

The Believer's Growth in Dependence

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)

In the natural realm, the more we grow up – the more independent we become. When we were infants we depended on our parents to feed us, clothe us and change our soiled diapers. But soon we were able to eat on our own, change our own clothes and clean ourselves without their help. When we are come to full age we are then said to be self-dependent or self-reliant. We work and provide for our own needs as well as for the needs of our children.

Now consider that the opposite is true concerning *spiritual* maturity. The more we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, the more *dependent* upon God we become (Proverbs 3:5). The more mature we become, the more we are able to see the vileness of our nature and the deceptive nature of our own heart. We are made to feel and know our proneness to all sorts of sin and uncleanness (Isaiah 51:1; Romans 7:18-25; Philippians 3:8-11; Job 40:4).

Therefore, we are made to cling more tightly to Christ. We are made to labor to enter into the rest of Christ's one perfect offering for sin. We are made to trust in God's promises, power, and providence when all of life seems to be contrary to His word. Spiritual maturity is not *less* dependence on Christ but *more* dependence upon the Salvation of God. As believers spiritually grow up, our faith *in* Christ, our hope that is *by* Christ and our love *for* Christ also grow. And all the while, our confidence in – and dependence upon – the flesh decreases (Philippians 3:3).

- Fred Evans