

It's Time to Grow Up (Part 1)

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[0:00] Please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant.

And being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated?

[1:27] So again, our focus this morning is on verse 12. We spent a lot of time covering verses 5 through 11. And this morning we are moving on with our focus on verse 12.

And this verse is very clearly talking about sanctification. Sanctification. Many of you are probably either wondering what that word means, or you've heard it before, or you've heard it before, and you're familiar with that term.

Other of you may know exactly what the Bible is talking about when you see it speaking of sanctification. It's important that all believers of Jesus Christ understand what sanctification means. And here's why. Because he prayed for you, that you would be sanctified. Look at John chapter 17, verses 17 through 19. Jesus in his high priestly prayer is praying of us.

Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

[2:44] So this is important. Sanctification, sanctify, that word means to set apart or to declare holy or to consecrate something.

So sanctification is the act or process of acquiring sanctity. Of being made or of becoming holy.

Wayne Grudem defines sanctification as a progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and more like Christ in our actual lives.

So it's important again that we understand that when we're talking about sanctification, we are talking about our salvation, and we're also talking about our growth as Christians in becoming more like our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

Sanctification is spoken of in three different ways in the Bible. First is positional. Positional sanctification. Let me explain to you what that means.

[3:50] This is a one-time act of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of unbelievers whom God has chosen for salvation. At the moment of salvation, you as a believer were made to understand and acknowledge your sinful state of being, your inability to save yourself through any of your own works, and your need to be saved by a Savior.

And then you accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as payment for your sins. And then you put your faith in Jesus, in His redemptive work on the cross and His resurrection.

And the Bible says that at that moment, you were sanctified. In the times where I've been blessed to witness somebody coming to faith in Jesus Christ, you can see all of these things happening at a moment.

And it's reflected often, when I've seen it, in a single teardrop coming down the cheek as they are comprehending their sinfulness, and they are comprehending God's grace for the very first time.

And they're believing this awesome, life-changing and transforming truth. They understand their hopeless state. They understand their sinful position.

[5:14] And they are overwhelmed by the love that God has for them through His Son, Jesus Christ. It's like somebody has turned the lights on inside of their minds, inside of their hearts, and they believe.

They see it. And you can tell that they are undergoing a transformation right before your very eyes. It's an amazing miracle that only God can do. The Bible says that at the moment of salvation, believers are brought out of darkness and into the light.

They have been justified through their faith, and their position before God has been changed forever. Forever their position has been changed. No longer are they dead in their sins and their trespasses.

No longer are they slaves to sin, but they are alive in Christ forever. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. Because salvation is an act of the Spirit, the believer's new position can never be changed.

That can never be changed. That can never be lost. That can never be taken away. We cannot unsave ourselves. Don't take my word for it.

[6:23] Let's look at the Bible and see for ourselves. There's a few verses I want us to see. Four, actually. Philippians 1.6. We were there not that long ago. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

I am so thankful for that verse because if it were up to me, I would have given God plenty of reason over and over again to stop the work that he began in me.

And you could probably say the same, but I thank God that he will continue to do within me what he did for me beginning on that day when he saved me, when he brought me out of darkness into light, that he will continue to guide me through this life until the very end when I go to be with him.

And I take great joy in that verse. Let's look at John 6.40. And this is the will of him who sent me that I should lose nothing, Jesus here speaking, of all that he has given me, but I will raise it up on the last day.

I will lose nothing of what he's given to me. I will raise it up on the last day. Romans 5.10. And finally, Ephesians 1.13-14.

[7:43] In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit who is the guarantee, the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory.

So again, at the moment of salvation, a believer is sanctified. They are set apart unto God as holy. A transaction has taken place once they've believed their sins have been placed on Jesus Christ, right? And he's died for their sins. And as a result of that, Christ's righteousness then is taken and placed on that sinner.

So when God now sees that believer, he doesn't see somebody who was once guilty of sin. He sees somebody who now he declares to be innocent of sin.

Do we understand that? That is amazing. So now when God sees you, he sees you as a righteous, holy, sanctified person forever.

[8:53] Amen. There's also, the Bible also speaks of progressive sanctification. So sanctification is complete, but it's also a progressive work of God in the life of the believer.

Once we've been positionally sanctified, the progress then of sanctification begins. So let me explain. That sounds confusing. Those of us who have been born again will naturally begin to act in our new nature, the nature that's been given us, the nature of Jesus Christ.

And the result of that will be a progressive increase in holy living. I like how C.S. Lewis talked about progressiveness. He said, we all want progress, but if you're on the wrong road, progress means doing an about turn and walking back to the right road.

In that case, the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man. So when we've been saved, we've repented of our sins and we have changed our outlook, right?

We were going this way, that way leads to sin and death. Now I see that this way leads to life. And I'm going in this way. And this is the progress that I am making.

[10:12] That is the most progressive man. Let's look at 1 Peter 1, 15 through 16. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Since it is written, you shall be holy for I am holy. So here we see through scripture that sanctification is also made through progress of living the Christian life, of us putting aside, right, the sinful nature, the sins that so easily ensnare us and entangle us, and we are becoming more holy as we are being obedient to the Christian life that we've been called to live.

When you go to Lifeway, or any other Christian bookstore, you will see a large section of that bookstore is dedicated to progressive sanctification.

But here's the thing. If you go into Lifeway, if you go to any of those Christian bookstores, you're not going to see progressive sanctification on any sign over any section of books. You know what it's going to be called?

Christian growth. Christian growth. That's what progressive sanctification is, and that's what we'll be spending most of our time on this morning.

[11:31] But let's move on to the third way that the Bible speaks of sanctification, and that is ultimate sanctification. Progressive sanctification is the Christian's lifelong process of becoming more like Christ, and it will be completed at either their death or Christ's return.

Though we've been saved, and we are growing to become more like Christ in our life, we see and understand that the sin nature still remains.

But once we go to be with the Lord, the author of Hebrews says that we will enter into His presence as just men made perfect.

We will be holy as He is holy. We will be totally free from sin, and that is what we refer to as our glorification, our ultimate sanctification.

So now here's the question that I want to bring to you. So why does any of this matter? Now you might even be thinking that yourself. Okay, I understand. Now why does any of this matter?

[12:42] What does anything, what does any of this have to do with me? Why should I care at all about this? Why should your progressive sanctification or Christian growth make any difference to you?

Well, first of all, very simply, because healthy things grow. Healthy things grow. Just look at a child's development, for example.

For you, if you've had children, you've taken them to the doctor, hopefully, and you've had them have their regular appointments, and they check their height, and they check their weight, and they mark it down on a growth chart, and they compare it to their previous appointments, right, to make sure that the child is progressing and growing correctly.

And if there's something wrong, then in their growth chart, that means that there's something that they need to take a further look at. But we see that the growth chart should be going upwards in a child's life.

Let's look at 1 Peter 2.2. It's the same way with us as Christians. We're born again. When we are first made to believe, like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, we are told, that by it you may grow up into salvation, if indeed you have tested that the Lord is good.

[14:03] So again, when you were saved, you were born again. You have a new craving, and that new craving is for God's Word, for God's truth that you didn't have before.

And like a newborn baby craves its mother's milk, now you crave for God's truth. But babies grow and develop, don't they?

How many of you, if you've seen a mother with its newborn child, do you see her, you know, cook it a steak or something like that and put it in front of it? Hey, here's your dinner.

I hope you enjoy it. Baby's going to look at you like you're crazy, right? Because it's not able to stomach it. It can't cut up the meat. It can't feed itself. It doesn't have the teeth to chew it.

It's not ready for that yet. So we all start out in this way with that spiritual milk. But babies grow and so should Christians.

[14:59] Let's look at Hebrews 5, 12 through 14. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you. Again, the basic principles of the oracles of God.

You need milk, not solid food. For everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature.

For those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. So you see in the Christian life we are to grow.

We are to mature. We are to get to the point where we can handle the solid food. So say some of you or any of you would to ask me and my family to go out to eat after church today.

Right? And say we sit down and we start to order our food and the waiter comes to me and says well what would you like to eat? And I say no I'm good and I pull out a bottle and I start you know shaking it up and getting it ready.

[16:00] I've got my dinner right here. You know you'd think this guy is weird. And rightfully so. Or say say I do order a meal solid food and as it comes you know my wife Danny is the one who has to cut it up into little pieces and then she's the one feeding it to me.

You'd think this guy is not very mature right? Certainly unfit to be our pastor and rightfully so. That would look strange. That wouldn't look right.

But unfortunately that's the way many Christians I think look to the rest of the world. They look like little kids who don't truly understand their Bible or what they believe.

This past week Dan and I in Willard we had the opportunity to hear Abdu Murray speak at Oklahoma Wesleyan University. He's an apologist and we got to hear his testimony how he's a Muslim and he would love to debate Christians because what he would find out in his debates with Christians is that they didn't really know what they were talking about.

They didn't really know their Bibles and so he would look forward to having these debates with Christians because he would just walk all over them. He would destroy them with his arguments.

[17:23] And he had so much fun doing that that he decided that he was going to read more of the Bible for himself. And guess what happened? He was saved as a result of that. And it just caught me when I heard him say that because that's embarrassing as Christians isn't it?

that we don't know our Bible. We claim that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life and rightfully so but we couldn't point a person to that passage of scripture where it says that.

You know there's some Christians they don't even know how many books are in the Bible. And that's why I love Awanas because that's what we're doing is we're training our kids to memorize Bible verses to know where to find things in their Bibles.

And so I believe that God is telling us today in his church especially in the United States of America it's time to grow up. It's time for us to grow up.

Don't you realize that this is God's will for you to grow up in him? Let's look at another verse Ephesians chapter 4 verses 14 through 15.

[18:38] So that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine by human cunning by craftiness and deceitful schemes rather speaking the truth in love we are to grow up to grow up in every way into him who is the head into Christ.

It's time to grow up. So how are we going to do that? Well if you had your outline from last week we didn't hit that last point we're going to hit it right now.

Christian growth results from being like Christ. How are we going to do that? Well we're going to be like Christ. That's how we're going to grow up. And you see that tiny little word there in the beginning of verse 12 and it's therefore.

And if you remember like we talked about last week whenever you see that word you ask yourself this question. What is that word therefore? Therefore? we've got to figure it out.

This word is drawing us back to the conclusion of the preceding statement which speaks as we've just read a little while ago of the humiliation and then the resulting exaltation of Jesus Christ.

[19:51] So let's review that again. Verses 1-5 if you remember they speak to the importance of unity within the church and so Jesus Christ is presented as the supreme example that we are to follow so that we will experience the kind of unity that we need to experience in our churches.

And then in verses 6-8 they speak of the humiliation of Jesus Christ of his dissension right? Of his coming down taking on the flesh being a servant dying on a cross and then in verses 9-11 it speaks of his exaltation right?

Every knee bowing every tongue confessing on that day that Jesus Christ is Lord. And here's the principle as we saw last week what are we being taught here?

What do we need to come away with? Well it's this that those who exalt themselves will be humble but those who humble themselves are the ones who will be exalted like Jesus was those who are humble in Christ will be exalted if we're going to grow like Christ we need to be like Christ which means we must be humble and the good news is that when we humble ourselves Christ God exalts us he exalts us then we saw that those who are humble in Christ submit to his lordship what does this mean well it means that Jesus he's not your mascot he's not just your spiritual guru or your therapist he's so much more than any of those things he's lord he's lord of lords he's king of kings

and somebody who confesses that expresses that in the way that they live right my opinions my thoughts my feelings do not come above or before what god's word says to me i stand in submission underneath this truth not on top of it jesus is lord that means that we bow the knee again understanding that i'm not my own god that it's not my way that i should walk in but it's all according to god and it's according to his word i'm going to bow my lord it's confessing with your mouth confessing that truth that jesus is lord declaring that he is the way he is the truth he is the life and those who are humble in christ die to self and they live for him this is an amazing and great paradoxical truth of the bible that he who loses his life is the one who finds it we gain by losing if you're going to grow as a christian then you must be like christ you're not going to grow in your christ likeness if you're not being like the one who you are supposed to be like the good news about this is that the holy spirit empowers us as believers to live our lives in this way you can grow in your christ likeness by being like christ because the holy spirit is there to help you along the way to do that then we see secondly that christian growth is motivated by love it's motivated by love how are we going to grow will we understand that our growth is motivated by love paul refers to these believers as my beloved his choice of words here suggests a second aspect of christian growth and it's that believers understand that they are greatly loved by god they are greatly loved by god if you remember last week i introduced you to our vision statement for our church our four e's engaging enlightening encouraging and equipping and i want you to see how this vision is biblical right here and it's a model for us and our disciple making and it shows the love of god if you remember this church in philippi was started by paul who is now writing to them from prison in rome he hasn't forgotten about them you remember in acts chapter 16 he's on his second missionary journey it's paul

and it's silas and it's timothy and they go to this city they go to philippi and they go there they spend a few days there and then they find out on the sabbath day where there is a group of people who meet together for prayer they don't have a synagogue these people meet outside of the city how did they find out that information they're engaging the people of philippi they didn't just get there and be like okay god we're here we're open for business send people to us we're ready to share the gospel with them they engaged they asked questions they found out they knew where these ladies were going to be and they engaged them they went to where they were and then it says that when they found them that they spoke to them in verse 14 they engaged them and one who heard was a woman named Lydia from the city of

[25 : 47] Thyatira a seller of purple goods who was a worshipper of God and get this because they engaged them because they spoke to them about the gospel look what happened the Lord opened her heart the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what they were saying to what Paul had to say God called these men to engage these ladies with the gospel and he used their words to do what the second aspect of our vision enlightened them they were enlightened by the words that they heard spoken to them their hearts and their minds were enlightened and then they were encouraged as Lydia was later baptized along with her household she opened her home to Paul and his companions and they continued then to be able to go out into the city engaging people and sharing the gospel that their minds might be what enlightened by the

Holy Spirit and if you remember as they were doing this as they were going throughout town they were being followed around by a little slave girl right who was being a distraction to them she had a evil spirit inside of her she was able to tell fortunes and do all kinds of things that made a profit for her her masters and so Paul spun around on her and said you know basically casting out the demon out of her right there right and so as a result of that her masters got upset and had them thrown in jail and if you remember while they were in jail about midnight they are singing and they're praying in prison and there was an earthquake God shook that place so that all the doors of the prison cells opened and their shackles came off and you remember this woke up the jailer who ran inside and he couldn't see that the prisoners hadn't escaped and he drew his sword because he was going to commit suicide he was going to kill himself because that's his fate that would have resulted if these prisoners had escaped he would have had his head cut off and then what happens Paul sees him and says stop stop what you're doing and the man comes to his senses right he's enlightened no doubt he's heard them praying he's heard them seeking and guess what he says to them sirs what must I do to be saved he was enlightened he was encouraged and that's what Paul is doing right here isn't it he knows these people no doubt that the people who received this letter is Lydia and that jailer and their households and others whom they have engaged whom the Holy

Spirit has enlightened and now he's encouraging them while he's in prison and he's writing to them with words of encouragement that also do what equip them for the ministry that they've been called to the Great Commission so it comes back around and that's what we are looking to do here as well why did he do that though he could have said well my work is done

I went there the church has been planted it started seems like it's doing fine I'm in prison I've got my own issues right he doesn't do that why because he loves these people he loves this church he loves Christians and he knows that the Christian life can be a difficult life to live and he cares about them he knows that again this life isn't easy he's well aware of their shortcomings He knows their weaknesses he understood the dangers that they faced both from the outside of their church and from within their church he knew that they were loved by God and so he seeks to encourage them to equip them to remind them of the great love that God has for them that they don't serve a ruthless merciless unforgiving deity like their pagan neighbors did that they served a Lord who was merciful who was forgiving who was gracious who was willing to restore them back to fellowship when they sinned progressive sanctification does not run in a straight line from positional to ultimate you understand what I'm saying so it's like okay

I'm saved and then it's just straight up all is good I don't make any mistakes I don't have any issues with sin and then I get to heaven and I'm ultimately sanctified the Christian life does not work that way man I wish that it did but it doesn't Romans 8:28 says that God works all things together for the good of his people and so as we go along in our progressive sanctification as we go along in our walk with Christ we go through these series of peaks and valleys you know where there's moments where we feel like we're we're we couldn't be closer to God unless we were standing before him in heaven you know we are just on fire and there are moments where we're down in the valley and we feel like God is far far away and God uses all of those moments to make us like his son now here's the thing you see they're up and down but they're trending upwards so your valleys aren't as deep here as they were down there but God uses all of these things for the good and I don't have time to share but I have personal testimonies of many times where I've been down in the valley as a believer and I hated it oh man

[31:42] I hate I hated going through those moments but I thank God that I went through them because you ever notice that on top of a mountain peak nothing really grows nothing grows there's no vegetation there can't survive but all the growth takes place down in the valley doesn't it and so if you're ever down in the valley you may be down there this morning you got to understand that as a believer God hasn't given up on you but that whatever you're going through he's using it to help you grow like Jesus and so we've got to understand this too and you've heard me say it again before and you'll hear me say it again and again that church must be a place where it's okay to not be okay church must be a place where you're able to come in here and somebody asks you how are you doing you say you know what not doing very well right now and instead of that person who hears that I'll be praying for you I hope everything turns out okay no that person then engages them further what's going on tell me because you truly care because you truly love that person and you truly want to be used by God if possible to help them church must be a place where it's okay to not be okay where you can come and be encouraged and seek encouragement from your brothers and sisters in Christ who will help you mature in your faith in your Christ likeness it's motivated by love

Christian growth requires active obedience as we continue in verse 12 the next part as you have always obeyed obeyed there is a compound Greek verb and it has the basic meaning of placing oneself under what has been heard and therefore submitting to what you've heard and obeying it in order for a believer to grow they must hear God's word so this is an appeal for believers to continue to study God's word and continue to put themselves place themselves under the teaching that they're hearing coming from the word of God let's look at 2nd Corinthians 10:5 through 6 we destroy arguments in every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ being ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete right now we live in a world that is turned upside down is it not we live in a time where we are being told that right is wrong that left is right right that good is bad and bad is good and we've got to know the word of God so that we can destroy those arguments so that we can say no that isn't right and here

I can show you why it isn't we live in a world that has exchanged the truth of God for a lie and many of you have probably heard this story before but it's heartbreaking and it is disturbing to me one of many disturbing and heartbreaking stories that seem to come out every single day in our culture

this one is of a man in Toronto a 52 year old man who was married with seven children and he left them in order to fulfill his identity his true identity which he said and I'm not making this up which he said was that of a six year old girl he left his wife he left her with their seven children and he moved in with some friends who agreed to be his adopted parents so that he can dress himself up and act like a six year old girl every day and he lives in a culture that encourages him to do that they're not holding him responsible for the family that he's left behind how is this poor woman going to take care of all of those children but to them he's a champion he's put on a pedestal right look at this guy this is the example that we should follow no it is not when he was asked about this this is what he said

I can't deny that I was married I can't deny that I have children but I've moved forward now I've gone back to being a child I don't want to be an adult right now that is tragic but you know what else is tragic I see a lot of especially young men in our society right now they're growing up physically but they're not growing up mentally they're definitely not growing up spiritually and they're acting like boys and I got friends and I will mention their names you wouldn't know who they are anyways but you know what I'm saying I don't want to throw them under the bus but it breaks my heart that they are my age 35 years old they don't have a spouse they don't have children and all they do is live for themselves they party and they live it up they do what they want and some of them don't even have their own house they still live with mom and dad and they haven't changed much from when they were 18 years old and had graduated from high school man it's time to grow up and man it's time for us to be the spiritual leaders in our household that God has called us to be because your children mine they go to schools they turn on the TV and they are bombarded with these lies and if you don't know the Bible then you are not able to protect them you aren't able to take those statements that the world says are true and say no this is not true this is not good for you let me show you out of love why this can't be and how much more this way is better so it's time to grow up that means we must be actively obedient the better

I know my Bible the more I'm able to obey it the better I'm able to obey it and understand it the better I'm able to tear down those false arguments those falsehoods and instruct my children instruct my wife instruct my family what is right and what is wrong and make sure that they know how God wants and expects his people to grow fourthly Christian growth necessitates self-control Paul continues so now not only in my presence but much more in my absence so besides Jesus Christ the greatest teacher of God's word was the apostle Paul and these people had the benefit of sitting underneath his instruction for a long time but now as I said before he's hundreds of miles away and his only means of contact with them are these letters that he's writing or receiving from them messengers that he's sending to them or that are coming back to him with news of what's going on and Paul's point to them is that a

[39:17] Christian's growth must not primarily depend upon their pastor it must not primarily depend upon their Sunday school teacher or any other teacher or anyone else for that matter that they are responsible for their own growth their own self-control again Jesus Christ is a supreme example and a true believer is never without the Holy Spirit's ability to work in their life to make them able to live the life that God has called us to live but we've got to be self-controlled we've got to practice these spiritual disciplines and here's what they are first what does it take to grow well to eat right you can grow this way if you eat at McDonald's all the time right trust me I know so it doesn't just matter that you eat it matters that you eat right we want to put on strength by what we are feeding ourselves on we want to be nourished and so what are we eating well we're eating the

Bible now not literally but we are feasting upon the word of God we are allowing it to absorb into our hearts into our minds secondly in order to grow we must breathe we've got to breathe to be able to live and to grow and that is our prayer life being in communion with God praying consistently and constantly throughout the day being in communion with him in order to grow we need good hygiene that's our spiritual confession of sin that's us casting our sins and our anxieties and our worries upon Christ and knowing that he is faithful and that we can trust him and be forgiven of him of our sins in order to grow we need a caring family who's there to help us to love and support us this is you know your family it's also your church family that's what we are here to do to help you to grow to encourage you in your walk with Jesus

Christ in order to grow we need regular exercise this is your service this is your coming here this is your coming on Sunday evenings or Wednesdays this is your coming to be taught to learn so that you can grow in order to grow we need protection from temptation and again that's what you know

people like myself or Dan or other leaders and teachers within the church are here to pray for you when you have an issue or in a struggle you have somebody that you can come confide in who will be there to be able to equip you via the word of God so that you can stand and resist the devil in order to grow we need to give that means we give our time we give our talents we give our treasures fifthly Christian growth growth is to be pursued with an attitude marked by fear and trembling and so Paul concludes verse 12 by saying work out your own salvation with fear and trembling now this verse when read with verse 13 seems to present us with another paradox we are called to work out our salvation but then we see that it's

God who's the one who's actually doing the work so what is it well paradoxes aren't unusual when dealing with spiritual truth as we've seen we live by dying we gain by losing Jesus is fully God yet he's also fully man he conquered by dying those are all paradoxes but they are true so understand this salvation is never achieved by human works yet it always requires personal faith I could show you a lot of verses that prove that point but for time's sake let's look at Ephesians 2 verses 8 through 10 for by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing it is the gift of God that not as a result of works so that no one may boast for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them so to me this clearly says that a person cannot earn their salvation salvation this isn't about my good deeds outweighing my bad deeds at the end of my life that

God will let me into heaven because I've been quote unquote a good person my salvation results from and is totally dependent upon the grace of God grace is preeminent in every aspect of salvation but now look at Acts 16 31 and they said believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved you and your household so there is something that we must do believe in the Lord Jesus I like two quotes I want to share with you first from Charles Spurgeon about this verse in salvation you cannot work it in salvation but when God works it in you work it out when God works it in you work it out in John MacArthur the point of this present verse is that it takes spiritual energy to grow as a Christian to live a life that is holy fruitful and pleasing to the

[44 : 55] Lord so now what is all of this about fear and trembling right because didn't I just say that God was merciful that God was loving he is perfectly so but he is also perfectly just and as a result of that he will hold believers accountable for their disobedience forgiving the sin not always and not often forgiving the consequences of that sin let's look at one last verse together 1st John 1 8 through 9 if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us if we confess our sins he is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and so knowing that we serve a holy and just God it should create within our hearts a healthy fear and trembling of just how awesome he is not fear of being doomed to eternal torment but a reverential fear of who he is and what he's done you know

I'm still new here and I don't know quite yet where all of you are at in your spiritual growth but I know this that none of you has reached that place of ultimate sanctification yet and the church is a place like I said before where you should come so that you can be equipped so that you can be enlightened so that you can engage your community that they can know the truth of Jesus Christ it's got to be a place where it's okay to not be okay so if you have questions about God's word and you don't understand this don't keep them in here let them out speak share that we'd love to help you if you're going through some difficult times difficulty in your marriage difficulty with your children difficulty at work difficulty with anything do not come into this place and act like you're okay don't come into this place and pretend like you don't have struggles that you don't have problems because if you do that

I guarantee you this you will not get the help that you need and God wants to use your church to help you grow more like him don't keep those opportunities from us to love you to help you to encourage you to equip you to enlighten you Thank you.