

## A CHECKLIST TO ENCOURAGE SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Faith must be active – we cannot make progress by drifting aimlessly. The apostles urge us to press ahead, to learn and grow in the Lord (Philippians 3:12-15, 2 Peter 1:5-11). This checklist reminds us of some of the ways in which spiritual growth can be enabled, pursued and seen in our daily life. Take a few moments to think about your own walk. Are you pressing on?

- ☑ **I make time to learn** from my Lord and to gain wisdom so that I may be a faithful witness to Him in the way that I live.  
**Why?** It requires time to learn from the Lord. In a demanding world we must choose to order our lives so that we have time in the Scripture and time for prayer. The Lord Jesus was never rushed, and He always made time for prayer to His Father.
  
- ☑ **I welcome the Holy Spirit to convict me** of whatever displeases Him in my words, thoughts and deeds.  
**Why?** Our lives must be open to our Lord or He is not truly our Lord. We must be willing to face up to our sins and in that way be delivered from them. See 1 John 1:9 for the promise that enables the boldness that leads to sanctification.
  
- ☑ **I look to my Shepherd for grace and strength** to resist all that can seduce me to follow the ways of the world.  
**Why?** We are warned, “*Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall*” (1 Corinthians 10:12). We face many temptations in life, but our Shepherd can guide us safely through them all. Morning by morning, we look to Him to order our day.
  
- ☑ **I practice self-discipline** so that I will not be controlled by addictions, bad habits, laziness, gluttony or selfishness.  
**Why?** Self-discipline is self-control, which is one of the fruits of a Spirit filled life (Galatians 5:22-25). If we don’t control ourselves, who or what does? Disciples of Jesus learn how to resist the desires of the flesh with active self-discipline.
  
- ☑ **I don’t follow fashion or the world’s fads** thoughtlessly, but I live in the world as a pilgrim, with a different and higher citizenship.  
**Why?** If we follow what everyone else is doing, watching, reading or wearing, we are not following the Lord Jesus. The spirit of the world is not of God. Our calling is to walk with Him in humility, learning to focus on the things that matter for eternity.
  
- ☑ **I work honestly and generously**, as unto the Lord, not seeking selfish gain or advantage, nor to become rich.  
**Why?** Whether at school, at work or caring for others in the home, how we work is a vitally important part of our witness to the Lord. Dealing with the difficulties and challenges that arise in our work is very helpful experience for our spiritual growth.
  
- ☑ **I keep a watch on my speech**, so that I may say nothing that might dishonour the Lord Jesus or stumble the weakest or newest saint.  
**Why?** Our words have power to bless and power to harm others, to glorify God or to dishonour Him. “*Be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger*” (James 1:19-20). Our words reveal our heart, which we are told to guard with all diligence (Proverbs 4:23).

Let’s encourage one another as much, and as often, as we can, and let’s grow together in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus.