

# We Must Spend Time With Our Creator God

**Probably the most widespread and persistent problem to be found among Christians is the problem of retarded spiritual growth.**

**Ephesians 2:1-6** [NIV] *“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands: I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you: **You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first.** If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. But you have this in your favour: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”*

Jesus Christ points out this problem to the church at Ephesus. They were busy doing many good things and had right attitudes towards the evils in this world. There was, however, one important thing they lacked; they had lost the enthusiasm they first had when the Good News of what Jesus Christ had done for them was originally shown them.

**In the first steps of your Christian life, you may have had great enthusiasm but little knowledge, but now you have knowledge but little enthusiasm.**

**Both of these are necessary if we are to keep our love for God intense and untarnished.**

**Hebrews 10:32-39** [NIV] *“Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathised with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, ‘He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.’ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.”*

The writer encourages his readers **not** to abandon their faith in Jesus Christ in times of persecution, which will come to all Christians. **But to show by their endurance that their faith is real.**

**The causes of retarded growth and loss of faith are many.**

**There is one, however, which is so universal that it may easily be the main cause.**

**Failure to give time to the cultivation of the knowledge of God and building a personal relationship with Him.**

**The temptation to make our relationship with God judicial and ritualistic instead of personal is very strong.**

**Sadly, believing for salvation has these days been reduced to a once-done act that requires no further attention.**

**Acts 16:22-31** [NIV] *“The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody’s chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, ‘Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!’ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ They replied, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.’”*

**Too many people finish reading at the end of this verse and fail to read on.**

**Acts 16:32** [NIV] *“Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.”*

Paul and Silas then taught them what was involved in salvation and they were then baptised, with the indication that the whole family continued to meet with the rest of the Christian family at Lydia’s house, [verse 15].

A Christian **only** matures when they have cultivated the knowledge of God and His will and built up a personal relationship with Him.

This takes time, time we must offer to our Creator.

**Romans 12:1-2** [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

**A Christian must devote their whole life to the desire to know Jesus Christ more intimately.**

**Philippians 3:8, 10, 14** [NIV] *“What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ” ... “I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,” ... “I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus.”*

Progress in our Christian life is exactly equal to the growing knowledge we gain of the Triune God through personal experience.

**Are we willing to sacrifice our life, that is time, to know Jesus Christ more intimately?**

**John 17:3** [NIV] *“Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”*

Eternal life is to continue to know God the Father and Jesus Christ more intimately, as the Greek word for “know” indicates.

**1 John 5:11-12** [NIV] *“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”*

**We can experience this close relationship right now if we are willing to give our time to accomplish it now.**

**John 6:63-68** [NIV] *“‘The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus had known*

*from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, 'This is why I told you that no-one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.' From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. 'You do not want to leave too, do you?' Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have the words of eternal life.**'"*

**It is the teaching of Jesus Christ that leads us to being given the gift of eternal life. [Romans 6:23]**

A thousand distractions will woo us away from thoughts of God, but if we are wise we will sternly put them from us and make room for the King, Jesus Christ, and take time to converse with Him.

**The Christian Bible tells us how to develop this intimate relationship, it is altogether a matter of how determined and enthusiastic we are to experience this Holy task.**