

The Christian Experience: From Seed to Saint.

This chapter taken from the book *When Faith Came* by Franklin Whittenburg © 1998-2006

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Now after all those scriptures you have finally realized you are dead in Christ (Colossians 3:1-3 KJV). Now the process to resurrect you from the dead begins.

But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: (1 Corinthians 15:35,36 KJV).

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal (John 12:23,24 KJV).

In the Christian religion, if you are just coming to the foot of the cross or to the altar and stopping, then you haven't gone far enough. You have not yet been crucified with Christ. Your seed has not even started growing! How can you be resurrected from the dead unless you first die? How can you ever die at the foot of the cross? Jesus died ON the cross, not at the foot. When you come to the foot of the cross and then go back out into the world you never get to cross over to the promise land. The promise land was on the other side of the Jordan River (river of death). When does the believer die so the seed could be quickened and start growing?

I am crucified WITH Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20 KJV).

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world (Galatians 6:14 KJV).

The process of resurrecting you from the dead will end with you becoming mature, which the Bible calls "perfection". Please read the chapter "Perfecting of the Saints". When we are born of the Spirit when we are first saved, then we are newborn babies in a spiritual world and also have to grow in the spirit and knowledge of our Heavenly Father just like Jesus (Luke 2:40 KJV). The individual believer becomes a man-child. Some believe this term "man-child" is referring to the corporate church, I believe that it is referring to the individual believer. A man-child is a natural man and a spiritual child in the same body.

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:3 KJV).

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby (1 Peter 2:2 KJV).

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe (Hebrews 5:12,13 KJV).

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? (1 Corinthians 3:1-3 KJV).

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him (Luke 2:40 KJV).

Because you are “in the Spirit” in knowledge only, you are starting out as a spiritual baby in a brand new world and a brand new life, which means you now have to learn about this new spiritual world.

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in KNOWLEDGE after the image of him that created him: (Colossians 3:9,10 KJV).

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:1-3 KJV).

Before you can do the Fathers business, you must learn the Fathers business.

Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father (Galatians 4:1,2 KJV).

The Bible says the “beginning of wisdom” is the fear of the Lord (Psalms 111:10). If the “beginning of wisdom” is the fear of the Lord, then the “end of wisdom” should be the love of the Lord!

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this

world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us (1 John 4:16-19 KJV).

Ideally you should be hearing the voice of Jesus in the words of scripture and you should have received a spiritual understanding, so all I am going to do is share some of what I have discovered in my growth in this spiritual world. This study is meant to exhort and edify the new believer and confirm the things that the Holy Spirit maybe showing you.

In this study I would like to explain the transformation process that a believer goes through to get from the point of first truly believing in Christ (babe in Christ) to the “fullness of the stature of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). This is the growing process that all Christians go through and I believe that it is the most misunderstood. You will never get there by your sheer determination to get there. I also would like to talk about the seed that is planted in the believer. If you listen to what is being preached in churches today, the only seed spoken of as relating to a Christian anymore is money given to ministries. The seed that I am going to explain is a seed that is sown in the heart of the believer and the growing process it goes through to the point that it can produce fruit. This seed has nothing to do with money, but it has everything to do with the believer in Jesus Christ. What is the seed?

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ (Galatians 3:16 KJV).

The Bible also says the seed is the Word of God and the Bible calls Jesus the Word made flesh. How is the seed planted? When someone first hears the Gospel and truly surrenders all to Jesus, there is a union formed between the believer and Christ through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit then plants a seed in the heart. That seed is Christ. All the seed needs to grow Christ in the believer is to be planted and watered. Contrary to popular belief today, you do not lose your Christianity or the Holy Spirit each night and have to rededicate your life again each day when you wake up. In fact you do most of your spiritual growing at night when you are in natural sleep. When Paul said, “I die daily”, he was referring to the outward man perishing as the inward man is growing. “I” of self is being replaced by Jesus in the believer. Like John said, “I must decrease and He (Jesus) must increase (John 3:30). You do not replant the seed each day or it never will have time to spring up and grow! If you have to keep replanting the seed each day that may mean your life is actually stony ground and the seed can never take root (Matthew 13:18-23 KJV)!

And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how (Mark 4:26,27 KJV).

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6,7 KJV).

There is a popular analogy of an acorn that is used by many preachers to explain this unconscious growth of the believer. Inside an acorn is a whole oak tree. The acorn knows just what to do to produce an oak tree if it is just planted and watered. The seed that has been sown in the believer's heart knows just what to do to create Christ in the believer.

The Christian must first become one Spirit with Jesus Christ to become complete and reproduce. Union with God is the first step:

But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: (1 Corinthians 15:35,36 KJV).

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God (Romans 7:4 KJV).

Notice how the Bible uses this discourse about marriage to describe the believer's union to Christ. In a relationship, you can walk side by side "totally committed" to serving and loving your wife or husband all day long, but you still will never be able to reproduce until you become one with them! In like manner you can be a "follower of Jesus Christ" in total "commitment" and obedience to His cause, but you can never reproduce fruit until you become one with Him. There is a huge difference between a Christian (joined to the Lord by the spiritual newbirth) and someone who is just "committed to the cause of Christ" (i.e. Christ follower). Many religions have changed the Gospel from Jesus "is the way", too Jesus "showed the way" and reduced Jesus Christ down to nothing more than a heavenly inspired teacher that "shows us a way to God". Much like other religions supposedly "show us a way to God".

I hear so many pastors and speakers preach on "commitment" to marriage and to Christ. This is where I disagree with almost every pastor and teacher on marriage. Total "commitment" to your spouse is not true marriage, and total "commitment" to Jesus Christ is not true Christianity! There are people that have so totally "committed" their lives to their religion, all the way to the point of blowing themselves up in a crowded market place, and still are in error! Please read the study on "Marriage: Till Death Do Us Part".

Instead of an actual union of one Spirit with Jesus, Christianity is being taught today as just a covenant where you vow to be faithful to Jesus' teachings and Biblical precepts, but you remain a separate individual from Christ. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6:17,

But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17 KJV).

What I am discussing here is the personal relationship that the believer experiences with Christ when they are born again and not the great end time event known as the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, where the church as a whole body is together with Jesus. Many people know about Jesus through reading the Bible, but unless you know Jesus in a personal spiritual union then no spiritual newbirth can result. No seed was ever planted in the person's heart and no newbirth ever resulted in the person's life.

The same Holy Spirit that planted the seed in Mary for Christ to be born is the same Holy Spirit that plants the seed in our hearts for Christ to be birthed in us. Christianity is a spiritual new birth experience. When a woman is pregnant, then there are two separate beings and lives existing inside her body, the mother's life and the life of her child. Even though they both exist in one body, the child is a separate creation from the mother and carries half of the father's nature, which makes the child a totally new creation and a new life. In like manner the new spiritual man that is growing inside the Christian, when they are joined to the Lord by the Holy Spirit, is manifesting the attributes of the Father also, and is also a new creation. Paul said in Galatians 4:19, ***I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you.***

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2 Corinthians 13:5 KJV).

And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha (Romans 9:29 KJV).

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ (Galatians 3:16 KJV).

As Paul told the Galatians when he said, "I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you", the Christian experiences travail during this spiritual new birth process. I explain this travailing in birth in greater detail in the chapter "Baptism of Fire".

Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD (Jeremiah 1:4-8 KJV).

One day Jesus will tell many that he never "knew" them. Are you absolutely sure you "know" Him or do you just know about Him? If not, please read the chapter "How I Messed Up the Sinners Prayer".

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Matthew 7:23 KJV).

The Bible's use of the word "knowing" is used many times to describe the marriage union where a seed is planted.

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD (Genesis 4:1 KJV).

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God (Luke 1:34,35 KJV).

Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain (Galatians 4:8-11 KJV).

Please read the chapter “Marriage: Till Death Do We Part?” for a deeper study of the marriage relationship as compared to Christ and the believer being joined through the Holy Spirit. To understand the Christian “newbirth”, I want to first explain the difference between a Spirit, a human being, and a combination of the two, which is a spiritual being. The Bible says that God and man were totally separate beings, but they could communicate and fellowship together (Genesis 3:8-10). God is divinity, and man is humanity, but with Jesus Christ, you had a totally new creation! With Jesus, you have a divine human being. He was born of a virgin woman, but with God as his Father.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:18 KJV).

The Bible says that Jesus was the firstborn of many brethren.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren (Romans 8:29 KJV).

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, (Hebrews 2:10,11 KJV).

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God (John 20:17 KJV).

Jesus came in the flesh, but was born of the Holy Spirit or a spiritual being. This is why Jesus never had to be spiritually “born again”. Jesus was already “born of the Spirit” from the virgin Mary’s womb.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly (1 Corinthians 15:45-49 KJV).

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:14-17 KJV).

Point to Ponder: It is being taught by many today that the word “virgin” used in describing Mary does not necessarily mean “sexually pure”, but can mean simple that she was a young woman by the translation of the word, thus denying the virgin birth of Christ. I love how there are other verses that take away this argument and affirm the virgin birth. What about the verses that do not use the word “virgin” yet describe the same event!

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I KNOW NOT A MAN? (Luke 1:34 KJV).

The next verse (Luke 1 :35 KJV) explains the virgin birth and at the same time perfectly describes the born again Christian’s “spiritual newborn” experience also!

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35 KJV).

What kind of “new creation” would every born again believer joined to the Lord through the Holy Spirit be then? A human being which was “born again” by the power of the Holy Spirit or a spiritual being! We now also have a heavenly Father and carry half the Father’s nature!

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (1 John 3:1-3 KJV).

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 1:2-4 KJV).

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:12,13 KJV).

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment (Revelation 20:15): because as he is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17 KJV).

The Bible says that the Son of God, which is Jesus Christ, was divinity and also had a physical body. Remember it was God's plan, not man's, that Jesus came in the flesh (John 3:16).

Foreasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Hebrews 2:14,15 KJV).

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9 KJV).

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world (1 John 4:1-3 KJV).

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16 KJV).

The same Holy Spirit that planted the seed in Mary for Jesus to be birthed, is the same Holy Spirit that planted the seed (Galatians 3:16) in us for Christ to be formed in us.

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, (Galatians 4:19 KJV).

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever (1 Peter 1:23 KJV).

Notice here that Jesus was born of the Holy Ghost, yet he still had the Holy Ghost descend on him 30 yrs later with power in the form of a dove and remain. The Bible does not speak of Jesus doing any miracles until after that event.

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased (Luke 3:21,22 KJV).

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him (John 2:11 KJV).

Jesus then turned water into wine. Our spiritual newbirth as new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17) should then parallel Jesus' life. What was Jesus life like growing up?

And the child grew, and waxed strong in the spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him (Luke 2:40 KJV).

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him (Hebrews 5:8,9 KJV).

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52 KJV).

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (Ephesians 4:13,14 KJV).

The Bible says that Jesus grew in wisdom and knowledge of God before He started ministry.

Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things (John 8:28 KJV).

Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all (Colossians 3:9-11 KJV).

The divine order is first receiving the knowledge of the ministry before receiving the power for the ministry.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; (Romans 12:6,7 KJV).

Jesus also endured suffering during the growth process. Jesus was “born of the Spirit” from Mary’s womb but was not given the power of God and released into ministry until the Holy Ghost descended on him when John the Baptist baptized him. Even the disciples followed this same pattern.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me (John 6:44,45 KJV).

Let me explain further, when the disciples walked with Jesus, they could not understand some of the parables either that Jesus taught to the people and they would ask Jesus to reveal them to them also. The disciples, when they walked with Jesus didn’t initially have the Holy Spirit like we do today to reveal the deep spiritual truths of those parables because Jesus was not yet crucified.

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come (John 16:13 KJV).

(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) (John 16:39 KJV).

The disciples were not “born of the Spirit” until AFTER Jesus crucifixion and resurrection when Jesus met them and breathed on them when they were locked in a room. This happened 40 days BEFORE the upper room at Pentecost!

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: (John 20:21 KJV).

When man was first created, God breathed the breath of life into Adams nostrils, not his heart.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul (Genesis 2:7 KJV)

When man was recreated (new creation) or “born again”, Jesus breathed on the disciples, he breathed the Spirit of Life into their hearts and their spirits were now quickened (made alive) and they became a new creation. They became spiritual. The Bible teaches, humanity was not originally born with a “spark of divinity” (1 Corinthians 15:45-50). That is why Jesus said, “you must be “born again” (born of the Spirit).

That at that time ye were WITHOUT Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, and WITHOUT GOD in the world (Ephesians 2:12 KJV).

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life (John 6:63 KJV).

Adams source of life came from the outside in the air that he breathed, but the Christians source of life today, as a new creature comes from the inside by the Holy Spirit (Spirit of Life) that dwells in their heart.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit (1 Corinthians 15:45 KJV).

After Jesus breathed on the disciples and they received the Holy Ghost, they finally had a spiritual interpreter in their heart and they could understand the deeper spiritual truths of the scriptures and learn the mysteries of the Kingdom. They now had access to the “tree of life”. Please see the study “Who Are You?”. Jesus said that some would try to climb up some other way (John 10:1). There are many people that take a broad way and try to gain access to the “tree of life” or “Christ consciousness” by climbing up to it thru meditations or rituals (i.e. Kabala, Yoga, New Age, etc.), like climbing a ladder to different levels seeking “enlightenment” or the “higher self”. The “born again” Christian has direct access to the throne of God and the “knowledge of God” through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:18,19). Even though the disciples were now born of the Holy Spirit when Jesus breathed on them, they still had to be baptized by the Holy Ghost forty days later with the power for ministry. This power for ministry came at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) **AFTER** they finally understood the spiritual aspect of the scriptures.

And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? (Luke 24:31,32 KJV).

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I

send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:44-49 KJV).

And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul (Acts 16:14 KJV).

Once again we see the disciples go through the same growth pattern as Jesus. Jesus, when he was growing in wisdom and knowledge was also working a regular job as a carpenter as he was growing in wisdom of his Father's Kingdom.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52 KJV).

Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things (John 8:28 KJV).

As we can see again, the spiritual newbirth and growth of Jesus in us should follow the same pattern. We are born of the Holy Spirit when He plants the seed in our hearts. The young Christian can now understand the deeper things of the spiritual world and the Father's Kingdom. This knowledge is still hidden from the natural man in plain sight (1 Corinthians 2: 9-16 KJV). Once we grow in spiritual wisdom and knowledge of the Father (1 Peter 2:2), then we are baptized in the Spirit at the appointed time to give us power to accomplish the ministry the Father has called us into. Please read the chapter "Perfecting of the saints".

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (Ephesians 4:11-15 KJV).

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known (Ephesians 4:9-12 KJV).

I also think many people do not understand the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I hear many Pentecostals and Charismatics claim that they have the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues. The purpose of the baptism of the

Holy Ghost was not so someone could just speak in tongues. It was to provide the power and anointing for ministry.

We can also see the growth process of the Christian when compared to building a temple, with the Shekinah Glory of God filling the temple (our body) after it is finally finished.

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: (Colossians 1:25-28 KJV).

How is the temple of the body built? When someone presents the Gospel to another person that the Father is drawing and they first truly surrender all to Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of the temple is laid at that point. 1 Corinthians chapter 3 explains this building process in more detail. The Bible says,

According to the grace of God, which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:9-11 KJV).

As you can see by this verse, the believer in Christ is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ the cornerstone. The Knowledge of God is like stones placed in the temple. The apostles and prophets brought the Word of God, then Holy Spirit gave us the understanding of it.

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (2 Timothy 1:10 KJV).

What happens when someone receives the first deep revelation of spiritual truth, a stone in the temple is laid. The Bible says that God builds line upon line and precept upon precept (Isaiah 28:9-12 KJV). There is order to this building. When the believer grows in spiritual understanding then more stones are laid in that temple. What many in the church do today though, when they first get a spiritual revelation out of the scriptures, is they immediately think that God has called them to preach. They will then join a seminary and place some sort of man's religion on top of what the Holy Spirit is revealing them out of the scripture. They will then go into ministry or preaching without a firm understanding of the big picture. That is why you have so many denominations out of one truth. What many fail to realize is a temple is not ready for service until it is FINISHED. When the temple is finished, then it is dedicated, and the Glory of God fills the temple and it was now ready to minister to the people. In fact the Lord's Prayer (also called the Apostles

prayer) was basically a shorter version of the same prayer that Solomon prayed when dedicating the temple (1 Kings 8 KJV). It was a temple dedication prayer.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen (Matthew 6:9 KJV).

And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel (1 Kings 9:3-5 KJV).

In the Old Testament God sanctified the house, in the New Testament God sanctifies the believer!

Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place. For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually (2 Chronicles 7:15,16 KJV).

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:11 KJV).

I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me (Acts 26:16-18 KJV).

Maybe what I have shared here will help exhort and edify you in the good news (Gospel) of Jesus Christ and also confirm what you have found in your own personal Bible study.

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**160 Fourth Way Drive
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