

# Spiritual Growth

Enrico Caruso, the great Italian tenor, was once observed pacing up and down backstage at the Metropolitan Opera. Caruso kept saying, “You little me, get out of me! You big me, get into me!”

All Christians would do well if they could get the “little me” forever out of themselves and the “big me” in for good. There is something great in all of us. We are made in the image of God. This means that we have an incredible potential for goodness, for greatness. God believes this. This phenomenal change comes about as we develop into the “royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people” (Pet. 2:9). We become our best when we walk with God as His spiritual children. Only by following God’s direction, the Bible, do we come to the peak of our performance. This is true of the husband and wife, the parent and child and especially so of one’s own self. Too often though, Christians feel out-numbered by their problems and simply under-developed spiritually. Instead of being strong and powerful, we settle for being spiritually “weak and puny.” We need to develop spiritually. We need to grow spiritually. God wants us to possess the faith of a mustard seed which can move mountains. God wants us to be strong (1 Cor. 16:13); Eph. 6:10). When we are strong, we can stand firm against the devil (Eph. 6:11). When we are strong we can help others spiritually (Gal. 6:1). When we are strong we become what God wants us to be. To become strong in the Lord one must develop spiritually.

1. **Spiritual Development Takes Regular and Consistent Practice.** One does not become a champion body-builder by stopping by the gym “every now and then.” A goal oriented, strictly followed program is what turns one into a champion! One develops spiritually by the same method. Coming to Bible classes now and then, and skimming through passages rapidly will not give you the mighty faith that you are capable of having. The disciples were daily studying the Bible (Acts 17:11); daily praying (Mt. 6:11); daily cross-bearing (Lk. 9:23); daily encouraging (Heb. 3:13) and daily teaching (Acts 5:42). The Psalmist wrote about the man who delights in the law of the Lord and in this law “doth he meditate day and night” (Ps 1:2). A regular and consistent pattern of spiritual activity must be followed to grow spiritually. You need to make a plan.
2. **Spiritual Development Demands Self-Discipline.** Many men have set out to be triumphant only to fizzle out because they could not give their total attention to this goal. They became side tracked, and got bogged down. Other things

stole their heart so that they lost the importance of this goal and settled for mediocrity. Being a Christian means learning to say the word “NO”. Paul wrote, “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thes. 5:22). The Christian who can not turn aside from the things that demand his time and his interest will never reach his potential. The great Christian will keep his mind “on things above” (Col. 3:2) and adjust all else around this goal. He will make regular set times to study his Bible and pray to God.

3. **Spiritual Development Takes Time.** No one ever became a champion overnight. Many months of practice and development go into every winner. Some become discouraged and grow impatient and quit. But those who stick to it will see the gradual changes become great changes as they reach their potential. Babes in Christ must eagerly seek the milk of God’s word (1 Pet. 2:2). Listening to the advice of older Christians, and with practice and patience we can become the great men and women of faith that God wants for us to be. Do not grow weary and do not give up!

There is something great in all of us. Believe it about yourself. Believe it about others. More than this, so something about it, **today!**

Roger Shouse

\_\_\_\_\_ Every day I will read \_\_\_\_\_ (verses/chapters) in my Bible.

\_\_\_\_\_ Every day I will pray, remembering to thank the Lord.