

# Church of Christ

3361 West State Street, Fremont, OH 43420

## Worship Services

Sunday Bible Study	10:00 am
Sunday Worship	10:45 am
Sunday Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 pm

*Classes for all ages*

**Preachers: Ted Bowen and Sean Rizer**

### What Must I Do To Be Saved?

1. Learn the truth (Hear) (John 8:32; 17:17; Rom 10:14-18)
2. Believe in Christ (John 8:24; 20:31; Heb 11:6)
3. Repent of all sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Rom 2:4; 2 Cor 7:9,10)
4. Confess faith in Christ (Rom 10:10; Acts 17:30; Matt 16:16)
5. Be baptized into Christ for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
6. Live faithfully (Revelation 2:10)

### 7 THINGS TO REMEMBER DURING THE LORD'S SUPPER!

- 1 LORD. "There is one Lord." (Ephesians 4:5)
- 2 THIEVES. "There were also 2 others, criminals, led with Him to be put to death."  
(Luke 23:32)
- 3 CROSSES. (Luke 23:39-43; Ephesians 1:7)
- 4 PARTS of HIS GARMENTS. "Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier, a part, and also the tunic." (John 19:23)
- 5 WOUNDS. His head was crowned with thorns. His back was scourged.  
His side was cut open. His hands were pierced. His feet were pierced. (John 19-20)
- 6 HOURS of AGONY. Christ was crucified at the 3rd hour and died at the 9th hour.  
(Mark 15:25-37)
- 7 SAYINGS of The CROSS. (Matthew 27:46; Luke 23:34, 43-46; John 19:26-30)

No  
Services  
due  
to  
COVID-19  
outbreak

### Prayer List

Kaitlin Baker  
Gen Stanley  
Nora Wiseman  
Mary Feasel  
Isaac Advey  
Jean Adkins  
Tracey Briggs  
Jamie Hall  
Kaitlyn Hall  
Ashley Hall  
Janet Baker

### Soldiers Serving Abroad

Cody Lyons  
Mercedes Speck

## The Need for Spiritual Growth

By Sam Binkley, Jr.

The church here has just concluded a successful series of gospel meetings during which many of the members showed a genuine interest in spiritual growth. Three young men were baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins and began a new life in Jesus Christ. Now is a good time, therefore, for us to remember the admonition of the apostle Peter who wrote, "But grow in the grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3: 18). Not only do the new born babes in Christ need to grow, but so do all the rest of us, that we may "go on unto perfection" (Heb. 6:1).

To those who had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ by obeying the truth Peter wrote, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pet. 2:1-3).

There are several things mentioned in this passage which must be done in order for us to grow as we should. These instructions are introduced by the word "Where-fore" which calls attention to the things which have just been said. In this case the recipients of this letter were reminded of the fact they were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19), that their souls were purified when they obeyed the truth (1 Pet. 1:22), and that they were born again of the incorruptible seed which is the word of God (1 Pet. 1:23-25). Reflecting upon such great blessings should motivate one to want to do whatever was necessary to please him who had blessed him so.

The first thing needed to bring about this growth is to put away those things which would hinder. The ones Peter lists here are ". . . all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (1 Pet. 2:1).

When one obeys the truth he becomes a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17), and is taught "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). As new creatures Christians no longer live in wickedness, guile, etc., but put off all these things that they may grow toward spiritual maturity.

The idea of putting off certain things and putting on others is also taught in other places in the Scripture. An example of this is in Colossians 3:8-10 and Ephesians 4:22-32. In both of these the command is to put off the old man and "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24).

Peter is specific in saying one should lay aside malice or wickedness which is evil of any kind, particularly a desire to injure another. Guile, which is to be crafty or deceive, is the next thing to be put away. It is said of Jesus that no guile was found in his mouth (1 Pet. 1:22). Hypocrisies have no place in the life of a Christian, therefore must be put away. Envy, a sin of the heart, must also be put away in order for one to grow. Envy is that feeling of unhappiness because another has that which one desires for himself. All evil speakings must be put off. These hinder growth rather than produce it. It is by the word of God one is convicted that these things are wrong, and must be put away in order to be the children of God and become strong in the Lord.

It is not enough that we lay aside all the evil things mentioned here, but there must also be a desire for the sincere milk of the word in order to grow. The desire is to long for the word of God as a new born babe longs for the milk which is necessary for its survival. Hunger for food is a natural experience common to all. However, we must learn to cultivate a desire for the word of God. It is the sincere or unadulterated word of God that we must have in order to grow. When the word of God is perverted, corrupted, or tampered with in any way the results will not be spiritual growth.

In his warning to the elders of the church of Ephesus, the apostle Paul said, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). The word of God is able to build us up only if we study it and rightly divide it (2 Tim. 2:15). By this means we can be approved of God. The Bible tells of some who had not longed for the word of God and needed to be taught the first principles when they should have been able to teach others (Heb. 5:12-14). This passage also shows the necessity of exercising oneself unto godliness in order to grow. When we fail to grow as we should we become vulnerable to the temptations of Satan, and are in danger of being carried about with the doctrines of men to return to a state that is worse than we were before. See Ephesians 4:14; 2 Peter 2:20-22.

God not only tells us to grow, and how this may be accomplished, but also gives divine encouragement to do so. Peter says this growth is "unto salvation." The salvation here mentioned is the deliverance that awaits

the faithful at the coming of the Lord and the judgment. They had already received forgiveness of their past sins when they were born again of the incorruptible seed. The new born babe in Christ will desire the sincere milk of the word, not for the sake of arguing, but that he may grow for this pleases the Lord and fits him for the judgment.

If one has tasted that the Lord is gracious, he will certainly want to feed upon the word of God that he may grow. The idea of tasting that the Lord is gracious is a reminder of the statement of the psalmist: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Ps. 119:103). You know how appealing sweets are to most people. The figure of the babe who desires milk teaches us the importance of continuing to return again and again to the word of God that we might partake of the goodness of God. Tasting food usually increases our appetite for more food. For this reason it is difficult to understand how any one who has "tasted the good word of God" (Heb. 6:5) can turn away from it to the "leeks and garlic" of Egypt.

The Christian needs to grow for a number of reasons. Among these is to keep us from regressing to where we were before becoming Christians or even deeper into sin. In the spiritual realm we either grow or go the other way. The Bible tells us that to go back to former ways is worse than the first (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

We need to grow because there are battles to fight, and strength is required to engage in them with our adversary. The kind of strength needed is that which comes from a knowledge of the word of God, and prayer for his help. It takes the whole armor of God to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. This includes the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God and prayer (Eph. 6:12-18). Since the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, it is God's word we need, not swords, guns, etc. Jesus overcame the temptations of Satan with the word of God (Luke 4:1-13), and we can do the same today.

Since Christians make up the spiritual temple of the Lord we need to grow that the house of God, which is the church of the living God, may be strong. This text says that every Christian is a lively stone in the spiritual house, chosen of God. As such we can offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:4-5). These are powerful incentives to make us want to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

Guardian of Truth XL: No. 17, p. 13-14

September 5, 1996

<https://www.truthmagazine.com/the-need-for-spiritual-growth>