

Cleanse Your Ways

A well-baby checkup is a common practice in our society. Parents like to know their new arrival is in top shape and growing according to schedule. Parents recognize the need to keep up with their child's progress in life: mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. This physical truth is also a spiritual one. The scriptures tell us that spiritual growth is to be taken seriously. The apostle Peter addressed this issue in several scriptures. He said, "as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (1 Peter 2:2); as well as, "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Just as growth is essential in life, so is spiritual growth.

As physical requirements are essential to physical growth, we understand that certain requirements are essential to spiritual growth. These requirements involve basic principles. Before life, a birth must take place: this is axiomatic. When Jesus spoke with Nicodemus, he said, "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Once this new birth has taken place, the child of God must keep himself or herself from sin.

Satan's tools consist of "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life" (1 John 2:16). The flesh seeks to be gratified, the eyes see and covet, and the desire to be someone special has resulted in the fall of many. To keep ourselves pure, we must develop an attitude of self-denial: proper spiritual priorities must be established. Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" (Matthew 16:24-26).

The apostle Paul said, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world" (Titus 2:12). Denying oneself will keep the child of God free from sin. The Psalmist put it this way: "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: Oh let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I laid up in my heart, That I might not sin against thee" (Psa. 119:9-11).
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