**Spirit-salvation is eternal in scope and is based solely on the work of Christ on the Cross and which can never be lost; whereas soul-salvation is strictly millennial in scope, is based solely upon a Christian’s perseverance (faithfulness) in faith-based works during his Christian life, and is a salvation that can be lost through neglect (**[**Hebrews 2:3**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.3&t=NKJV)**), which is the subject of the various warning passages in the book of Hebrews.**

**God’s Remedy for Spiritual Immaturity
By Charles Strong of** [**Bible One**](http://www.bibleone.net/)

(This document centers on Jesus the Christ (*lit*. “Messiah”) and the *entire* tripartite redemptive plan of God for mankind, a key aspect of which is largely absent throughout Christendom today. It is replete with an abundance of scriptural references which can serve as a suitable Bible study lesson plan for any Christian Bible study class.

The underlining of specific words in passages of Scripture is for emphasis)

God’s inspired (living) Word emphasizes the necessity for continuous spiritual growth in both the understanding of and implementation of God’s will and purpose for mankind. No Christian is exempt from this mandate, as seen in the following passages of Scripture:

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.* ([Romans 12:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.1-2&t=NKJV))

*Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.* ([1 Corinthians 14:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+14.20&t=NKJV))

*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*. ([2 Corinthians 7:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+7.1&t=NKJV))

*That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and* *revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.* ([Ephesians 1:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.17-18&t=NKJV))

*For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ that passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*. ([Ephesians 3:14-19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.14-19&t=NKJV))

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers* [*lit.* pastor-teachers]*, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge* [*epignosis -* full-knowledge] *of the Son of God, to a perfect* [*lit.* full-grown, mature] *man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting*. ([Ephesians 4:11-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.11-14&t=NKJV))

*Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind* . . . *.* ([Philippians 3:13-15a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.13-15a&t=NKJV))

*For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy.* ([Colossians 1:9-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.9-11&t=NKJV))

*As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving*. ([Colossians 2:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.6-7&t=NKJV))

*Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God . . . For this is the will of God, your sanctification . . . that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor . . . For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness*. ([1 Thessalonians 4:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.1&t=NKJV), [3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.3-4&t=NKJV), [7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.7&t=NKJV) [3a])

*Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge* [*epignosis –* full knowledge] *of the truth.* ([1 Timothy 2:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+2.4&t=NKJV))

*Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. . . . Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.* ([1 Timothy 4:12-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.12-13&t=NKJV), [15-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.15-16&t=NKJV))

*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.* ([2 Timothy 2:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.15&t=NKJV))

*But you must continue in the things that you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God* [*lit*. God-breathed], *and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.* ([2 Timothy 3:14-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.14-17&t=NKJV))

*Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him*. ([Hebrews 2:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.1-3&t=NKJV))

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the Word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*. ([Hebrews 5:12-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.12-14&t=NKJV))

*Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby . . . you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* ([1 Peter 2:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.1-2&t=NKJV), [5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.5&t=NKJV))

*Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless . . . but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*. ([2 Peter 3:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.14&t=NKJV), [18a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+3.18a&t=NKJV))

A person enters the family of God through *spirit-salvation*, otherwise known as the “new birth” or the “birth from above,” which is apprehended by a one-time decision in which he accepts solely by faith God’s grace-gift of eternal salvation ([Ephesians 2:8-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.8-9&t=NKJV)), which is based entirely upon the vicarious (substitutionary) penalty-payment made by Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary ([Isaiah 53:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+53.6&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.13&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.21&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 2:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.24&t=NKJV)) — a transaction that is irrevocable by either God or man ([John 6:37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+6.37&t=NKJV); [10:27-28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+10.27-28&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 1:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+1.22&t=NKJV); [5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.5&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.13-14&t=NKJV)). This expression of the will, a non-meritorious act God requires man to execute for personal eternal redemption, is most succinctly stated by Paul and Silas to the Philippian jailer’s inquiry (“*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*”), which was “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved* “ ([Acts 16:30-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+16.30-31&t=NKJV); see also [John 1:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.12&t=NKJV); [Acts 10:43](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Acts+10.43&t=NKJV)).

At this discretionary junction, when a person who is “*dead in trespasses and sins*” is made spiritually “*alive*” ([Ephesians 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.1&t=NKJV)), he enters the family of God as a spiritual infant, a child who experientially knows almost nothing of God’s Word. And this is due to the fact that before his spiritual birth, “*the* *natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they* [the things of the Spirit] *are spiritually discerned*” ([1 Corinthians 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.14&t=NKJV)). This fact argues forcefully against what some evangelicals promote as “Lordship Salvation,” which is the dual requirement to “make Christ Lord of one’s life” in addition to “*believing* in Him” in order to obtain eternal life. Upon being born from above, the infantile Christian does not know what it means for Christ to be Lord of his life and he has no concept of the path to this lofty goal. Making Christ “Lord of one’s life,” unlike the instantaneous act of spiritual birth, is a continuous and progressive process of *sanctification* (being set-apart) that will dominate the Christian throughout his entire temporal life should he choose to engage in it.

The venture down the pathway of sanctification is classified in Scripture as *soul-salvation* ([Matthew 10:39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+10.39&t=NKJV); [16:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.25&t=NKJV); [16:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.24-27&t=NKJV); [Mark 8:35](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+8.35&t=NKJV); [Luke 9:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+9.24&t=NKJV); [17:33](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Luke+17.33&t=NKJV); [John 12:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+12.25&t=NKJV) [“life” and “soul” are used interchangeably in the New Testament, both stemming from the same Greek word, *psuche*]; [Hebrews 10:39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.39&t=NKJV); [James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 1:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+1.9&t=NKJV)), which is separate from *spirit-salvation* ([John 3:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.6-7&t=NKJV)), a distinction made by the Holy Spirit (the Greek words for “spirit” and “soul” are never used interchangeably) as this is necessary regarding the tripartite nature of man ([1 Thessalonians 5:23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+5.23&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 4:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+4.12&t=NKJV)).

Spirit-salvation is eternal in scope and is based solely on the work of Christ on the Cross and which can never be lost; whereas soul-salvation is strictly millennial in scope, is based solely upon a Christian’s perseverance (faithfulness) in faith-based works during his Christian life, and is a salvation that can be lost through neglect ([Hebrews 2:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+2.3&t=NKJV)), which is the subject of the various warning passages in the book of Hebrews. And whereas spirit-salvation is determined and settled by the person’s decision of faith in Christ during temporal life, his soul-salvation is determined by issues and determinations (based upon his works) made at the Judgment Seat of Christ subsequent to his temporal life ([Matthew 16:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+16.24-27&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 3:11-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.11-15&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:10-11a](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.10-11a&t=NKJV); [Romans 2:3-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+2.3-11&t=NKJV); [14:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+14.10&t=NKJV); [Galatians 6:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.7&t=NKJV); [Colossians 3:24-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.24-25&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 10:23-31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.23-31&t=NKJV); [Revelation 2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2&t=NKJV); [3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+3&t=NKJV); [22:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+22.12&t=NKJV)) and which is then extended throughout the Messianic Era, the millennial reign of Christ over Earth.

(For a comprehensive comparison of spirit-salvation to soul-salvation the following two books by Arlen L. Chitwood are recommended: [Salvation of the Soul](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/salvation-of-the-soul.php) in this site, and [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Salvation by Grace through Faith](http://bibleone.net/SGF.htm). Another excellent book on the subjects is [Bible One - Gary Whipple's Beyond the Rapture](http://www.bibleone.net/BeyondtheRapture.pdf).)

A Christian’s soul-salvation is directly proportional to his spiritual growth, that is, it is directly related to his spiritual maturity. The first cannot be achieved without the second. Spiritual maturity is absolutely essential if the Christian is to please God in this life, to obtain his soul’s salvation at the Judgment Seat of Christ, to be part of the Bride of Christ.

(As in the *type*, the bride of the First Adam was taken from his body [[Genesis 2:21-23](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+2.21-23&t=NKJV)] , so it will be in the *antitype*, the bride of the Second Adam will be taken from His body [[Romans 5:14b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.14b&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthian 15:45-49](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthian+15.45-49&t=NKJV); [Philippians 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.11&t=NKJV)], and to ultimately rule and reign with Christ as His wife and consort queen during the coming Messianic Era [[2 Timothy 2:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.12&t=NKJV); [Revelation 19:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.7-8&t=NKJV); [20:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.4-6&t=NKJV)])

But sadly, if one will understand and accept the lessons of the parables relayed by Christ, as recorded in [Matthew 13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13&t=NKJV), which pertain to the “*mysteries of the kingdom*” ([Matthew 13:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.11&t=NKJV)), *i.e*., the acquisition of the “*word of the kingdom*” ([Matthew 13:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+13.19&t=NKJV)) doctrine from then until now; it will become apparent to him that spiritual maturity will not be the norm during the last days of the Church dispensation.

(It should be noted that there is a distinct difference between *gnosis* [knowledge] and *epignosis* [full or mature knowledge] of the Word [[Ephesians 1:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.7&t=NKJV); [4:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.13&t=NKJV); [Colossians 1:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.9-10&t=NKJV); [2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2&t=NKJV); [1 Timothy 2:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+2.14&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 2:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.25&t=NKJV); [3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.7&t=NKJV); [Titus 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Titus+1.1&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 10:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.26&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV)]. The former applies to a fragmentary understanding of it; the latter to a clear and mature [comprehensive] understanding of it. The former relates to the “milk” [elementary] doctrines; the latter to the “meat” [advanced] doctrines [[Hebrews 5:12-6:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+5.12-6.2&t=NKJV)]. The former speaks to spirit-salvation; the latter to soul-salvation, which involves an understanding of God’s comprehensive program of redemption pertaining to the purpose and future of man — the “*word of the kingdom*.”)

An understanding of this key doctrine of God’s Word, *i.e*., the “*word of the kingdom*,” is nearly non-existent in Christendom today. And because of this, most Christians lack the additional motivation that always accompanies this truth, which can be most efficacious toward the achievement of more advanced stages of spiritual growth. Indeed, to come to an understanding of the “*word of the kingdom*” normally reflects a plateau of doctrinal awareness that is associated with proper advancement along the spiritual path of maturity.

The question is, as is reflected in the title to this study, what is God’s remedy for spiritual immaturity? And to this writer the answer is summed up in the following passage of Scripture:

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith* [*lit*. the faith], *who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*. ([Hebrews 12:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.1-2&t=NKJV))

The key to spiritual growth (maturity) is encompassed in the words, “*looking to Jesus, the Author* (*lit*. Originator) *and Finisher* (*lit*. Perfecter) *of our* *faith*.” For it is only as we look to Christ are we able to “*lay* *aside every weight, and the sin that so easily ensnares us*,” permitting us to “*run with endurance the race that is set before us*.” The apostle Paul says it in similar fashion:

*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts*. ([Romans 13:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+13.14&t=NKJV))

*My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you*. ([Galatians 4:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.19&t=NKJV))

*As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him*. ([Colossians 2:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.6&t=NKJV))

Quite clearly, Christianity is *all about Christ*. He was the instrumental Person of the Trinity who created man, the very objects to which Christianity encompasses ([Genesis 1:2b](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.2b&t=NKJV); [Psalm 33:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Psalm+33.16&t=NKJV); [John 1:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.1-3&t=NKJV), [10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.10&t=NKJV), [14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+1.14&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 3:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+3.9&t=NKJV); [Colossians 1:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+1.16&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+1.2&t=NKJV)). Christ was the One in whom God the Father expressed and continues to express His pleasure ([Isaiah 42:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Isaiah+42.1&t=NKJV); [Matthew 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+3.17&t=NKJV); [12:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+12.18&t=NKJV); [17:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew+17.5&t=NKJV); [Mark 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Mark+1.11&t=NKJV); [2 Peter 1:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.17&t=NKJV)). Christ alone became sin for us that we may become the righteousness of God in Him ([2 Corinthians 5:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.21&t=NKJV)). The Holy Spirit never focuses His attention upon Himself; the Holy Spirit will only testify of and glorify Christ ([John 14:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+14.26&t=NKJV); [15:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+15.26&t=NKJV); [16:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+16.13-14&t=NKJV)). And it is Christ alone by whom Christians will be judged; and, upon passing this judgment will rule and reign with Christ as His Bride and consort queen during the coming Messianic Era ([2 Timothy 2:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.12&t=NKJV); [Revelation 20:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+20.4-6&t=NKJV)).

Yet there is extensive and pervasive efforts throughout Christendom, particularly in so-called evangelical circles, that would have the believer in Christ look elsewhere for spiritual growth, to the Holy Spirit, to emotional gyrations, to the local church, to self-effort in the adoption of a system of taboos (do’s and don’t), which is nothing more than legalism, all of which eventually leads to a state of pride and a certain “falling away” from true spiritual growth. Indeed, while it is popular for Christians (and non-Christians) to proclaim the name of God in realms of religion, secularism, and politics; the name of Jesus Christ is often taboo, to be avoided as one would a plague.

Yet, in all matters of this life, it is Jesus Christ alone to whom the child of God must look if spiritual growth to maturity is to be achieved. A Christian should avoid following a litany of rules prescribed by a religious organization or seeking what many incorrectly believe to be a “second act of grace,” *i.e.* the baptism of the Holy Spirit (in accordance with Scripture, this takes place at a person’s “birth from above,” when the Spirit baptizes [immerses] the believer into the Body of Christ in addition to indwelling and sealing the believer, a one-time transaction never to be repeated or reversed [[John 7:39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+7.39&t=NKJV); [14:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+14.16&t=NKJV), [17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+14.17&t=NKJV); [Romans 5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+5.5&t=NKJV); [8:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.9&t=NKJV), [15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.15&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 1:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+1.22&t=NKJV); [3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.16&t=NKJV); [6:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+6.19&t=NKJV); [12:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+12.13&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 6:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+6.16&t=NKJV); [Galatians 3:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.28&t=NKJV); [4:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.13-14&t=NKJV); [2:21-22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.21-22&t=NKJV); [4:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.30&t=NKJV); [1 John 3:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+3.24&t=NKJV)]). Instead, he is instructed to look to and walk in Christ until Christ is formed within him.

So how does the Christian look to Christ? There is only one way. Since there is a unique and definite link between Jesus Christ, the living Word of God, and the written (God-breathed) Word of God (the One reflecting the Other), the Christian is to immerse himself in the “*implanted Word*,” which will transform him progressively to spiritual maturity and the eventual salvation of his soul. In fact, a comparison between the companion passages of [Ephesians 5:18-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+5.18-20&t=NKJV) and [Colossians 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.16&t=NKJV) confirms that a Christian is “*filled* [controlled] *with the Spirit*” when “*the Word of Christ dwells in him richly*.”

*Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted Word, which is able to save your souls.* ([James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV))

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God* (*lit*. God-breathed), *and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete* [mature], *thoroughly equipped for every good work*. ([2 Timothy 3:16-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.16-17&t=NKJV))

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.* ([Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV))

The following (indented) exegetical discussion of [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV), taken from [Salvation of the Soul by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/SOS.pdf) (pages 59-61), is particularly noteworthy to the topic of this study:

Following the command in [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV), “*Do not be conformed to this age*,” the Christian is commanded to be “*transformed by the renewing of your mind*.” The Greek word translated “transformed” is *metamorphoo*. This is the word from which the English word “metamorphosis” is derived. This word refers to an *inward change* brought about completely apart from the power of the individual himself. The individual Christian is powerless to bring about this *metamorphosis*.

In [2 Corinthians 11:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+11.13-15&t=NKJV), Satan is said to be “*transformed into an angel of light*” and his ministers “*transformed as the ministers of righteousness*.” In the Greek text the word “transformed” is not the same in [2 Corinthians 11:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+11.13-15&t=NKJV) as it is in [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV). The word used in [2 Corinthians 11:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+11.13-15&t=NKJV) is *metaschematizo*, referring to *an outward change*; and, textually ([2 Corinthians 11:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+11.13&t=NKJV)), this change is brought about *through an individual’s own power*.

Satan, thus, seeks to *counterfeit* the work of the Spirit by substituting *an outward change in place of the inward change.* And the nature and source of this pseudo change often go unrecognized.

Christians who seek to bring about the change of [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV) themselves will always effect a *metaschema* (outward change) rather than a *metamorphosis* (inward change). At the time of the birth from above the Spirit of God began a work in the Christian that He will continue “*until* *the day of Jesus Christ*” ([Philippians 1:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+1.6&t=NKJV)). No effort on the part of Christians can help the Spirit of God effect this change.

Man’s way finds man actively involved, seeking spirituality through either quitting certain things or doing certain things, subsequently producing a *metaschema*. But God’s way finds man passive, and God performs a work in the individual, ultimately producing *the* *metamorphosis*.

The endless list of “do’s” and “do not’s,” taboos formed by Christian groups; invariably have to do with a *metaschema*, not a *metamorphosis*. Any effort on the part of Christians to help the Spirit of God bring about the transformation of [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV) will always result in pseudo-spirituality. God’s way is *an inward change* accomplished through the power of the Spirit, not *an outward change* accomplished through the power of the individual.

Note according to the text how this inward change, *the metamorphosis*, takes place: “. . . be *transformed by the renewing of your mind*.” The word “*renewing*” is a translation of the Greek word *anakainosis*; and the action of the preceding verb (“transformed”) directs attention to a continuous renewing process, one which is to keep on taking place. In [2 Corinthians 4:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+4.16&t=NKJV) we are told that “*the inward man is renewed* [*lit*. ‘is being renewed’] *day by day*.” This renewing process is to keep on taking place day in and day out for the entire duration of the pilgrim walk here on earth.

Then, [Colossians 3:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.10&t=NKJV) reveals how the renewing of the mind is accomplished:

*And have put on the new man, which is renewed* [*lit*. ‘is being renewed’] *in knowledge after the image of Him that created Him.*

Note the word “*knowledge*” in this verse. The regular Greek word for “knowledge” is *gnosis*, but the word used in [Colossians 3:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.10&t=NKJV) is *epignosis*. This is the word *gnosis* (knowledge) with the prefix *epi* (upon). *Epignosis*, thus, means “knowledge upon knowledge,” *i.e*., “a mature knowledge.” The word translated “renewed” is a past participle of *anakainoo* (the same word used in [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV) and [2 Corinthians 4:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+4.16&t=NKJV)) and could be better translated, “being renewed.” The only way a Christian can acquire this mature knowledge, which allows the Spirit of God to work *the metamorphosis* in his life, is through receiving the living Word of God into his saved human spirit.

Christians *must* allow God to continue “*breathing in*” life. The living, God-breathed Word must be allowed to flow into man’s saved human spirit or there can be no *metamorphosis*. The renewing of the inward man “day by day,” through receiving “*the implanted Word*,” producing *the metamorphosis* in one’s life, is the manner in which the salvation of the soul is presently being effected.

As previously seen, receiving “*the implanted Word*” in [James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV) and [1 Peter 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.2&t=NKJV) is preceded by “*laying aside*” everything opposed to purity (*ref*. in this site, Ch. 3, [God’s Firstborn Sons](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-six.php#God%E2%80%99s%20Firstborn%20Sons)). It is the same with *the metamorphosis* in [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV). The words, “*do not be conformed to this age* [*lit*. ‘stop being conformed to this age’],” appear prior to the words, “*be transformed by the renewing of your mind*.” Those “*in Christ*” are commanded to remove themselves from that which lies “in the evil one” prior to receiving “*the implanted Word*,” which will effect *the metamorphosis* in their lives.

Thus, [Romans 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.2&t=NKJV); [James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV); and [1 Peter 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.2&t=NKJV) all teach the same thing relative to laying aside everything opposed to purity prior to receiving “*the implanted Word, which is able to save your souls*.”

As is evident, the entire point of this study is to direct Christians to the Person of Christ alone in regards to their quest to achieve spiritual maturity. It is only as we look to Christ, in the same fashion (by faith) that we became united to Him, that we are able to “*walk in Him*” ([Colossians 2:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.6&t=NKJV)) down the road of spiritual growth. And the only way we are able to look to Him is through immersion into the living (God-breathed) written Word.

Achieving spiritual maturity is the responsibility and duty of every Christian; and, the only remedy for spiritual immaturity is to look to Christ in all matters during our temporal life. When you ask what Christ would do in any situation, you may always know if you have studied the Word, “*the mind of Christ*,” and thereby have grown to a deeper friendship with the One who paid your sin-penalty on the Cross of Calvary.

*For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ*. ([1 Corinthians 2:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.16&t=NKJV))

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus*. ([Philippians 2:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+2.5&t=NKJV))

*No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you*. ([John 15:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+15.15&t=NKJV))

Let us all follow Paul’s example:

*Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you*. ([Philippians 3:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.13-15&t=NKJV))

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[Bible One - Charles Strong's God's Remedy for Spiritual Immaturity](http://www.bibleone.net/Gods-remedy.htm)