

“And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.”

– Luke 5:17

# Spiritual Maturity

## The Process of Spiritual Growth

Part 3

# Recap

- Spiritual maturity is necessary for all believers
- Misconceptions about Spiritual Maturity
  - Maturity develops naturally
  - Maturity by association
  - Maturity comes instantaneously
  - Maturity is designed for the elect few
  - Maturity is for adults or elderly
- Process of Spiritual Maturity
  - Invitation
  - **Detachment**
  - **Assessing Value**
  - **Ascending the heights**

# Process of Spiritual Growth: Detachment<sup>1</sup>

- Abraham
  - Detachment from our closest relationships
  - Detachment from earthly possessions



# Process of Spiritual Growth: Detachment<sup>2</sup>

- David
  - Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.” (1 Sam. 17:45)
  - He learned as a shepherd to lean on God’s strength



# Process of Spiritual Growth: Detachment<sup>3</sup>

- St. Paul
  - “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Cor. 12:9-10)
  - Detachment of the ego



# Process of Spiritual Growth: [Assessing Value](#)

- David

- “The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord’s anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.”

(1 Sam. 24:6)

- Obedience to God rather than revenge
- If we want growth we must be prepared to make sacrifices or trade-offs



# Process of Spiritual Growth: **Assessing Value**

- Sacrifices / Trade-offs

- 1. Trade affirmation for accomplishment**

- Trade getting other people's approval for fulfilling God's commandment and enriching your relationship with Him

- 2. Trade security for significance**

- Martyrs
- **“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”** (Ps. 116:15)
- Trade our comfort for submission to God (e.g., St. Paul's conversion)





# Process of Spiritual Growth: **Assessing Value**

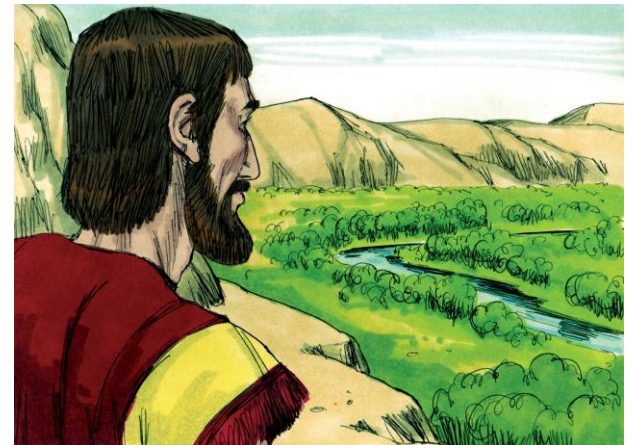
- **Sacrifices / Trade-offs**

3. Trade personal pleasure for spiritual growth

- EX: Abraham lets Lot choose his land

4. Trade what is acceptable for the pursuit of perfection

5. Trade your **work** for God for a **walk** with God



# Process of Spiritual Growth: **Ascending the Heights**

- The higher we climb the smaller the world looks
- “**Who shall ascend to the mountain of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy place?”  
(Ps. 23:3)**
- Tools for growth
  - Prayer/fasting, Scripture, alms, service, charitable deeds
  - Practice them prayerfully and consistently



# Principles of Spiritual Growth

- He who does not grow will likely revert
- Spiritual growth is unlimited because perfection is unlimited
  - EX: Like pursuing the horizon (HH Pope Shenouda)
- Growth will require seriousness and commitment
- Expect growing pains
  - EX: Moses, David, Peter, Thomas, Disciples

## 1 Corinthians 9:24-25:

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.”

# Summary

- Growth is necessary for maturing
- Misconceptions
  - Maturity develops naturally/automatically
  - Maturity by association
  - Maturity comes instantaneously
  - Maturity is designed for elect few
- Process
  - Invitation
  - Detachment (relationships (if needed), possessions, ego)
  - Assessing Value
  - Ascending the Heights
- Principles
  - He who does not grow will likely revert
  - Spiritual growth is unlimited
  - Growth requires seriousness and commitment
  - Expect growing pains