

“Get Growing - Session 1” - The Volitional Dimension

- Good Evening, I am so glad you made the effort to attend this evening
- I'm so very excited for this series, it's one I've been wanting to do for several years
- Let's pray

I. Get Growing - Session 1 - The Volitional Dimension

A. The Pieces

- Introduction
 - ▶ When a baby boy is born into the world, he doesn't stay a baby boy
 - ▶ He grows, he becomes a toddler, an elementary student, a middle school student, a high school student, he goes through puberty, he becomes a fully grown adult man
 - ▶ He matures physically, He matures intellectually, He grows
 - ▶ The same thing needs to happen when you are born into the family of God
 - ▶ When you respond to the gospel message, when you receive Christ for salvation, when you are saved you become a child in the family of God
 - ▶ You are born again into the family of God
 - ▶ And you start as a babe in Christ Jesus, a beautiful awesome little baby boy or baby girl in Christ Jesus
 - ▶ Please understand that you are not to remain as a babe in Christ Jesus
 - ▶ You are to grow, you are to mature, you are to develop into a fully grown mature Christian man or woman
 - ▶ Growth as a Christian doesn't happen automatically like it does with physical babies, physical babies just grow, all you have to do is feed them
 - ▶ Spiritual growth as a Christian is not automatic, it's intentional, it requires cooperation, it requires commitment, it requires effort

- ▶ It requires that you actively engage in the foundational disciplines of Christian growth
- ▶ We are going to be looking at those disciplines of spiritual growth in this series
- ▶ The goal is that you know how to grow and that you engage in these disciplines to grow
- Dawson Trautman's Wheel Diagram
 - ▶ Now I'm going to make use of a very powerful yet simple tool to take us through the disciplines of spiritual growth in this series
 - ▶ You have a hard copy of that tool in your hands tonight, it also posted in PDF format at our website
 - ▶ Here it is: the Wheel diagram
 - ▶ This is a wonderful diagram that was developed by a man named Dawson Trautman way back in the 1930's
 - ▶ Dawson Trautman became a Christian in his early 20's and worked as a lumberyard worker and a gas station attendant in California when he came became a Christian
 - ▶ He did not stay a babe in Christ Jesus, He grew as a Christian and he began leading many others to Christ, and discipling young Christians to spiritual maturity
 - ▶ That's what he became all about, teaching Christians how to grow
 - ▶ He founded the Navigators ministry which still ministers today in the military, in high schools and universities, many businesses, the main goal is to help Christians grow
 - ▶ Billy Graham hired the Navigators ministry to do, "follow up" work at his crusades
 - ▶ On June 18, 1956 he was spending time at a church camp at Schroon Lake, New York, ministering to young adults, teaching them how to grow
 - ▶ That afternoon he was on a boat with several campers, they were water skiing, they hit some choppy water and he and a female camper were thrown out of the boat

- ▶ Dawson held her up to keep from drowning and died in the process
- ▶ He died at the age of 50, he was married with 5 children, high-school-aged or younger

Billy Graham spoke at Daws' funeral and said of his last act of heroism, "Daws died the same way he lived—holding others up."

- ▶ What a great man he was
 - ▶ I just thought it was very important for you to know where this came from, and understand how important it is
 - ▶ This was the tool that he developed and shared with countless thousands of Christians, one on one, in small groups, creating discipleship networks in every sector of society
 - ▶ It's a diagram that he would draw on paper napkins at coffee shops
 - ▶ I'll never forget when I first saw this diagram as a brand new believer at the age of 7
 - ▶ I've drawn this diagram on a napkin while telling others how to grow in Christ
 - ▶ Once you learn it you can do the same thing with others
 - ▶ This diagram looks so simple, and it is, but every detail is intentionally meaningful and so very important in terms of Spiritual growth
 - ▶ Talk through the diagram a bit.....
 - ▶ Tonight I want to point out 3 details
- The Wheel
 - ▶ First notice the most obvious observation, it's a wheel
 - ▶ A wheel is used to illustrate spiritual growth as a Christian
 - ▶ That's very significant
 - ▶ (1) Wheels imply movement, progress, growth
 - ▶ Spiritual growth as a Christian is constant motion, it's constant progression, you are to constantly move forward
 - ▶ You are active, You are in action

- ▶ Notice the Label for the wheel - The Obedient Christian in Action
- ▶ You start growing as a new Christian, and you continue growing until the day you exit planet earth
- ▶ You become a Christian, you start growing, you reach maturity in Christ, but you keep growing, and you learn to lead others to Christ and teach them how to grow all along the process
- ▶ There is no coasting as a Christian, you keep pedaling, you keep moving forward, you don't take vacations
- ▶ You need to have that constant passion and desire in your life, to grow
- ▶ It's like peddling a bike uphill, the moment you stop peddling you go backwards
- ▶ You are either growing in Christ or you go backwards
- ▶ No matter how long we have served Christ, we can keep growing, and growing we should day by day
- ▶ Listen to these words by the Apostle Paul

Philippians 3:12–14 (NKJV)

12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- ▶ Now Paul was a very fruitful Christian I think we would all agree, He did amazing things, He never stopped growing, His wheel kept moving forward
- ▶ You need that desire
- ▶ (2) Wheels make it easier to move, it was a great day in human history when the wheel was invented
- ▶ We move things faster and more efficiently with wheels
- ▶ This wheel includes the 4 basic disciplines of spiritual growth, they are shown as spokes in the wheel

- ▶ Pray, Bible, Fellowship and Witnessing
 - ▶ We are going to spend one session on each one of those spokes
 - ▶ Those 4 disciplines keep you growing, those 4 disciplines make it easier for you to move forward in spiritual growth
 - ▶ These disciplines never go away, you never graduate from them
 - ▶ You are to be dedicated to those disciplines until you exit planet earth
 - ▶ And you need to keep them in good balance
 - ▶ Prayer, Word, Fellowship, Witnessing all four are important, all are needed
 - ▶ If a spoke is missing the wheel goes wobbly
 - ▶ Long on fellowship but no witnessing.....wobbly
 - ▶ Long on word but not much prayer.....wobbly
 - ▶ You need all four in good balance, consistently, until you exit planet earth
- The Hub
 - ▶ Ok now I want you to notice the center of the wheel, the hub of the wheel
 - ▶ Everything revolves around the hub, the hub is the most important part of the wheel
 - ▶ What does it say in the hub, it says Christ
 - ▶ If you want to grow in Christ Jesus than Jesus Christ must become the center of your life
 - ▶ Everything about you and about your life must revolve around Jesus
 - ▶ When you become a born again Christian, Jesus is your savior, you receive Him as your Savior, we all need that
 - ▶ Now in order to grow He needs to become your Lord, your master
 - ▶ You must allow Him to take the driver's seat in your life
 - ▶ So Christ Himself is take top priority in your life, He is to become more important to you than anyone else in your life
 - ▶ Think about what happens when you get married

- ▶ You leave Father and Mother and cleave to your wife
- ▶ Your wife, your husband becomes the most important person to you in all human relationships
- ▶ What a drag it must be for some wives having to put up with husbands who are still mamma's boys
- ▶ Christ is to be the most important relationship with you, your life revolves around Him, He is your Lord
- ▶ Christ is to be more important to you than your career, or making money, or any kind of hobby
- ▶ Lots of people live a career centered life, everything revolves around their career
- ▶ Many many people live a money centered life, everything revolves around making money
- ▶ You are called to live a Christ centered life, everything revolves around Him
- ▶ You follow Him into the career that He has for you
- ▶ You use money the way that He so desires
- ▶ He is the Lord of your life
- ▶ Most difficult part of this concept, no longer living a self centered life, instead you live a Christ centered life
- ▶ Most people live their lives completely self centered, calling their own shots, doing what make themselves happy
- ▶ Singing that song by Frank Sinatra, I did it my way
- ▶ If you want to grow as a Christian you need to be Christ centered, you need to die to self

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

- ▶ That's so important, I've died to myself, Christ lives in me
- ▶ All of the spiritual giants in church history had this moment of surrender, of dying to self

George Mueller, when questioned about his spiritual power, responded simply, “One day George Mueller died.” D. L. Moody was visiting New York City when he consciously died to his own ambitions. Pastor Charles Finney slipped away to a secluded spot in a forest to die to self. And evangelist Christmas Evans, putting down on paper his surrender to Christ, began it by writing: “I give my soul and body to Jesus.” It was, in a very real sense, a death to self.

- ▶ Listen also to what Paul the Apostle wrote in Romans 12:1

Romans 12:1 (NKJV)

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

- ▶ That’s a big step in Christian growth, I present my body, my life, my soul, my everything as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to you my God
- ▶ I choose you Jesus to be the center of my life, you call the shots
- ▶ Listen to how Jesus Himself put it

Luke 9:23–24 (NKJV)

23 Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

- ▶ We need to make Jesus the center of our lives, it’s a desire that we should reaffirm to ourselves every day
- ▶ Now some Christians are cautious about this, if I surrender my life to Him, He’s going to make do something I don’t want to do
- ▶ He’s going to send me to Africa or something
- ▶ I’m not going to be able to this or that

- ▶ Jesus said you if you lose your life for My sake you will save it
 - ▶ He will bless you, He has good plans for you, He is a good shepherd
 - ▶ You can trust Him with every area of your life
 - ▶ He is your heavenly father
 - ▶ I did it and the Lord sent me into an adventure that I could never have even dreamed up for myself
 - ▶ I love what I do, I love my amazing wife and family, I love the house that I live in, the wonderful friends, brothers and sisters in Christ at this church
- The Rim
 - ▶ Ok now look at our 3rd detail for the night
 - ▶ Look at the rim
 - ▶ The rim is where the work is done for the wheel, it's where quite literally the rubber meets the road
 - ▶ It represents your obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ
 - ▶ You live your life daily in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ
 - ▶ This is directly related to the hub
 - ▶ If Christ is truly the center of your life, the one in the drivers seat, than you will obey Him where the rubber meets the road in every area of your life
 - ▶ Commandments in relationships - sexual purity until marriage and within marriage only
 - ▶ Commandments in friendships
 - ▶ Commandments in business and career
 - ▶ Moral commandments - things to abstain from
 - ▶ Christian imperatives - you going to see that the Lord commands us to pray, to read the word, to fellowship, to witness
 - ▶ Now there is friction where the rubber meets the road
 - ▶ The world won't like your morals, your absolutes, you will most definitely be hassled for living an obedient Christian life
 - ▶ It might cause friction with others in your life

- ▶ And let's face it, it not's easy dying to self, we blow it
- ▶ But our desire should be to obey the Lord in every aspect of life

John 14:21 (NKJV)

21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

- ▶ There is a special blessing in obeying the Lord Jesus, He manifests Himself to you, you know Him better
- ▶ The commands of the Lord are not meant to take away your fun, but to enhance you, to protect you, to keep you strong and healthy and vibrant
- ▶ And than please notice this verse

1 John 5:3 (NKJV)

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

- ▶ We obey the commandments because we love God, and He has loved us!
- The Will to do this
 - ▶ Ok now notice from the explanation on the diagram that this evening we spoke of the Volitional Dimension of Spiritual Growth
 - ▶ Volitional: relating to the use of one's will
 - ▶ We are speaking about spiritual growth as it applies to you
 - ▶ It is a matter of will
 - ▶ Will you grow? Will you choose to live your life this way
 - ▶ Will you desire and seek to grow spiritually until you exit plane earth
 - ▶ Will you allow Jesus to be the center of your life, will you move out of the driver's seat and let Him take over

- ▶ Will you seek to obey Jesus in every aspect of life, where the rubber meets the road?
- ▶ That's the first step to spiritual growth!
- ▶ You need to make that step, and you need to reaffirm these decisions day by day!
- ▶ Spiritual growth is possible for every single Christian
- ▶ It's not just for special, elite Christians
- ▶ You don't have to go to an expensive seminary
- ▶ You just have to choose to do so, and you will grow
- ▶ I invite you to make that choice and take those steps towards spiritual growth

Conclusion

- Closing Prayer and Invitation