

What's Next

Part One - Progressive Christianity

God always has a next step for us to take.

1 Timothy 4:15

Practice these things. Devote your life to them so that everyone can see your progress.

Romans 12:2

Don't become like the people of this world. Instead, change the way you think. Then you will always be able to determine what God really wants - what is good, pleasing, and perfect.

Romans 8:29

Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart to become like his Son...

1 Timothy 4:12-14

Don't let anyone look down on you for being young. Instead, make your speech, behavior, love, faith, and purity an example for other believers. 13 Until I get there, concentrate on reading Scripture in worship, giving encouraging messages, and teaching people. 14 Don't neglect the gift which you received through prophecy when the spiritual leaders placed their hands on you to ordain you.

Eight Next Steps in Spiritual Progression

1. How You Talk

Ephesians 4:29

Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

2. How You Act

Galatians 5:19-21

Now, the effects of the corrupt nature are obvious: illicit sex, perversion, promiscuity, 20 idolatry, drug use, hatred, rivalry, jealousy, angry outbursts, selfish ambition, conflict, factions, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild partying, and similar things. I've told you in the past and I'm telling you again that people who do these kinds of things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

3. How You Love

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient. Love is kind. Love isn't jealous. It doesn't sing its own praises. It isn't arrogant. 5 It isn't rude. It doesn't think about itself. It isn't irritable. It doesn't keep track of wrongs. 6 It

isn't happy when injustice is done, but it is happy with the truth. 7 Love never stops being patient, never stops believing, never stops hoping, never gives up.

4. How You Believe

John 5:39-40

You study the scriptures thoroughly because you think in them you possess eternal life, and it is these same scriptures that testify about me, 40 but you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life.

2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

5. How Pure You Are

Hebrews 4:15

Jesus understands every weakness of ours because he was tempted in every way that we are. But he did not sin!

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. 4 Then each of you will control his own body and live in holiness and honor - not in lustful passion like the pagans who do not know God and his ways. 6 Never harm or cheat a fellow believer in this matter by violating his wife, for the Lord avenges all such sins, as we have solemnly warned you before. 7 God has called us to live holy lives, not impure lives. 8 Therefore, anyone who refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human teaching but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

6. How We Revere God's Word

1 Timothy 4:13-14

Until I get there, concentrate on reading Scripture in worship, giving encouraging messages, and teaching people. 14 Don't neglect the gift which you received through prophecy when the spiritual leaders placed their hands on you to ordain you.

Matthew 4:4

But he answered, "It is written, 'Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

7. How Committed You are to Church

Hebrews 10:25

Some people have given up the habit of meeting for worship, but we must not do that. We should keep on encouraging each other, especially since you know that the day of the Lord's coming is getting closer.

8. How You Use Your Gifting

1 Peter 4:10

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

Matthew 6:21

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

As we faithfully take the next step God has given us, we progress in our faith and become more Christlike.

Philippians 1:9-10

I pray that your love will keep on growing because of your knowledge and insight. 10 That way you will be able to determine what is best and be pure and blameless until the day of Christ.