; 2 Chronicles 32:31), but He cannot *tempt* us into sin. When we are tempted by our own sinful nature. (James 1:14).

2. The results of sin (Romans 6:12; Ephesians 2:1-3)

a. Sin is rebellion against God. (Psalm 106:40-43; Isaiah 59:12-13)

b. If you say “Yes” to the temptation, you have chosen to do something against God (you have sinned). (Isaiah 59:12-13)

c. Death is the result of sin (rebellion).

i. Physical death

1) After Adam and Eve rebelled against God, God limited the number of years each person's body would live. (Genesis 1:22; Psalm 39:4-5; Psalm 90:10; Psalm 139:16)

- ii. Spiritual death of the unbeliever
 - 1) A person who physically dies before coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, will eternally be separated from God. (Isaiah 59:1-2; Luke 16:19-31 [26])

C. Set aside your personal desires

- 1. We must choose how we will respond to temptation.
 - a. Pray that you are not put into situations (lead) in which you will be tempted. (Matthew 6:13)
 - b. If you find yourself in a situation where you are tempted to sin (do something that God has asked you not to), resist the devil who is tempting you. Stand firm in the faith. (1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7-8)
 - c. Choose to be aware of what is happening around you (temptations presented), and thank God as He brings to your mind what you need to do to say “No” to the temptation. (Hebrews 2:18)
 - d. God will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, and He will also provide a way out. Look for it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - e. When does temptation turn to sin? (Matthew :27-28)

D. Be self-controlled

- 1. Take control of your thoughts (be alert). (1 Peter 5:8)
 - Choose what you will think about. (Philippians 4:8; Psalm 119:148; 143:5; Joshua 1:8)
- 2. Take control of your tongue (speech). (James 1:26; Psalm 34:12-13; Proverbs 21:23)
- 3. Take control of your actions. (1 Peter 1:13)
 - “Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes...” (Ephesians 6:11-18)

E. Consider your traditions

- 1. Do not follow cultural or home traditions when they contradict God’s word. (Matthew 15:2-9; Mark 7:6-13; Colossians 2:8)
- 2. Instead, consider every act and thought and compare it to God’s word. (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 2:14-16)
- 3. When you find that you are not doing things God’s way, stop. Choose to follow God’s way only. (Joshua 24:15)

CONCLUSION

Continued in Session 3.