**LOGOS BIBLE STUDY**

**Lesson 201 – STEPS TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY**

1 Peter 1:4-8 – *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Please note that in verse 4 it says that through scripture we are given “exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature” – the character and nature of God that was lost in the Garden in Eden when sin entered. Christ came to restore that which was lost (Luke 19:10) – the character and divine nature of Him who created us to be His children.

1. ADD TO YOUR FAITH – (Faith was covered in the First level of the Logos Bible Study, but there is still more to cover as Faith is the first layer to build up and it must be built strong to support the added layers of spiritual building.)
2. Faith comes by knowing God as revealed in His Word – Romans 10:17.
3. The Bible reveals God and His ways, His love, His promises and care for His people.
4. As you read, or hear it preached, you are shown how God has dealt with His people in the past.
5. Rewards for obedience.
6. Chastening for disobedience.
7. It shows His promises and His conditions
8. This builds your understanding and confidence in Him for you can expect of Him.
9. It also shows what He expects from you so you can walk faithfully before Him in this life.
10. Purpose of Faith – Hebrews 11:6 (and all of chapter 11)
11. Faith enables us to obtain His favor and promises, and to obey God when He directs us to do something we feel is impossible.
12. You will not step out and go do what God asks of you unless have confidence that He will be with you.
13. Suppose God asks you to do something impossible.

aa. It takes faith to obey and go.

1. Faith is confidence or trust – Hebrews 11:1
2. To trust Him is to reach beyond yourself and your ability.
3. It’s not by your hand, but by His ability.
4. Faith has two enemies – unbelief and doubt.
5. Unbelief is refusing or failing to accept God’s Word or promises.
6. Doubt is to question God’s Word or promises.

aa. It that really for me?

1. Both unbelief and doubt have consequences which mean what God has promised is not received – Hebrews 3 & 4.
2. Faith is not so you can acquire things as taught by the recent wave of prosperity and success doctrines.
3. Faith is not so we can use God for our benefit, but so He can use us for His purpose.
4. Obedience in faith is called faithfulness which has great reward – Matthew 25:21.
5. Faith in God and His Word needs to be strong because it will be tested.
6. See Joseph as an example – Psalm 18:30 and Psalm 105:19.
7. Faith is proven by experience which often involves tests and trials –

1 Peter 1:6-7 and 1 Peter 4:12.

1. FAITH – Angels do not have it; only mankind can have it.
2. Angels are curious about faith in man – 1 Peter 19-12.
3. Angels do not need faith; they know God and have been in His presence.
4. They don’t understand how man can obey God without seeing Him or being with Him.
5. Man’s faith qualifies him to judge the angels that sinned because they were not faithful (obedient) even when they were in God’s presence – 1 Corinthians 6:3.
6. Even Satan cannot understand faith, he has not got it.
7. However he does recognize the power in man having faith which is why he works to destroy it by causing doubt in what God said – Genesis 3:1.
8. “Hath God said?”
9. Faith is a spiritual force; it is a shield to protect you from Satan’s assault –

 Ephesians 6:10 & 16.

1. Faith is also a spiritual quality of the heart, the inner core or spirit of mankind.
2. It is not a quality of the mind or intellect for it cannot be understood by the natural mind – 1 Corinthians 2:5-14.
3. The natural mind or intellect will oppose faith.
4. Faith comprises a spiritual breastplate when tied with the spiritual quality of love – 1 Thessalonians 5:8.
5. Both faith and love are qualities of the heart, the inner being.
6. Note that the breastplate covers the vital part of man, the heart.

aa. From which faith and love emanate which produces

 righteousness - Ephesians 6:14.

bb. Righteousness is by faith – Romans 10:10, Galatians 5:5 and Philippians 3:9.

1. *Pistos* is the Greek word in the Hebrews 11 translated as *faith.*
2. One of the meanings of *pistos* is *fidelity* which means *faithfulness.*
3. Faithfulness equates to obedience and trustworthiness.
4. A state of being faithful means God can trust you with what He instructs you to do - or being obedient
5. Also that He can trust you with what He gives you such as power, authority, gifts, ministry, etc.
6. VIRTUE – Add to your faith virtue; conformity to His divine nature and moral conduct showing uprightness and positive quality of lifestyle.
7. A repented, changed life that conforms to new standards of living as an ambassador of Christ and His kingdom.
8. No longer living in a worldly, carnal, selfish, soulish, self-indulgent and lustful way.
9. New standards that are godly - showing self-control, faithfulness, obedience and holiness – see 2 Corinthians 7:1, Ephesians 4:24 and

1 Thessalonians 4:7 .

1. Virtue or holiness is a form of identification as being a child of God.
2. To be holy means to be set apart from the world and committed unto God.
3. Exhibiting God’s character and nature in our dealings with life in this world – as Jesus did.
4. New standards of behavior and motive which come out of the re-born spirit produces a new way of living – Colossians 1:10-11.
5. The Fruit of the Spirit, which is the character and nature of God that we receive when we accept Jesus, and the Spirit of Christ dwells in us – Galatians 4:6 and Galatians 5:22-23.
6. These character traits are the opposite of unregenerate, unrepentant man who is selfishly (fleshly) motivated – Galatians 5:19-21 & Romans 6:5.
7. The old motives and desires have to be dealt with – Galatians 5:24 and Romans 6:6, 11.
8. These new spiritual virtues are a product the new birth and walking in intimate fellowship with the Lord.
9. LOVE – desiring the best for others even at your own expense –

John 15:13 and 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. (More under section VIII below).

1. JOY – the result of living with a god-kind of love and a recognition of all of the grace and mercy God has given you.
2. Joy even in difficulties because of deep assurance of ultimate victory – James 1:2-4 and 1Peter 1:5-9.
3. PEACE – a state of rest and calm even in perilous situations – Colossians 3:15 and Philippians 4:6-7.
4. Confidence that God knows your every situation and is in control - Isaiah 26:3-4.
5. LONGSUFFERING – patient endurance in afflictions and also in your relationships without retribution (or pay back).
6. Also a product of LOVE – Ephesians 4:1-3 & 2 Timothy 3:10-12.
7. GENTLENESS – character and conduct being soft spoken, not fiery or hot headed.
8. Kind, promoting peace and harmony instead of strife - 2 Timothy 2:24 and Titus 3:1-2.

aa. Note what the opposite produces; it invites evil demonic

 activity – James 3:16.

1. GOODNESS – benevolence toward others.
2. Generous and helping when possible and doing what is right – Ephesians 5:9-10 and Luke 6:27-28, 31.
3. FAITH – trust, dependence and reliance on God and His Word.

i. Being faithful and trustworthy; one that God and others can trust.

h. MEEKNESS – not vaunting of self, not striving for recognition or honor, position or power – Psalm 25:9.

 i. Showing contentment and inner strength.

 ii. Being teachable and reachable by others.

1. TEMPERANCE – being level headed exercising self-control in desires – Titus 2:11-12.
2. Moderation, not being driven.
3. The Life of the Vine – John 15:1-8.
4. This is the Fruit of the Spirit, the very life that is in Jesus Christ will flow through those who are intimately tied into Him.
5. This fellowship comes through prayer and knowledge of His Word
6. This is what God is looking for in His children – Colossians 1:27, Ephesians 4:13, Galatians 4:19.
7. KNOWLEDGE – Add to your virtue knowledge; to come to know that which is spiritual yet practical to guide you in this life – Ephesians 1:17-18.
8. Knowledge of God, Christ, His Kingdom and His principles of life.
9. So that you can live a godly life – 1 Timothy 6:2-6 and Titus 2:12.
10. Godly knowledge will build faith and faithfulness.
11. Worldly knowledge causes you to turn from faith and trust in your own means and ability to live – 1 Timothy 6:17-21.
12. Lack of knowledge leads to ruin – Hosea 4:6 and 2 Peter 1:9.
13. Carnal (worldly) knowledge opposes spiritual knowledge –

Romans 8:6.

1. How does this happen? – Romans 1:28-32.
2. By rejection or ignorance of the Word of God.
3. Lack of knowledge of truth allows man to be brought into bondage of superstition and false religious beliefs that are destructive – see Isaiah 5:13.
4. Possessing knowledge makes you fruitful - if you apply it – 2 Peter 1:8.
5. Knowledge strengthens spiritual character – Colossians 1:9-11.
6. Knowledge builds you up – Ephesians 4:13.
7. Knowledge helps you to grow in Christ – Ephesians 3:14-20.
8. Helps you to depend on His power because it reveals the glory (majesty & power) of God to our spiritual understanding –

2 Corinthians 4:5-7.

1. Equips you to teach others – 2 Timothy 2:2.
2. Knowledge of truth sets you free of superstitions and false doctrines and the bondages cause by them – John 8:32.
3. Knowledge makes you more spiritual, it equips you to become spiritually capable.
4. Knowledge leas to understanding – Proverbs 4:1-7.
5. Proverbs 9:10
6. Proverbs 16:16
7. Proverbs 24:3-5
8. Spiritual knowledge compared to carnal (natural) knowledge – see

Romans 8:6.

1. Spiritual is the knowledge of God, His Son and His Kingdom – Proverbs 1:7.
2. Teaches fear (reverential respect) of God and His judgments on evil which will guard you path.

i. Fear God’s anger and judgment on sin.

 ii. It will keep you from compromise which can lead to sin.

1. You will flee in fear, knowing God says “No”!
2. Natural knowledge (education) is destructive when it rejects or forsakes God – Colossians 2:7-8.
3. Worldly knowledge can spoil, ruin and destroy you if you are not rooted , built up and established in your faith by sound biblical knowledge – 2 Timothy 3:5-9.
4. Knowledge must be of truth and not from those of corrupt minds.
5. Pharisaical or “religious” leaders tend to take away, pervert or hide knowledge of truth so they can maintain positive control and influence over their people to use them as a resource for their own gain and recognition – Luke 11:43-46, 52 and John 12:19.

Note: Knowledge was symbolized by a key worn around the neck of the doctors, teachers and lawyers in that day. It represented their authority, and knowledge was considered authority – Matthew 16:19. A knowledgeble person could teach with authority as Jesus did – Matthew 7:28-29 and Matthew 21:23.

1. Spiritual leaders are properly motivated and work to build you up with their knowledge to bring you to their level of understanding or even excel beyond them.
2. TEMPERANCE – the exercise of Self Conrol.
3. Control of physical appetites, lusts and desires – 1 Corinthians 9:27.
4. Moderation is the key; do not let excesses control you – Philippians 4:5.
5. Control of temperament – emotional displays and reactions.
6. Be level headed and even tempered.
7. Comes from confidence (faith) that God is ultimately in control of all of your affairs as you place them in his hands – Romans 8:32.
8. Control over your spirit – Proverbs 25:28.
9. Which spirit leads you, (or drives you)?
10. The “old man” or the spirit that is in/of the world – Ephesians 2:2-3.
11. The “new man” after the fashion of Christ – Ephesians 4:20-24.

 i. Note the behavior of the new man – Ephesians 4:25-5:4.

2. This has to do with motivation – what motivates you to act –

 Romans 13:14.

1. PATIENCE – a state of peaceful, restful calm with assurance.
2. The proving of true faith, confidence in God and His Word, being patient during tomes of tribulation – Hebrews 6:12.
3. Testing of faith produces patience – James 1:3.
4. Testing by trials and pressures – Romans 8:25-28 & Hebrews 12:27.
5. Some tribulation can be severe challenge to your faith –

Luke 21:16-19 & 36.

1. Such experience proves where your trust is; in God or in man or material things.
2. Patience is maintaining yourself in Christ, in all your ways, while enduring conflict which opposes you and your faith – James 1:12 and Proverbs 3:5-6.
3. It is a sign of more developed faith which is deep rooted and unmovable – James 1:4.
4. Patience (and endurance) is a co-quality of meekness, gentleness and love –

Galatians 5:22-23.

1. It will endure without trying to fight back, vaunt itself or get even.
2. It is confidence that God will deliver and execute vengeance if it is needed.
3. Patience is also evidence if being secure in God’s love to care for you and to see you though – Ephesians 3:17.
4. You will wait quietly, not murmuring or complaining.
5. The peace of God governing your heart – Colossians 3:15.
6. GODLINESS – God likeness in attitude and behavior, showing His character and nature in you.
7. The opposite of sinful, wicked, selfish or ungodly lifestyle –

1 Timothy 6:6-11.

1. Motivated by a heart focused on Him and His Word.
2. Godliness *(eusebeia)* is a fear of and reverence for God.
3. Produces a life of holiness, separated from worldliness.
4. Noticeably different from the unregenerate mankind in society.
5. A quality of life. – 1 Timothy 2:2b
6. Having just a form of godliness is a pretense or outward show but still allows people to live in sin – 2 Timothy 3:2-5.
7. Denying the power of God to change lives.
8. Lack of respect and reverential fear of God causes man to have no sense of responsibility or accountability to God.
9. There is no fear of consequence for crossing Him by sinning.
10. BROTHERLY KINDNESS
11. Treating others in the Body of Christ as family – Philippians 2:1-4.
12. Looking after the welfare and wellbeing of others – Acts 2:44-46 and

Acts 4:32-35.

1. Revival and spiritual awakening causes the worth of material things to decrease in the hearts of the revived – 1 John 3:16-17.
2. Relationships with others increase in value compared to material thins – Proverbs 3:27-28.
3. A re-orientation of priorities comes in line with God’s values.
4. Carrying out acts of love – Luke 10:25-37.
5. How – Romans 12:10-21.
6. Colossians 3:10-13.
7. CHARITY – *(Agapao)* Love as God has it – His divine nature.
8. Love – charity is used as this kind of love is GIVING – John 15:13.
9. Desiring the best for another person even at your own expense.
	1. Love is action, deeds, not just words.
10. It will cost you something to do it.
11. It is the opposite of selfishness.
12. All the building steps to maturity lead to final step God’s kind of LOVE.
13. Having the full character and nature of God in you as his children.
	1. Love is the first of the Fruit of the Spirit – Galatians 5:22.
14. Remember that the Fruit of the Spirit is the character and nature

 of God.

1. Love is the final building block in developing divine character –

Colossians 3:14 and 1 Peter 4:8.

1. It is the full statue of Christ in you – Ephesians 4:13.
2. What was Christ’s motivation for the works He did?
3. Compassion – Matthew 14:14.
	1. Compassion is love in action.
4. We are to do the works of Christ to and for others – John 14:12.
5. We are to show His love and have compassion as He did so God can work through us.
6. Love makes faith and the Gifts of the Spirit work – Galatians 5:6 and

1 Corinthians 13:1.

1. With God’s love in you, you become a channel through which the Holy Spirit can work and perform His gifts to minister and touch others – 1 Corinthians 12-30 to 1 Corinthians 13:3.
2. Loves builds up others – Ephesians 4:13-16.
3. Love is the nature of God – 1 John 4:16-17.
4. We are to love others as God loves us – 1 John 4:11-12.
	1. This kind of love fulfills the Great Commandment – Matthew 22:36-40 and Romans 13:8-10.
	2. Love is the fruit in us that God is patiently waiting to be formed in us – John 15:16-17.
5. What love does and does not do – 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.
6. Love also forgives as God and Christ have forgiven us because of LOVE.
7. Love also protects and provides, meeting needs of others.
8. Why is Love so important.
	* 1. Love is the foundation of the Kingdom (domain) of God – because God is LOVE – it forms His total envirnment.
			1. All of God’s children must have and show forth His divine nature in order to live in His Kingdom.
9. Since love is His divine nature, it must be manifest in us.
	1. Living and demonstrating God’s love in this life is representing God’s kingdom now on this vile earth.
10. The opposite of love is SELFISHNESS - not Hate, as so many think.
	* 1. Since love is *charity*, or giving, then the opposite is getting or taking.
			1. Getting or taking is an act of selfishness.
			2. Selfishness is a character of the fleshly old sin nature.
		2. The old sin nature of the flesh must be put away –

Galatians 5:24, Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:8-14.

1. THE SPIRITUAL HOUSE - 1 Peter 2:5
2. Start building with faith and add each step to complete with love –

Galatians 5:6.

1. Note the logical progression of each building step.
2. Designed to build the believer from the inside out that Christ may be formed in you.
	1. Build the heart, mind and character – the true individual.
	2. Build behavior, your action and reaction in relationships to others.
3. The believer matures from the new birth to full maturity in Christ as a child of God and member of His divine family.
	* 1. He develops from an individual stone to part of the whole spiritual house of God.
4. He can now be part of the completed spiritual temple of God

 who He is pleased with.

1. THERE ARE VARIOUS LEVELS OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY THAT BELIVERS REALISTICALLY ATTAIN – Matthew 13:18-23.
	* + - 1. The seed being sown is the Word of God that reveals the plan of God.
2. The gospel of the Kingdom as revealed in and by Jesus Christ –

Matthew 13:19.

* + - * 1. There are those who reject the good news because they allow the enemy to deceive them.
1. The seed will not produce since it did not fall on fertile ground.
	* + - 1. There are those who accept the good news but have no real commitment.
2. Conforming to God’s will and ways is opposed by the world they live in so they experience persecution and trials which they don’t like.
	* + 1. They will not get rooted in God’s love or in is Word so they wither and dry up – Matthew 13:20-21.
3. Failing to water the new seed causes it to die since it has no roots.
	* + - 1. Some receive the good news that begins to produce as normal but gets choked out by its surroundings – Matthew 13:22.
4. These get distracted by the cares of this life: family, sports, education, pursuit of career and money.
5. Rather than focusing on the Kingdom of God, Jesus and His Word – Matthew 6:33.

2, No fruits is produced from this seed.

* + - * 1. There are those who receive of God and seek to grow as needed having their priorities in order and doing what is needed to grow to maturity – Matthew 13:23.
1. These produce fruit – the Fruit of the Spirit which God is looking for –

John 15:7-8, 16.

1. Not all produce the same amount of this fruit which is the character and nature of God and Jesus Christ – the Fruit of the Spirit.
2. Some produce 30% of the image of Christ’s likeness.
3. It seems that God is happy getting 30%.
4. Some produce 60% of the image of Christ’s likeness.
5. Some are able to produce 100% of the image of Christ’s likeness.

NOTE: A final thought on going to spiritual maturity: We are looking for “harvest time” at the end of this age when the Lord returns for us. When does a harvest occur? WHEN THE FRUIT IS RIPE! When the fruit is visible and clearly identified on the vines/trees. Is God waiting for us to be clearly evident as His Holy people?

 Matthew 13:38-39

Romans 8:19

Revelation 14:14-16