

Growing From Faith To Love

All throughout his epistles, the apostle Paul teaches that a sign of true spiritual maturity is having faith in Christ and love for the saints.

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. Eph 1:15 & Col 1:4

The truth is that we all begin with faith, but this faith should always lead us to genuinely love others. Many have tried with gritted teeth, only to finish frustrated, worse, offended. The apostle Peter gives us what might not be a quick shortcut, but a clear path, one of the clearest pictures of how spiritual growth actually works.

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.” 2 Peter 1:5–7 (NKJV)

This is not a random list of Christian qualities, nor is it a self-improvement checklist. Peter is describing a divinely ordered progression, how faith matures into Christlike love. It shows us how transformation happens—not overnight, not by pressure, but through cooperation with grace.

The good news is that faith is already there. Peter says, “add to your faith...” That means the foundation has been laid. What follows is the natural development of a life that is learning to walk with God.

Faith: Where It All Begins

Faith is the starting point. It is the gift God gives us when we respond to Him.

“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” 2 Pet 1:1

We all have received this faith, but it is like a spiritual muscle; it must grow. If it stays passive, it remains small and weak. God’s desire is not just that we believe, but that our faith becomes strong, steady, and fruitful. For this reason, Peter says we must add virtue to our faith.

Virtue: Making the choice to live right

Virtue is a word we don't hear much anymore, but it simply means moral courage. Virtue is faith becoming practical, expressed through decision. It's when belief turns into conviction and conviction turns into action. It is choosing to live a life that isn't automatically easy, but that will glorify God and bless others. We begin to live differently, not because we are trying to be good, but because something inside us has changed, we simply understand that our life belongs to Him. Faith without virtue stays private, so virtue gives faith a backbone, and it gives it a voice. Peter then speaks of knowledge.

Knowledge: Learning God's Ways

This is not about intellectual accumulation but it is about understanding God's ways and how to live right. Virtue is all about choosing, but knowledge is about what to choose. We begin to learn not just what God says, but how to walk with Him and how He leads us. Knowledge will teach us what is from God and what is not. But we must keep walking in God's ways, and this is why we need self-control.

Self-Control: When Truth Shapes Our Desires

This is where truth begins to touch our inner life—our reactions, appetites, and responses. Self-control is not about repression or suppression; it is about alignment. It yields to the Holy Spirit's nudges and corrections, bringing the inner man to govern our desires. The Spirit gives us grace to pause, choose, and walk differently. As we grow, we start noticing that we don't respond the same way we used to. Knowledge teaches us direction, and self-control supplies the discipline.

Self-control alone would be short-lived, but it prepares us for perseverance.

Perseverance: Staying Faithful Over Time

Self-control governs moments, while perseverance governs seasons. Perseverance is the ability to remain faithful over time, especially when faith is tested, especially when things are hard, slow, or costly.

This is not about enduring with clenched teeth. It is about learning to stay with God through pressure, disappointment, and waiting. Here, faith grows deep roots, and it moves from enthusiasm to endurance.

Godliness: Living Aware of God

Perseverance produces godliness—a life lived with a constant awareness of God’s presence.

Godliness is not about appearing spiritual. It is about walking with God in the ordinary moments of life. At this stage, faith has been tested, refined, and deepened. Obedience now flows more from intimacy and relationship than from effort. We are no longer just doing things for God; we are living with Him. Peter then speaks of brotherly kindness. Why? Because the beauty of Godliness is that it will slowly and without effort turn our hearts and attention outward, to others.

Brotherly Kindness: Loving the Family of God

Brotherly kindness is the affectionate love shared among believers. This is practical love: patience, tenderness, forgiveness, and loyalty. As we walk closely with God, our hearts soften toward others. We begin to carry one another, not judge one another. Spiritual maturity always expresses itself through love for others. This kind of love is good, yet still imperfect. God wants to bring us to fullness, to take us one step further... to the God kind of love, the Agape Love.

Love: The Fullness of the Journey

This is self-giving, sacrificial love—the kind of love that reflects God Himself, the kind of love that seeks the good of others without condition.

As faith is strengthened, disciplined, tested, and purified, love begins to flow naturally. This is not forced love; it is formed love. Love is not where we begin; it is where we arrive.

This is what maturity looks like, and love is in fact the highest expression of spiritual maturity.



GoTell.net
info@gotell.net
GoTell, PO Box 350773
Jacksonville, FL 32235-9998

The Flow of Grace

This is not self-improvement. This is transformation!

Faith awakens, Virtue activates, Knowledge directs, Self-control aligns, Perseverance strengthens, Godliness deepens, Brotherly kindness softens, Love overflows.

God is not in a hurry with us. He is forming something lasting, something eternal.

Faith grows as we walk with Him, respond to Him, and stay with Him. Over time, what begins as belief becomes a life marked by love. That love is not something we strive for—it is something we grow into.