Five Essential Elements of Spiritual Growth

1 Pet. 2:1-3

Introduction:

A. Growth important to every form of life - not necessary to prove - recognized by all.
B. Growth is unto salvation (v. 2 ASV).
   1. Lack of growth means deterioration - going backwards.
   2. Lack of growth means stagnation - breeds germs, disease and death.
C. We call attention to five essential elements of spiritual growth:

Discussion:

I. There must Be Life for Growth.

A. Lifeless matter cannot grow (men, horses, churches).
B. “Therefore” in verse 1 refers back to being born again (1:22-25)
   1. Begotten by gospel (1 Cor. 4:15).
   2. Begotten or brought forth by word of truth (Jas. 1:18 KJV, NKJV)
C. Must be raised from dead to new life. (Rom. 6:1-11)

II. There must Be a Place for Growth.

A. Fish cannot live out of water, certain plants cannot thrive in certain areas.
B. Bible shows importance of place shown from many passages
   2. Vineyard in a very fruitful hill (Isa. 5:1).
   3. Tree planted by rivers of water (Psa. 1:3)
C. Spiritual growth takes place in Christ (Eph. 4:15-16).
   1. Spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3).
   2. New birth brings one into Christ (Gal. 3:26, 27)
   3. New creatures in Christ - new life (2 Cor. 5:17).
D. Evil associations are not conducive to growth (1 Cor. 15:33)
   1. Bar and dance hall no place for spiritual growth.
   2. Unscriptural churches no place for spiritual growth (1 Cor 15:33 in doctrinal context)
E. Places for spiritual growth.
   1. Meeting with saints in scriptural worship.
   2. Other wholesome associations.

III. There must Be Nourishment for Growth.

A. Sincere (pure - unmixed - not watered down) milk of the word (Gal. 1:6)
B. Must desire or hunger and thirst. (Cf. Matt 5:6).
C. Built up by the word of his grace (Acts 20:32).
D. Milk for babes, meat for mature. (Heb. 5:12-14).
E. Feeding on moral and spiritual “junk food” will destroy spirituality.

IV. There must Be Cultivation for Growth.

A. Weed out things that hinder growth — malice, deceit, etc. (1 Pet. 2:1)
B. Practice - exercise. (Heb. 5:14).

V. There must Be Patience for Growth.

A. Takes time (Heb. 5:12; cf. Jas 5:7)
B. Patient with young and the weak.

Conclusion:

A. Remembering these things will help us all grow up together in Christ.
B. To grow, you first must be born — why not now?