



WATCHMAN'S TRUMPET



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FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

Hello,

I welcome you to this new month and present to you August 2022 edition of Watchman's Trumpet. This month, our theme is "Spiritual Growth"

Growth is a process of increase in capacity and quality. Growth can be measured by progress and fruitfulness. Spiritual growth therefore refers to a process by which a new convert in Christ over-time progressively increase in spiritual qualities and capacity. It describes such believer's progress in the things of God, exhibition of Christ-likeness and fruitfulness in the kingdom. The New birth experience or salvation and impartation of spiritual life by the Holy Spirit on seeking repentant soul is the bedrock and foundation of faith in Christ and relationship with God. Those without it are spiritually dead; dead things do not grow.

However, as good and exciting as this foundational experience is, there are still much more to have, to be and to do in the kingdom of God. A newly converted believer is like a Newborn in the natural family, no matter how much we love them there are privileges they cannot enjoy and responsibility we cannot commit into their hands. Galatians 4:1. Therefore, spiritual growth prepares us undertake greater responsibilities in God's kingdom and profit more. Christian maturity that is the outcome

of increasing spiritual growth. It advertises much more the possibility of divine grace in the world. We are better equipped to overcome temptations and have the potential of enjoying more grace, increase our labour for God and multiply eternal reward. It is therefore the right way to go and the desire of God for all His children.

This edition of Watchman's Trumpet provides in a concise form the information a believer or minister needs on this subject and can help him to achieve this goal. It is my sincere prayer as you read, that that your faith will grow exceedingly and your love for God and all men, including believers and unbelievers will abound much more in Jesus name. Welcome!

SPIRITUAL BIRTH AND LIFE PRECEDING GROWTH

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"

John 3:3, 5.



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Spiritual birth and life precedes growth. Dead things do not grow. Spiritual life is a journey, an upward journey that begins on earth and ends with endless life of peace and joy in heaven in God's presence. All journeys have a beginning. Spiritual life does. No one not born into an earthly human family can claim the rights and privileges that members of that family are entitled to and enjoys. Spiritual life that follows a spiritual birth makes us members of God's family and citizens in His kingdom. It is the beginning of effective life, walk and relationship with God and with other members of His family. It enables us partake much more in kingdom benefits. Natural men by nature and conduct are aliens to such life and relationship.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Understanding spiritual life
2. Origin and birth of the spiritual man
3. Divine-human cooperation in obtaining and retaining spiritual experiences

1. Understanding Spiritual life

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by

grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” **Ephesians 2:4-6**

“... thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” **John 17:2, 3.**

Spiritual life is a life of personal and intimate relationship with God through Christ sequel to repentance and expression of faith in Christ. Sin is the single most significant barrier to such a life. All sinners are spiritually dead. Ephesians 2:1-6, Romans 8:5-8, Colossians 2:13. There is no natural man that has not repented that is spiritually alive. Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, all men in their natural states are enemies of God because of sinful life and wicked practices. They are carnal and sensual. Pleasure and lustful desires rule their lives. They are therefore alienated from God’s covenant of promises. It is thus imperative for all who have natural birthday to have a spiritual birthday too to live acceptable and commendable life here on earth and live eternally with Christ at the end of earthly life.

Several Bible references revealed that Jesus is life John 14:6. He is the epitome and full expression of the life of God in man Colossians 3:5. Spiritual life is a life of oneness with Christ and with God. To be spiritual is to be in Christ and for Christ to be in us. Spiritual life is a life of intimacy with Christ and with God that begins on a particular day and/or time by definite deliberate choice and commitment to Jesus. It begins here on earth and shall last throughout eternity if we did not backslid.

2. Origin and birth of the spiritual man

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” **John 3:6.**

“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.**

The Bible uses birth as a metaphor to describe impartation of spiritual life into repentant sinner. It is a process by which man acquires and internalizes the life of God and the nature of Christ. It is strictly a spiritual operation performed in the human heart and life by the Holy Spirit. The experience is also described as “*Born Again*”, “*Salvation*”, “*Regeneration*” “*New Life*” or “*Spiritual transformation*” John 6:63. This process changes the man inside out 2 Corinthians 5:17. By the work of the Holy Spirit in him, he receives assurance of forgiveness of all his past sins evidenced by the lifting or removal of his feeling and sense of guilt. He also receives divine ability and grace to “*Sin no more*”. Actually, he develops a holy hatred for sin and with the Spirit’s help abstains from all appearances of evil. Passion and appetite for sinning no longer controls his life, he now possesses a new nature dedicated to pursuit of righteous living and God-pleasing pursuits and goals; a nature that desires to please God at all times and in all things.

Spiritual birth integrates us into God’s family and by it we become sons and daughters of God in a peculiar sense and have a relationship with God different from that of all others in the world who lack the new-birth experience. We do not choose our earthly family but our lifetime grants us the privilege of choice of whether or not we want to become part of God’s spiritual family by accepting Christ as our Lord and savior or not.



3. Divine-human cooperation in obtaining and retaining spiritual experiences

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” **Acts 3:19.**

Salvation is a spiritual experience, the first and best of many experiences that life in Christ guarantees. It is at the foundation of all others. To partake in this experience, you



must acknowledge your sinfulness, repent from all sins, and confess and accept Christ as your savior and Lord. Once your repentance is sincere and genuine, Holy Spirit comes into you and you begin to experience transformation of life and life-long guidance by Him. Others around us soon begin to notice the change in your life and testify about it.

Faith in Christ saves. But it is not a passive faith or a mental affirmation; it is a faith that manifests itself through repentance, whole-hearted confession of our sins and calling upon Jesus in prayer to save us. God cannot force salvation on anyone. God cannot save those who do not want to be saved neither will He keep in His kingdom anyone who does not want to be kept. Spiritual birth, life and growth will not happen if we sit around and do nothing. We must make ourselves available to God. As simple as this basic step is, it is difficult for many.

Therefore in our appeal for people to repent, believe the gospel and get saved, we must understand that it all had to start from God. A dead man can do nothing until he is revived, neither can a sinner repent until he is first convicted by the Holy Spirit and made willing to do so. It is God who opens the heart of men to believe and accept the Gospel. On the other hand those who are presently experiencing the strivings of the Holy Spirit urging them to repent should not harden their heart. It is as we respond and make ourselves available to God that every spiritual experience that God has planned for our lives becomes reality.





ABOUT WATCHMAN OUTREACH MISSION

Watchman Outreach Mission as envisioned fundamentally comprises of men and women of faith who watch over one another and together watch for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next to this primary assignment is an equally important responsibility of bringing others into the same state of watchfulness and readiness as the coming of the Lord draws near. Ours is a trans-ministerial, trans-denominational mission. Our core values include expository teaching, prayer and counselling. We train in principles and practice of Christian discipleship and equip for effective Kingdom Service.

The Lord Jesus Christ in one of His parable said "*While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept*" **Mathew 25:5**. Watchman Outreach Mission is a response of faith to this and similar warnings about events in the last days. Our response is based on the premise that prophecies, visions and revelations about the future such as the one documented in the Lord's parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins are sign-posts by which men are warned to keep vigil to avoid disastrous end. We serve to wake up the church and men everywhere to remain alert and watch for the Lord's return.

The Mission, based in Ibadan, Nigeria, was launched in 2009 and its maiden outing took place on the 20th November of the same year. On that day, we partnered with All Nations Evangelical Ministry (ANEM), Akobo, Ibadan for Evangelistic and Medical Mission Outreach to Idi - Ose Village on Arulogun - Olorunda Road in Lagelu Local Government, Ibadan.

In the years that followed we networked with churches and other Christian groups too to implement our mandate which include conducting gospel outreaches, discipleship training for new converts, organizing and facilitating workers and ministerial training, conducting administrative reviews in churches and ministries, writing of proposals for reforms and church growth strategies that can enhance social cohesion, improve church finances and foster overall development, unity and growth of such ministries; monitoring and/or supervision of the implementation of such reforms and strategies.

Some of these Christian groups and ministries include with Christ Apostolic Church, Oke - Ife in Ajangboju, Ibadan, Nigerian Military Christian Fellowship, Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment Chapter in Oyo - State Nigeria, Christ Gospel Mission International, Light of Jesus Evangelistic Ministry with branches in different cities in South Western Nigeria, and Ark of Salvation Church of Christ (ASCC) with headquarters at Molade, Monatan Ibadan.

Till date, although partnered ministries change from time to time depending on the leading we receive from the Lord, we remain committed to our main purpose and vision; that of service to the church and in the world to wake up men everywhere and encourage them to remain alert and watch for the Lord's return. Through our activities, souls had been saved, believers edified and church workers' spiritual growth and development enhanced, all to the glory of God.

WATCHMAN PRAYER HOUR



Prayer Points - For August 2022

1. Thank God for the impartation of spiritual life by the Holy Spirit
2. Thank God for your salvation and the hope of eternal life in Christ
3. Pray for freedom from carnality, lusts, worldly pleasure, idleness and self-indulgence
4. Pray for grace for increasing and continuous growth daily
5. Pray for grace for righteous living and God-pleasing pursuits
6. Pray for enhanced prayer life and increased appetite for the word of God
7. Pray for increasing intimacy in your walk and relationship with God
8. Pray for continuous transformation and guidance by the Spirit of God
9. Pray for stability in your relationship with others in and outside the church
10. Pray for divine guidance on our choice and use of scriptural resources and materials
11. Pray for progress, increased fruitfulness, productivity and profit in divine service
12. Pray for grace to live acceptable and commendable life here on earth and live eternally with Christ

"..... men ought always to pray, and not to faint;" Luke 18:1

May the Lord hear and answer all our prayers - AMEN!

Watchman Prayer Hour holds every Saturday from 10.30am - 12.00MD. We invite you to join us at our office in 78/80 Nepa (IBEDC) Building, Opposite U.I. Second Gate, Ibadan . Oyo - State Follow us on any of our Social media platforms and send your inquiries or prayer requests to any of our digital addresses.

For more info on the Mission, log on to:
www.watchmanoutreachmission.org

**INGREDIENTS,
RESOURCES AND
ENVIRONMENT FOR
EFFECTIVE AND
BALANCED SPIRITUAL
GROWTH**

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” 2 Peter 1:5-8

Growth does not take place by accident or neglect. Parents must nurture and train their children; farmers must work their fields and tend their crops. Spiritual growth can never take place by chance, it takes the blending of the right ingredients, availability and effective use of the right resources and living and interacting in the right spiritual environment for effective and balanced spiritual growth to take place in the new convert, believers or ministers.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Holy Spirit's blend of spiritual ingredients in growing Christian
2. Dedicated access to available resources for spiritual growth
3. Environmental influence on survival and growth of the newborn

1. Holy Spirit's blend of spiritual ingredients in growing Christian

Ingredients are substances that make up or forms part of something. Certain operations and provisions by the Holy Spirit must be part of our daily life and experiences if we are going to grow as Christians. Holy Spirit is ready to always guide, lead us and operate through these ingredients provided we cooperate with Him. They are:

1. Spiritual desire or appetite 1 Peter 2:1-3
2. Spiritual food 1 Corinthians

3. 10:3-4, John 6:32. May take the form of (i) Spiritual milk 1 Peter 2:2, Hebrews 5:12, (ii) Spiritual drink John 4:10-14, John 7:37, 39 Figurative of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and daily walk with Him and (iii) strong meat Hebrews 5:14
4. Spiritual revelations 2 Corinthians 4:18 come through study, prayer and meditation. As we behold the glory of the Lord, we are progressive transformed by the Spirit into His likeness
5. Spiritual/ministerial gifts Romans 12:4-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1, Ephesians 4:8, 11-12 Empowerment to serve
6. Spiritual service Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11-12, Galatians 5:13-14 By love serve one another
7. Spiritual fruits John 15:5,16, Galatians 5:22-23 Possession and exhibition of Christ-like qualities
8. Spiritual house 1 Peter 2:5, The ground and pillar of truth Hebrews 10:25 - Fellowship
9. Spiritual Testing or adversity 2 Timothy 3:12- may take the form of temptation, pressure or persecution
10. Spiritual discipline 1 Timothy 4:6-8 , Mathew 24:13, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Endure

The Spirit of God provides and works through all these to improve our spiritual life and make us more and more like Christ.



2. Dedicated access to available resources for spiritual growth

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” 2 Timothy 2:15

Resources refers to opportunities and materials available in believers' immediate physical environment whose use can help his growth. They include:

1. The Bible – different versions
2. Dictionaries – English and Bible dictionary

3. Audio – visual – recorded messages and sermons
4. Printed materials – Books, Seminars and conferences outlines, Hymn books, Encyclopedia
5. The Internet
6. Music - Inspiring spiritual songs
7. Prayer and study place and/or room – a space that affords quietness and meditation
8. Family devotion and quiet time
9. Vibrant Bible believing Church and consistency in fellowship and attendance
10. Supportive friends and/or family. Men of like minds, vision, passions, and destination- Two will always be better than one.

Experiences show that many growing and thriving believers have rich library and assorted materials and resources that keep them nourished. It is absolutely essential that we rely on the Holy Spirit in our choices of place, persons and materials that can help build our spiritual life so we don't fall into errors or become followers or supporters of falsehood in religion and doctrines.

3. Environmental influence on survival and growth of the Newborn

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful

Some environments are simply too morally polluted and toxic for thriving spiritual life and growth. We must avoid them.



Other environment, fellowship and communities provide greater access to spiritual ingredients, resources and service opportunities for richer fellowship and deeper relationship with God and other believers. Living the Christian life and entering into relationship with others in such environment will obviously facilitate faster and higher spiritual growth.

VERIFIABLE STAGES, PATTERNS AND EVIDENCES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

“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

Great excitement comes with spiritual birth and impartation of spiritual life upon a repentant soul by the Holy Spirit. The joy and peace of mind associated with the New Life we received when we manifest saving faith in Christ is best experienced than described. However, this experience as great as it is, is just the beginning of many great and wonderful things that God has preserved for those who love Him and have accepted the call to become sons and daughters in His kingdom. To access many of them as often found in the human family, we need to “grow up”. No matter how much we love our new born babies, there are things we cannot commit into their hands and there are privileges they cannot enjoy Galatians 4:1-2. To remain spiritual babes throughout life is to miss the best part of the great blessings that God reserved for His children even here in the world and our making heaven in such spiritual state hangs in balance.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Necessity and importance of spiritual growth



2. Stages and process of Spiritual growth
3. Pattern and evidences of spiritual growth and maturity

1. Necessity and importance of spiritual growth

“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 unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” Hebrews 5:12-14

Paul the Apostle in Hebrews 5:11-13 lamented the immaturity he observed in Hebrew Christians. He stated that there are things he would have told them but he will not because they are spiritual babes. A school once advertised a highly lucrative teaching post. The panel of interviewers selected one who had been teaching for only one year instead of one who claimed to have 25 years teaching experience. When asked why, the principal said “*You did not have 25 years experience as you claimed, you have had only one year’s experience repeated 25 times*” Many believers spend their entire lives in basic class and foundation of Christian faith – repentance, baptism, laying on of hands, fear of judgment etc. As a result, they are not profitable and fruitful to God, and men cannot depend on them, they are limited in usefulness and the extent of blessings they can receive from God. It is for this reasons that scriptural injunction on spiritual growth is given as a command “*But grow in grace’* 2 Peter 3:18

2. Stages and process of spiritual growth

Biblical record shows clearly defined pathway, stages and process that those making spiritual progress must follow to maturity – spiritual maturity. Believers’ destination on the growth pathway, the peak of maturity is conformity to Christ. To arrive at that destination, growing believers transit from spiritual birth to spiritual babes; they become young men, disciples and learners, and then serving servants or workers before finally becoming spiritual leaders and parents. These stages essentially refers to period of effective walk with God not chronological or biological age. Each of these stages has their distinctive and peculiarities:

i. Spiritual babes 1 Peter 2:2.

Spiritual babes or infants know that something has changed and are excited to tell others about it. However, they are ignorant of God’s word especially on how to live the new life as a follower of Christ. They are more of attention seekers and are more motivated by pleasure and reward. Their greatest needs at this time are understanding, care and love, instructions and modelling. Adult and matured believers need to be careful when around them because they can easily become discouraged by misleading and misguided disciples’ examples. The Lord greatly values them and placed a woe on whoever will make them stumble.



ii. Kingdom young men, disciples and learners. These are spiritual adolescents. They are young, strong, daring and eager. They have grown to the point of understanding some Christian principles and are beginning to apply them to life. They often ask many questions and criticize a lot. Their enthusiasm could sometimes be mistaken for arrogance. They at times want to act on their own. This trait might get them into trouble with constituted authorities in the church. They must be patiently trained to channel their energies towards exercises and experiences that enriches them spiritually, equips them for service and adds value to the kingdom of God.

iii. The serving Christian worker.

This is a stage at which a Christian begins to take responsibility for care of others as well as for his own life and actions. He is matured and reserved. Instead of airing all his problems and seeking support and sympathy, he figures out how to solve them. He is acquainted with how to apply the word of God to himself and use them to help others. He understands that God has a plan for his life and becomes occupied to fulfil that plan. His actions are God-centred and mission-minded. He has great desire to serve, help and make his life count. At this point on the spiritual growth ladder, they need debriefing about ministerial experiences, training on accountability, team building, team process and group dynamism including help to identify their skills and gifts to prepare them for the next stage

iv. Leaders, ministers and spiritual fathers. It is the final stage of spiritual development but not the final destination. The final destination on the spiritual growth scale as mentioned earlier is when we are exactly like Christ. Hence, spiritual fathers need to continue to grow too and avail themselves with the same ingredients; resources and environments required by others for spiritual progress and improvement daily, otherwise, they will regress. In spite of being in a vantage point to influence others, and provide direction, they must remain humble and teachable.

As spiritual parents they undertake the responsibility of reproducing and training disciples, helping new believers and other categories of Christians to develop in their maturity and usefulness. They need effective feedback to make them efficient; they also will greatly benefit from submission, loyalty and relationship as well as testimonies of the impact of their labour and efforts.

3. Pattern and evidences of spiritual growth and maturity

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;" **2 Thessalonians 1:3**

Historically and from cross-sectional evaluation of growth experiences of the people of God, two pattern of growth are identifiable. The first is crisis growth. Crisis growth occurs when God through the Holy Spirit brings urgent, tremendous and immediate challenge upon our life that requires urgent response and action. Most of these challenges are aimed at exposing and dealing with some shortcomings, blockades, weaknesses or hindrances in our life. It often challenges our submission and yieldedness in specific areas of life. Positive and appropriate response of prayer, obedience and sometimes sacrifice will lead to spontaneous accelerated growth. We through it obtain experiences that become useful in handling future challenges and conflicts.



Negative response will lead to a fall or failure of some sorts. In that case, sincerity and repentance makes us available for Holy Spirit facilitated restoration. It will take a repeat experiences in which we are able to apply the lessons from our fall, flaws, faults or failure to grow beyond this stage. Some people never do.

The second is continuous growth. Continuous growth is slow but steady growth towards maturity brought about by continual openness and obedience to God. It comes from daily realistic self-appraisal and submission to God.

Balanced growth requires both crisis and continuous growth. If we are always in crisis mode or prefer to wait for particular emotional experience before yielding to God, we make ourselves spiritually vulnerable to attacks and prone to having nervous breakdown. Emotion has its benefits especially in personal and corporate worship but the greatest part of our Christian life; experiences and journey will require objective clear-headed exercise of will power.



Parameters for recognizing believers making progress in their spiritual life towards maturity include total freedom from worldliness, renewed mind, life of self-denial, entire consecration, holy living, sacrificial love and service, abundant fruits, promotion of unity among believers, perfect harmony between Christian profession and practice, and effectiveness in evangelism and teaching of the word. A matured believer is known by his attitude to sin and the world, estimation of self, reflection of Christ and relationship with others.

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

2 Peter 1:5-7

PRIVILEGES AND PROFIT OF GROWING AND MATURED BELIEVERS

“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: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” Ephesians 4:13-16

Spiritual growth is a highly profitable and greatly rewarding experience and exercise. It pleases and glorifies God. Such an individual is profitable to himself; he is profitable in relationship and profitable to God in the advancement of kingdom interests; he profits on earth and profits in eternity. The more we grow, the more the privileges and favour we will enjoy in our relationship with God, in the fellowship and even in the community. All sincere people want to associate with a matured, godly, disciplined, principled and responsible Christian.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Profit of spiritual growth to a growing believer
2. Benefits of spiritual maturity in relationship
3. Divine privileges for a growing matured Christian

1. Profit of spiritual growth to a growing believer

“ ... godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” 1 Timothy 4:8.

In physical warfare, attack is the best form of defense. A moving target is

more difficult to shoot than a stationary one. Consistent spiritual progress by daily and regular use of resources that God provided for our growth is the greatest immunity against backsliding and guarantee of victory in spiritual warfare. Spiritual growth strengthens our spiritual stamina to withstand and overcome trial of faith and temptations from the devil.

2. Benefit of Spiritual maturity in Relationship

“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, ... “Acts 6:3-5



A matured Christian is an inspirer and role model. He has, shares and enjoys relationship with others as he grows in his ability to love, care, forgive, forbear, endure and serve. The more he grows the more reliable and dependable he becomes. He multiplies in good works and becomes a great source of blessing to other believers and his community. Matured believers are like pillars in the fellowship and Christian assemblies. God's people and leaders want to have many of such people around them.

Christian maturity enhances and promotes stability in marriage, in secular engagements and relationship among work team members in the church. They are more productive and could be relied upon under Holy Spirit's guidance to give wise, unbiased scriptural counsel, provide honest answers to thorny questions and solutions to difficult problems. The more we grow, the more our willingness and ability to make sacrifices that will make our relationship stable and thrive. Matured believers often make better decisions than younger ones. Their focus on eternity inspires others towards the same pursuit.

3. Divine privileges for growing and matured Christians

“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him” Exodus 24:1-2.

There are gifts and callings that God can never entrust to a young convert and immature believers. Since in most cases gifts from God commensurate with measure of grace, growing and matured Christians are in better position to receive and enjoy increasing grace and gifts from God. This increase in most cases has direct impact on their productivity. They are able to serve God more and achieve more for God. Standing and communing with God in the Most Holy Place demanded spiritual maturity and discipline. Increasing spiritual progress and growth brings us closer to God and enables us to operate in His authority. The more we grow, the more assured our salvation becomes and the more prepared we are to spend eternity with God and with Christ in heaven. As a result of the close connection between productivity and eternal reward, growing and matured Christians are likely to receive more reward in eternity than those who remain in Christian kindergarten throughout their lives. Carnality, spiritual instability, alternating cycles of backsliding and repentance may weaken the spiritual babe or carnal Christian's spiritual life, harden his heart and make him miss heaven.



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Dawson Trotman was born on March 25, 1906 in Bisbee, USA. His family was Presbyterian by tradition, but not practicing. He occasionally went to a Sunday school class during elementary, middle, and high school after his family moved to Lomita, California, in the 1910s. Trotman's high school years featured impressive credentials. He was class valedictorian, student body president, chair of the student council, and captain of the basketball team.

By the time he turned 20 he was a fairly pagan guy. He was bootlegging liquor down from San Francisco during prohibition, he was stealing stuff with regularity, and he was something of a pool shark in the local bars. But after getting caught drinking by local law enforcement officers, he said a quick "save me" prayer and committed to attending church again. He went to the local young people's (Christian Endeavor) meeting where they had a Scripture memory contest. He was a smart kid and wanted to impress the pretty girls so he ended up memorizing the 10 verses and coming back the following week to recite the verses with perfection.

While working on memorizing the next week's verses, he suddenly realized the logic of the gospel. He was on his way to work at a local lumber yard and as he recalled **John 5:24** in the King James Version: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life . . .*" Trotman asked himself the honest question: *Do I have everlasting life?* He prayed to Jesus to give him this life on the sidewalk. A Christian co-worker encouraged him to share this testimony with all of his co-workers at lunch the following day. That began Trotman's speaking ministry.

Trotman spent the next several years engaging in intensive personal evangelism while committing himself to a disciplined life of prayer. He married Lila Mae Clayton on 3 July 1932. The couple had four children. Trotman founded The Navigators in April 1933. This worldwide Christian organization supported various Christian

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

DAWSON TROTMAN
1906 - 1956



ideals: maintaining the basic disciplines of the Christ-centered Spirit-filled life, abiding in the Word of God, the importance of personal follow-up, one-on-one discipleship training, scripture memorization, and principles for multiplying Christian disciples, laborers, and equippers around the world. Vast majority of ministries at that time were geared towards large group evangelism efforts, the Navs were the only group that could help large-scale evangelists process all decision cards that came after a revival, gathering, or event. Billy Graham hired the Navigators to do follow up work in 1948 at his Hollywood Bowl YFC meeting. It was a success.

Afterward, Trotman pressed Graham, Torrey Johnson, and other key evangelical leaders to incorporate follow-up ministry into their revival preaching ministries. He developed an exhaustive and large-scale system of follow-up ministry that helped new converts come to understand the basics of following Jesus and know where to go to church to see this growth continue after a revival meeting.

The Navigators' influence has since grown to worldwide proportions with about 3,600 staff representing 60 nationalities working in 101 countries. He lost his own life on June 18, 1956 while rescuing a girl, Allene Beck, from drowning during water-skiing in Schroon Lake, New York.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen".

2 Peter 3:18

SONG OF THE MONTH

I'M PRESSING ON THE UPWARD WAY

1. I'm pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining ev'ry day;
Still praying as I'm onward bound,
"Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

Refrain:

*Lord, lift me up, and let me stand
By faith, on heaven's tableland;
A higher plane than I have found,
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.*

2. My heart has no desire to stay
Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
Though some may dwell where these abound,
My prayer, my aim, is higher ground. [Refrain]
3. I want to live above the world,
Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;
For faith has caught a joyful sound,
The song of saints on higher ground. [Refrain]
4. I want to scale the utmost height,
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till heav'n I've found,
"Lord, lead me on to higher ground." [Refrain]

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