

THIS IS HARD TO DENY

10/17 & 10/18

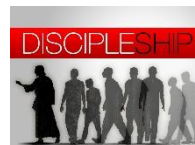
[Luke 9:23-26](#) – We watch our children grow into adults physically, mentally, and emotionally. It is hard to watch people grow spiritually. We are not able to see their thoughts, prayers, or their effort in their spiritual practices. We can see how they react to life and who they credit. In Luke 9:23-26, Jesus is speaking with his disciples privately and asking them how they see him. He shares with them that he will soon die and be resurrected. Then he tells them they must deny themselves, pick up their cross, and follow him. Jesus knew the next part of their life would be hard, and he knew they were ready for it. They grew in their understanding of who he is and in their ministry opportunities. They were ready.

How do you know when someone spiritually matures?

How can you grow spiritually?

Why is this important?

Sermon Notes



Our Journey for October 12 – October 18, 2026

There are times when we wish our children wouldn't grow up. We want them to stay in that sweet, innocent stage of life. But time marches on, and growth happens. What about our growth as followers of Jesus? Does growth just happen, or is it something we need to be intentional about? I don't think spiritual growth just happens. We don't become spiritually mature because time elapses. If you stop praying, what happens? Does your relationship with Jesus grow? When we stop praying, we miss what Jesus is speaking into our lives. We miss out on the peace that prayer gives. We miss out on the next thing Jesus has for us. In reality, we stunt our spiritual growth because we are not nurturing our souls. When we keep praying, there comes a time when our prayers are deeper, and we hear more clearly what Jesus is saying. We grow spiritually. This week, let's focus on growing our spiritual lives ~ Pastor Seth

GROWING = DEPTH

Mon. 10/12

[Psalm 119:33-40](#) – When we learn, the information we are learning stands upon the information we learned in the past. If you bake, you know what ingredients work together and which work against each other. In math, we learn to add and use that to understand multiplication. What we learned informs what we are learning. The same idea works in our spiritual journey. We understand Jesus loves us, and we build on that truth to see that Jesus loves unconditionally and at all times. An example would be when we accepted Jesus as our Lord. We heard that Jesus loved us. We accepted that truth, but did Jesus love us when we lied later that day? Our answer is yes, but did we accept that answer when we lied, or were we fearful that he didn't love us because we sinned? Our experience of love was more conditional until that moment. We grew in our understanding of Jesus' love.

What are you learning about Jesus now?

Where are you learning about Jesus?

I AM LISTENING

Tue. 10/13

[1 Samuel 3:1-21](#) – Samuel's life is interesting. His mother was not able to have children for a long time and prayed that she would have a son. When she became pregnant, she knew she would give her son into God's service. Samuel began serving God as a toddler. He grew up in the priest Eli's house. The Bible says that God was silent for a long time, then He spoke to Samuel. The issue was that Samuel didn't know what was going on, and there was no one to help him. When Eli figured out what was going on, he told Samuel to say, speak for your servant is listening. When Samuel obeyed, God spoke to Samuel and continued to speak until the day Samuel died. As Samuel grew, so did his understanding of God and his love for God. We may not be as young as Samuel, but we can learn how God speaks to us.

How does God speak to you?

How do you know it is God?

GOD'S WAYS

Wed. 10/14

[Isaiah 55:1-13](#) – Have you ever thought about finite and infinite? Finite has a beginning and an end. Infinite does not. Finite is limited in understanding. Infinite does not. Humans are finite. God is not. When God speaks to Isaiah, He shares with him what He is about to do, but not how He will do it. God has items that bring life to people, milk and bread, but He is not going to charge them. He is bringing life to them through His words and gifts. They will not be able to understand when or how it will happen, but it will happen like the watering of the earth. We may not understand everything that happens when rain and snow come, but we see grass grow. God's word is like the rain and snow watering our lives, and we grow because of it. We may not understand how or when, but we can feel our spirits growing.

When has God helped you grow spiritually?

What is God's rain and snow in your life?

HOW DID HE KNOW?

Thur. 10/15

[Matthew 16:13-20](#) – Some people know a lot of things. They can tell facts and trivia. Others can discern what you are thinking. When we engage in a conversation with either group, we leave wondering how they knew. Jesus is talking with His disciples, and He asks them about the crowds and what they think of Him. The disciples give the responses that they heard. Jesus then asks them what they think of Him. Peter says He is the Messiah. Peter is often brash about his thoughts and doesn't try to hide them. So, it is interesting to see what comes out of his mouth. You can almost see the disciples cringe when Peter speaks, but then they begin to nod in agreement. It has taken time for the disciples to reach this conclusion. They saw the miracles and heard the teaching. They felt the forgiveness. They knew Peter was right.

How long did it take you to know Jesus as the Messiah?

How did you figure it out?

GROWING IN FAITH

Fri. 10/16

[2 Thessalonians 1:3-4](#) – Do you encourage people when you see them do something good? Some are gifted at it. Others aren't very good at all in praising people's good efforts. Paul is writing to a church that is under severe persecution. They had no financial resources to support one another, but they gave what they could to support the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. Paul praises them for what they are doing. He recognizes their growth in faith by their love for others. Isn't it interesting to note that Paul sees their love for others? How does he see it? He sees it through their giving words of encouragement and financial resources. Paul knows they could keep their money, and no one would blame them. Their faith in God will not let them sit idly by, so they pray, support, and help their brothers and sisters in Christ.

How can others see your faith growing?

Who should you encourage as you see their faith growing?