

METHOD OF MATURING

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13, Colossians 1:1-28

- We will look at two 'steps' or methods in spiritual growth today:
 - Deeply receiving God's Word.
 - The proclamation of the Lord Jesus.

⁹For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰You are witnesses, and *so is* God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; ¹¹just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father *would* his own children, ¹²so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. ¹³For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not as the word of men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. **1 Thessalonians 9-13 NASB**

“When you appropriated to yourselves the word of the message which came from us, even the word of God, you welcomed it, not as a word finding its source in men but as it truly is, God's word which is being constantly set in operation in you who believe.” **Wuest**

“When you received the message of God...you welcomed it not as the word of [mere] men, but as it truly is, the Word of God, which is effectually at work in you who believe [Exercising its super human power in those who adhere to and trust in and rely on it]. **Amplified**

“The Word of God...which has living power in you when you have faith.” **V13 Basic English**

So shall My word be that goes forth out of My mouth: it shall not return to Me void [without producing any effect, useless], but it shall accomplish that which I please *and* purpose, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it. **Isaiah 55:11 AMPC**

Is not My word like fire [that consumes all that cannot endure the test]? says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks in pieces the rock [of most stubborn resistance]? **Jeremiah 23:29 AMPC**

¹¹ And God did unusual *and* extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹² So that handkerchiefs *or* towels *or* aprons which had touched his skin were carried away *and* put upon the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. ¹³ Then some of the traveling Jewish exorcists (men who adjure evil spirits) also undertook to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, I solemnly implore *and* charge you by the Jesus Whom Paul preaches! ¹⁴ Seven sons of a certain Jewish chief priest named Sceva were doing this. ¹⁵ But [one] evil spirit retorted, Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you? ¹⁶ Then the man in whom the evil spirit dwelt leaped upon them, mastering two of them, and was so violent against them that they dashed out of that house [in fear], stripped naked and wounded. ¹⁷ This became known to all who lived in Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, and alarm *and* terror fell upon them all; and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled *and* magnified. ¹⁸ Many also of those who were now believers came making full confession *and* thoroughly exposing their [former deceptive and evil] practices. ¹⁹ And many of those who had practiced curious, magical arts collected their books and [throwing them, book after book, on the pile] burned them in the sight of everybody. When they counted the value of them, they found it amounted to 50,000 pieces of silver (about \$9,300). ²⁰ Thus the Word of the Lord [concerning the attainment through Christ of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God] grew *and* spread *and* intensified, prevailing mightily. **Acts 19:11-20 AMPC**

And now [brethren], I commit you to God [I deposit you in His charge, entrusting you to His protection and care]. And I commend you to the Word of His grace [to the commands and counsels and promises of His unmerited favor]. It is able to build you up and to give you [your rightful] inheritance among all God's set-apart ones (those consecrated, purified, and transformed of soul). **Acts 20:32 AMPC**

- THE PROCLAMATION OF THE LORD JESUS
 - This is another powerful element in our spiritual growth.

⁹ For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

The Incomparable Christ

¹³ For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, ²⁰ and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven. ²¹ And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds, ²² yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister. ²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. ²⁵ Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching* of the word of God, ²⁶ *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, ²⁷ to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. **Colossians 1:9-28 NASB**

- Paul prays that his readers will be with all spiritual wisdom and understanding. **V9**
- He prays that they will walk in a worthy manner, pleasing God, being fruitful and grow in really knowing God. **V12**
- He prays that they will be strengthened with power according to His glorious might...real spiritual power, so that we can be fully steadfast and have patience and joy! **V11**
- He prays we will be grateful and recognize that He has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light...He qualified you...if you know Him...you have already been qualified.

- Knowing these things empower us to grow...but look at how he instructs us in the next verses.
- Proclaiming the realities of Jesus helps us grow and mature.
- He is...
 - He is our Deliverer - **Colossians 1:13**
 - He is our Redeemer – **Colossians 1:14**
 - He is how we know God – **Colossians 1:15**
 - He is our Creator – **Colossians 1:16**
 - He is our Authority – **Colossians 1:16**
 - He is our Stability – **Colossians 1:17**
 - He is our Head – **Colossians 1:18**
 - He is our way to Fullness – **Colossians 1:19**
 - He is our Reconciler – **Colossians 1:20**
 - He is our peace of God and with God - **Colossians 1:20**
 - We need to rejoice in the Proclamation of Him.
 - We need to join in proclaiming Him.

Our significant response to God's Word and our proclamation of who He is and what He has done moves us to closer connection with God and empower us to grow more deeply in Him.