



## Inner Growth - Believer's Progress

**For God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**

*2 Timothy 1:7*

**Preparation** - Luke 21:36

**Expectation** - Philippians 1:20

**Examination** - 2 Corinthians 13:5

**Confrontation** - Galatians 6:1

**Communication** - Proverbs 15:1

**Conversation** - Colossians 4:6

**Conclusion** - Ecclesiastes 12:13

A believer's progress is the daily belief of living for God in love and purity. In First John, verse eight of chapter four, states the person who does not love do not know Him. God is love and does not associate with sin. These two requirements are essential for a believer to continue to build a relationship with the Father.

The believer will only progress through life in God by facing their fears. Overcoming the dread of facing hardship, trials, suffering, and persecution will enable us to draw closer to Him. The love of God that passes all understanding will manifest within the life of a follower. A believer will experience the power of God at times in life when they least expect it. During times of uncertainty, self-control will determine the pathway of a believer to God or away from God.

*The believer should take precautions as followers of Christ. Therefore, we must be on the watch against sin and pray that our love will not diminish for God. Believers are to persevere in faith and righteousness that we might receive strength in Jesus Christ. Only through perseverance, the people of God will be able to escape all the terrible things coming upon the world in the last days. In the book of Luke, chapter seventeen, verse thirty-two states, "Remember Lot's wife." In the Old Testament, from the book of Genesis, the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Heaven. Lot's wife did not follow the instruction given by God and became a pillar of salt because she looked back. The expectancy of the enemy is for the believer to fail, fall back into the world, and go right back into sin. The devil knows where we came from and anticipates us dwelling in iniquity. Therefore, the enemy does not want us to keep our hearts and minds on God because he knows that will prompt us to leave sinful nature. The other concern the devil has is when we pray. The prayer to God creates an opportunity to develop a relationship with Him, opens up a plan for our life, enables us to experience the presence and power of God, and diminishes the scheme of the enemy. To overcome the obstacles that the devil will attempt to sway us away from the Holy One, we must call upon God for strength. The enemy will try so hard to wear us down mentally, physically, emotionally for us to be weak spiritually. The anticipation for a believer is by serving the Lord, and all things will fall into place in our journey for Christ. Initially, we know the necessities of life will work out for our good. However, the timing of it working out is the test because when we expect it, the timing of God is different from ours. Even though our confidence is high in the Lord, we still face some form of trial.*

During this time, the expectation as a believer is to represent God well. Regardless of the outcome, we are to serve the Lord.

The enemy will attempt to get us mad and frustrated with God because he will watch our situations in life and persuade us to do things our way. Deceive us into making decisions that would jeopardize our relationship with God only to set us up for the worst instead of gaining victory in the end. The devil is mainly a carnal worker and will attempt to convince us to do it in a way that is disobedient to God to gain access to our lives.

*The analysis of the believer is to determine if their own life and walk are with Christ. Are we in the faith? That is the question all believers need to answer for themselves. As followers, we need to assess our Biblical belief of being honest and careful about looking into our own lives. Do we receive the word with all readiness of mind and search the scriptures daily to see whether those things were so? Do we believe every spirit that we encounter? Do we try the spirits to see whether they are of God?*

*The enemy will try to divert us from following the truth and compromise with people that may appear to serve God. The devil will attempt to challenge our faith by attacking our minds with things we love in the past. The enemy will make an effort to distract us from our pursuit of growing in the Lord. If the devil sees that we love to read the Word of God at a particular time, he will seek to bring something up unawares to disrupt that from happening. The enemy will test us to see if our relationship with God is strong or not based on how we respond to the traps that he sets.*

Conflict for a believer is one of the most thought-provoking situations to encounter. The potential danger is the temptation to retaliate in such a way that could lead to sin. The result could be physical, mental,

and emotional for all people involved. What causes confrontations to occur in the first place begins with a fault. People that face overwhelming circumstances may look for someone as an outlet to express their frustrations and feelings about it. For a believer, wisdom is the key by asking God at that moment how to respond. Jesus, the Son of God, facing such adversity to save humanity, did not respond to Pilate or Herod questions in a way we would expect. He did nothing wrong, did not say much or very little, knowing their hearts, humbly submitted. Believers, who claim to serve God, will undergo situations where there is nothing concrete to blame us, but we listen. The enemy will use people in stressful situations to get after believers to force them to get angry and commit sin. These moments God will help us according to His Word or through another will give us advice on how to handle it. All we have to do as believers are to yield.

*There should be an instant bond for a believer connecting with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. However, that might not always be the case. Still, there is a fine line for a believer responding to others, especially the unbelievers. Our response can be big or small, will either cheer or enrage them, help them or hinder them. We as believers should be careful about what we have to say and should address God first. The response to questions or concerns from family, friends, and colleagues may come to us with feelings behind them. Therefore, we must not allow it to become personal. However, it should be an opportunity to bring peace instead of war.*

*The enemy uses the person harboring sin to ask questions, make comments, come with an arsenal of accusations, display disruptive behavior to tempt a believer to sin. May constantly repeat a series of questions and not allow for answers or comments. May interrupt while the*

*responder is trying to answer the question. May mock, tease, mimic, and make inappropriate face gestures while ignoring the attempt of the receiver to respond. These schemes are coming from the devil to cause a commotion to avoid reconciliation.*

Discussion is similar to exchanging information. The believer, on their part, sometimes will use a physical expression to support their interaction with fellow people in Christ and the unbelievers. The caution here for followers of God is not always what we say but how we say it. In situations like that, the listener will partly be watching the speaker's facial expression, body language, and other pertinent gestures along with the tone of the voice. Often the listener will misunderstand the speaker due to the distraction of their external motions. Therefore, instead of hearing the speaker, they resort to assumptions because of partially interpreting the gestures. The devil will look to raise conflict for a believer through conversation. The opportunity to create havoc through a misunderstanding between believers, family members, friends, associates are the chief means of destroying relationships. Even though the believer is the one who is to be the salt during a chat, the enemy will attempt to spoil it with the other party focusing on the "I'm right! You're wrong!" approach. The daunting task is to endure this sincerely while effectively sifting through in return with our words that should be uplifting and helpful. Some situations might be worse than others. However, to help the soul see God in all that we do is the duty of a believer. After all, we are to serve others to serve God. Meanwhile, we know the devil will use others to make us do the opposite.

*A believer's progress is to continue. To follow and obey the Word of God in its entirety which will include daily prayer and reading or studying. Praying will draw us closer to God and allow the Holy Spirit to sustain us. This step will help in our preparation, humble in expectation, strength in an examination, endure confrontation, patience in communication, sincerity in conversation, and presently the conclusion. The challenge is to live for God daily in love and disassociate with sin. To spiritually babysit the flesh to ensure we defeat fear, overcome hardship, victorious in trials to experience the power of God flowing through our lives to reach others.*



*The progress of a believer.*