
Chapter 1, Lesson 1, Exercise Guide

(Fill in the blanks by reviewing the lesson content.)

1. Spiritually mature Christians are _____ and _____ in their spiritual lives.
2. Lasting change comes about through a _____, more intimate _____ with the Lord.
3. When we grow up in God we stop acting like _____ and start acting like _____.
4. Reasons why Christians who truly love the Lord may not grow up spiritually include:
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
5. Maturity does not mean _____; it means adulthood and _____.
6. Jesus clearly expected _____ from us and would not have told us to be mature if it were not _____.
7. Living faith brings our _____ life and our _____, _____ life together and keeps them together.
8. Healthy growth is both _____ and _____.
9. Incremental means a _____ at a time.
10. Steady means _____ and _____.
11. Sustainable means able to maintain or _____.
12. A healthy person grows a _____ at a time, _____, and in a way that he or she can _____.
13. If you do not have a _____ with the Lord, this study will help you to _____ one.

Continuing in This Study. In this section, you will be asking the Lord to speak to you about the topic of spiritual maturity and about continuing in this Bible study. When we know that God has spoken to us, we can have great confidence to do what he asks!

The Voice of the Holy Spirit. Do you know how to hear the Holy Spirit speak? Here is a hint: His voice is a small, persistent, and encouraging thought. The devil speaks in a loud, demanding (nagging) voice filled with guilt and condemnation. The Holy Spirit is gentle but *persistent*. He speaks when we get quiet enough to listen and willing enough to act on what we hear.

Here is Another Hint: the Holy Spirit will never speak anything contrary to what he has already spoken through the Bible. In other words, God will not contradict himself. He will, though, speak to us about how he would like us to apply a Scripture *to our own life*. The Holy Spirit is the Lord's voice speaking to you as you read and pray. The Holy Spirit makes God's Word personal to us and to our circumstances and situations. This is one way he shows us that he cares about us, as individuals. *The more often we act on what we believe to be the voice of the Holy Spirit, the clearer his voice becomes to us.*

Prayerfully read each of the Scripture passages below. If possible, read them in more than one translation. (You may want to use the free services at www.BibleGateway.com. I recommend comparing King James, New International, New Living, and Amplified versions.) As you read, in the space provided below each Scripture, write the key words, phrases, or thoughts of each passage.

Each passage also has a place provided for a "personal observation or application." A personal observation or application is what the Lord speaks to *you* as you read each passage. After you read each Scripture several times, just wait, quietly, for him to speak to you. Then write what you believe he is saying to you. Make it personal for you by using personal pronouns such as "I," "me," and "my." This is a means for you to read the passages deeply and then document what the Lord impresses on you as you read them.

Below is an example of how to complete this exercise.

1 Cor. 13:11	Key words and phrases.
Children talk like children, think like children, and act like children.	
Men and women put childish ways behind them!	
Personal Observation or Application	What God speaks to me.
I am a grown man. I should put childish ways behind me! Lord, I need you show me where in my life I am still acting in a childish manner. This study is going to be good for me, but I can already tell it is also going to be a challenge. Ok, Lord. With your help, I'm going to do this. And I'm not going to let the devil talk to me—I'm only going to let YOU talk to me. Please help me to be still and listen to you speak to me.	

Write the key words and phrases and what is God speaking to *you* about 1 Corinthians 13:11.

1 Corinthians 13:11

Personal Observation or Application

Now continue with the remaining Scriptures.

John 15:5-8

Personal Observation or Application

Chapter 1, Lesson 2, Exercise Guide

Chapter 1, Lesson 2, Scripture References

Matthew 16:16; Matthew 22:32b; John 6:51; John 4:12; John 6:57; Romans 6:11;
Acts 17:28; 1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 10:19-22; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:9-10 1;
1 Corinthians 10:12.

Chapter 1, Lesson 2, Exercise Guide

1. When we talk about making progress spiritually, what does that mean to you?

(Fill in the blanks by reviewing the lesson content.)

- 2. God is the _____ God and he is the God of _____ people.
- 3. Once I was _____ spiritually, but God made me _____ in him.
- 4. People grow _____ very much the same way things grow _____.
- 5. Make a list of living things the Bible uses as analogies or examples of people and spiritual growth. See if you can find other examples not listed in this study.

- 6. We should make progress in our spiritual growth _____.
- 7. Spiritual growth should not be _____ or _____.
- 8. We should _____ and _____ to make progress in our walk with God.
- 9. Two things Paul lists in Col. 1:9-10 as pleasing the Lord are _____
_____ and _____.
- 10. Growth must be _____ and _____, just as it is with any
other growing thing.

11. Progress is not about _____ or _____.

12. Only _____ can change a person's _____.

13. Believing God means _____, cling to, _____, and put confidence in him.

14. Being _____ will change your heart—and *only* being _____ will change your heart.

15. In your own words and from your own perspective, why is “heart change” necessary if we are to grow up in God?

16. _____, _____, and _____ are not God's plan for us!

17. Write a brief explanation of an “iterative process” as you understand it.

18. When would an “iterative” process not be a good thing spiritually?

19. Write a brief explanation of an “iterative-progressive process” as you understand it.

20. Write a brief explanation of a “challenge process” as you understand it.

21. In what ways do these three models help you to visualize and understand how we learn and grow in God?

Chapter 1, Lesson 3, Exercise Guide

Chapter 1, Lesson 3, Scripture References

Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 5:16; James 5:16; James 3:1; Galatians 6:4-5.

Chapter 1, Lesson 3, Exercise Guide

1. If we are growing, we should be able to _____.
2. Spiritual growth is about change on the _____ that migrates to the _____.
3. God is in the business of _____ change.
4. Proverbs cautions each of us watch or guard our _____.
5. We have to guard our relationship with God _____.
6. We should never allow anything to _____ on our relationship with God or take precedence over it: not _____, our _____, car, or bank balance; not jobs or activities; not _____; not _____.
7. Mature people are _____ people.
8. All of us need _____ and _____.
9. The devil has two ways of keeping Christians from receiving (_____ and _____) instruction and/or correction: _____ and _____.
10. _____ is a key character trait of Satan.
11. _____ is usually the result of a wrong self-image.
12. God specializes in showing himself _____ in the middle of _____.
13. A bad or hopeless situation is a place where _____ can _____ and will happen.

14. Transparent means “ _____ or _____.”

15. When we talk about “living our faith out loud, warts and all,” what does that mean to you?

16. Another definition of transparency is _____.

17. The act of confessing our flaws to another believer _____
_____ in our hearts.

18. When we obey God’s Word and _____ ourselves, the hard places in
our hearts _____ and then _____.

19. It is _____ opinion that we seek, not the opinion of _____.

20. The most significant hallmark of spiritual progress is _____.

21. Gal. 6:4-5 tells us that God wants us to be _____ with our work.

22. The Christian life is supposed to be _____.

23. Pray about and list any specific things in your spiritual walk the Holy Spirit has already
prompted you to make progress in as we go forward with this study.

Personal Observation or Application

Chapter 2, Lesson 1, Exercise Guide

Chapter 2, Lesson 1, Scripture References

Philippians 3:12-15; Psalm 1:1-3; Proverbs 12:3; John 15; Romans 11:18-20; Romans 6:5; Colossians 2:6-7; Ephesians 3:16-18; 1 John 4:8 and 19; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and 11; 1 John 4:19; John 3:7-9; John 15:5; Colossians 1:23; Daniel 3:16-18; Acts 20:28-19; Hebrews 13:20; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:25; 1 Peter 5:1-4; John 10; John 21:16-18.

Chapter 2, Lesson 1, Exercise Guide

1. What is the *relationship* between spiritual maturity and the call of God on your life and what are some of the *differences* between the two?

2. What are some of the impacts on my life if I do not grow up spiritually or if I put off growing up spiritually?

3. Why does God use agricultural terms to describe us, his people? How does that help us understand how we grow up in God?

4. Mature people are _____ and _____, which means to become firmly _____, _____, or _____.

5. Describe with more detail some of the characteristics of spiritual maturity.

6. In your own words, describe the process of grafting a branch into a vine.

7. In what ways is a grafted-in branch dependent on the vine?

8. What happens to a branch when a graft does not “take”?

9. What is the choice we must make in this “grafting” process if we desire to grow?

10. We cannot get rooted and grounded in God without getting rooted and grounded

_____.

11. Describe how you will know you are getting “rooted and grounded” in God. Explain how it is measurable.

12. Paradoxically, in the kingdom of God, he blesses us when we _____, he promotes us when we _____, and he puts us in authority when we _____. In the same way, we will grow into _____ not by striving for maturity but by following after and _____.

Chapter 2, Lesson 2, Exercise Guide

Chapter 2, Lesson 2, Scripture References

Matthew 11:29-30; 1 Corinthians 13:11; Colossians 4:12; Hebrews 6:1; 1 Corinthians 3:10-11; Matthew 7:24-27; Hosea 10:12; Philippians 1:6.

Chapter 2, Lesson 2, Exercise Guide

Making and Confessing a Decision. “Choosing to choose” can be a first step toward spiritual maturity. Right now, if the Holy Spirit is prompting you, I encourage you to make and confess a decision to *choose* maturity. You are not figuring out *how* that will happen right now (that comes later); you are only responding in obedience to God calling you to a new place in him.

You are confessing that you

- (a) Understand the relationship between maturity and the call of God on your life,
- (b) Understand that you cannot fulfill the call of God on your life if you do not choose to grow up in your relationship with him, and
- (c) Are choosing right now to answer the Holy Spirit and make a decision to move toward spiritual maturity *as he leads you*

On the lines below, according to what the Lord has laid on your heart, confess and commit to him the decision you are making regarding growing up in him.

Dear Lord,

Proceeding Confidently in God. Since you have made and confessed this commitment in response to where God is leading you, I encourage you to *proceed confidently*, knowing “That He who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ [right up to the time of His return], developing and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you” (Philippians 1:6, AMP). Now let’s go on, placing our confidence in God to bring this about!

- 7. When *we* start things God hasn't started, we get to finish them _____
_____.
- 8. Many Christians are exhausted and discouraged because they are expending all of their strength on "_____"—things they have begun but God hasn't _____.
- 9. As we grow in God and learn to recognize and heed his voice better, we should also get better at discerning _____ and _____ he wants us to participate in with him.
- 10. We have to eventually _____ if we want to "go on" to maturity.
- 11. If we have _____ beliefs about God himself, they will affect everything else in our walk.
- 12. Reread the sections in "No Other Foundation" and "Faulty Foundations and Faulty Beliefs." How did these sections affect you? What did the Lord speak to you about your own foundation, particularly about your own understanding of the character, nature, and heart of God, about your own trust issues with him?

Personal Observations or Applications

13. Reread the section “Preparing Our Hearts for the Word.” What did the Lord speak to you about preparing your heart for the Word?

Personal Observations or Applications

14. If we have chosen and committed ourselves to grow up in God, how can we know that we can **proceed confidently**, assured that God will complete what he has begun?
