

Question #2.b. “Sanctification,” or “Discipleship”

The second part of this change of mind, change of heart, change of priorities and change of life-style is the spiritual growth of Christian living.

The Gospel Song puts it this way,

“Day by day, O Dear Lord, three things I pray:
to see Thee more clearly,
to love Thee more dearly,
to follow Thee more nearly, day by day.”

The theological word for this process is “**sanctification**,” meaning to grow in holiness or godliness. We seek to become better people because we are being changed from the inside out by God’s living Word, applied to our lives by God’s Holy Spirit.

The process of growing in Christian Character is also known as “**discipleship**.” We are disciples, or followers of Jesus, as we apply his teachings to our daily conduct and morals.

In Romans 12:1-2 The Apostle Paul describes the process like this. “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. [2] 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.”

The sermon outline describes the process in this way:

- We were FORMED in the Image and Likeness of God (Genesis 1, 2)
- We were DEFORMED by the corruption of sin (Genesis 3, Romans 1-3, etc.)
- We all are CONFORMED to the pattern of this world (which is either ignorant, uncaring or hostile toward God)
- God’s Word allows us to become INFORMED about the possibility of mercy and living a new, holy life that pleases God.
- We are REFORMED by our conversion to Jesus Christ when we receive the gift of new life and salvation when we are “Born Again.”
- We are called to participate with God in the process of being TRANSFORMED by changing our thoughts, attitudes, motivations and values to agree with God’s Will and Truth, especially as revealed in the Bible, the written Word of God.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

Are you making efforts to grow spiritually? How?

Are you reading the Bible and Christian literature to put God’s ideas into your head and heart?

Do you listen to Christian music to inspire your personal worship of God?

Do you talk about spiritual things with family and friends to encourage one another?

Would you be willing to seek additional help to overcome a problem?

How do you think God wants to change your priorities, relationships, habits, etc. for the better?