

Session 13

Christian Growth

1. Discipleship Scenario

2. Discussion Questions

a. *Healthy Christian Growth*, by Sinclair Ferguson

Review Questions

- What is the goal of Christian maturity?
- Why does the author use the image of a baby crying out for milk as an example of what our attitude toward God's Word should be like? (Is this your attitude?)
- Why is instruction in God's Word essential to growth?
- The author writes, "*we have an almost unlimited capacity for self-deception.*" What does he mean? Do you agree?
- In what way do we need relationships with others to grow? How does God use our environment and circumstances to help us grow in Christlikeness?
- What are the three enemies of Christian growth? What are the differences between them? What does it mean to put off and put on?

Questions for Personal Application

- In what ways are you seeking to grow in your knowledge of God's Word? Would you say that you understand and love God's Word more now than you did a year ago? Why or why not?

- If we have an almost unlimited capacity for self-deception, how can we make sure that the Word of God is regularly rebuking us? How has the Word of God rebuked you in the last week or month? How do you allow God's Word to rebuke you?

- Is your spiritual life like the ballet company member who can sense a difference when he misses one day of practice? Why or why not?

- The author writes, *"If we are serious about growing as Christians we will not be content with a casual haphazard knowledge of the Bible."* What is your plan for growing in the knowledge of Scripture? What are you currently studying?

- Have you ever studied a book of the Bible along with a good commentary? How did you benefit? Share with the group 1-2 things that you learned about the book that you studied.

- Have you discovered that your understanding of the gospel has been strengthened as you have tried to explain it to someone else? How has evangelism helped you to grow in Christlikeness?
- Have you begun a library of Christian books? What books have you read in the last two years?

b. *"To Take the Soul to task", by David Powlison*

- What does the author mean when he says that taking the soul to task is the brutally, painstakingly, delightful way? Why does he agree with John Calvin that the Christian life is a *"race of repentance"*? JC Ryle wrote of the Christian, *"He and sin must quarrel, if he and God are to be friends."* In your opinion, is this an accurate view of the Christian life?
- At the bottom of page 2 and the top of page 3, the author says that humanity is divided into fundamentally two kinds of people. What are those two kinds of people? Do you agree? If you agree, which kind are you?

c. "*Sanctification (Growth in likeness to Christ)*" (Bible Doctrine chap. 23)

Review Questions

- Describe at least three ways in which sanctification differs from justification.
- Will sanctification ever be completed in this life? Explain?
- Describe God's role and man's role in sanctification. Who has the primary and who has the secondary role? Explain.
- Is it wrong to say that we are to strive for holiness and greater obedience in our lives? Why or why not?
- Name at least five motivations for obedience to God given in Scripture.

Questions for Personal Application

- As you look back over the first few years of your Christian life, can you see a pattern of growth in sanctification? What are some things that you used to delight in that no longer interest you? What are some things that you used to have no interest in that now hold great interest for you?

- How does it affect your life to know that the Holy Spirit is continually at work in you to increase your sanctification? Have you maintained a balance between your passive role and your active role in sanctification, or do you tend to emphasize one aspect over the other? If there is an imbalance in your life, what might you do to correct it?

- Are there areas where you have struggled for years to grow in sanctification, but with little to no progress? Please explain. Has this chapter helped you to regain hope for progress in those areas?

3. Scripture Memory Verse

1 Timothy 4:7-8 ⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; ⁸ for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

4. Assignment for Next Time

Read "*Pursue a Servant's Mindset*", by Stuart Scott; "*The Cross and Criticism*", by Alfred J. Poirier; and review "*The 50 Fruits of Pride*", by Brent Detwiler. Next meeting is _____.