

# The Foundation of Growth in Christ

Lesson Two:

# **What Is Growth in Christ?**

## Parable of the Soils (Mark 4:13-20)

What happens when a person comes to believe in and confess Jesus as their Savior and Lord?

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come. Now all these things are from God....”*  
(2 Cor. 5:17-18a)

Your soul's condition in relationship to God has changed entirely. You are not the same-souled person you once were, so that your old-souled self is done away with and your new-souled self is now put in right relationship with God

*“In reference to your **former** manner of life [the old-souled self], **you lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with **deceitful lusts**, and that **you be renewed in the spirit of your mind**, and **put on the new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”*  
(Eph. 4:22-23)

- The degree to which you **expressed** this reality about you is not the point.
- Some people express a horrible history of this old-souled, Satan-owned spiritual rebellion. And some people, who have the same lostness of soul, express that sinfulness to a lesser degree.
- Ephesians 4:17-19

Spiritual death keeps your soul in **darkness**; this spiritual darkness is why unbelievers suffer in spiritual **blindness**.

But that was your **former** life. So why do you **still** sin in what you think, say, and do?

There is a spiritual **past**-tense truth about you, and there is a spiritual **present**-tense truth about you.

That is what Paul is describing in Ephesians 4:20-24 about your conversion from this former **unbeliever** (vv. 17-19) to this **now new self**, “*which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*”

As this new spiritual **person**, your spiritual **progress** in Christ involves you in the spiritual **process** of learning to do what is already true of you in relationship to Jesus.

You do all of these in relationship with Jesus, and you do it in the context of church life — you share in the lives of others who, like you, are battling sin while walking with Christ.

Now that you have spiritual life in Christ, you need a steady diet of biblical spiritual nourishment leading to spiritual growth in Christ.

Having been regenerated, reborn, redeemed to new life by grace through faith in Christ, you need to grow up into who God has saved you to be in your new relationship with His Son. The penalty of sin has been paid for you, and the power of sin has been broken for you.

You don't have to earn anything — you do not have to get Jesus to love and forgive you, to be patient with you, or to convince Jesus that you really belong to Him.

Your spiritual position defines *what* you grow from and what you grow to express.

Your spiritual process defines *how* you are to grow into who you are in Christ.

