

**THAT ONE LOST SHEEP**

The central theme of the Bible, from its first to its last book, is the revelation of how mankind is redeemed, and how they can be restored from the disastrous effects of sin through a healing relationship with Jesus Christ. When God's offered grace and man's outstretched hand of faith (itself a gift from God) clasp, salvation takes place. And when man continues to clasp the hand of God, a relationship matures the result of which man grows into the likeness of his Creator.

We have studied the steps whereby one may come to Christ and receive salvation. In this lesson we want first to look a bit further into how a converted person may grow, mature, and develop in the Christian life. There are "steps" in growth just as there are steps in the initial formation of a relationship with Christ. Second, we want to see the great importance that the Lord places on each and every person. As a song writer has penned, "Oh, how He loves you and me."

1. In order to live, we all must have water and food. A poor diet, too much junk food, an unbalanced choice of food, all yield poor health sooner or later. Good nutrition is in the headlines these days, and for good reasons. To be healthy and growing spiritually, we must have good spiritual food. What do you find in the following passages that show us the need for the very best in spiritual food?
  - (a) John 6:35-40 \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b) John 17:17 \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c) What do you understand by the word, "sanctify," in (b)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is a second, vital ingredient in the spiritual growth process?
  - (a) Old Testament: Psalm 55:16,17 \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b) New Testament: Philippians 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c) Prayer is a key to growth. But what kind of prayer do these Scriptures teach? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The devil does not cease to confront a reborn Christian with temptation. The growth process is characterized by victory over temptation. What do these texts say about the nature of temptation and gaining victory over it?
  - (a) James 1:12-15 \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b) Romans 13:14 \_\_\_\_\_

4. In order to grow, the Christian must learn to trust in the fulfillment of God's promises for sustaining power. "Feelings" can be very deceptive. God's promises are sure, feelings or no feelings. Among the hundreds of great promises in the Bible, read these two encouraging samples: Isaiah 41:10; Jude 24,25.
5. Many reborn Christians find their growth impaired because they cannot seem to escape feeling guilty, even after claiming God's promise of forgiveness, as in 1 John 1:9. What is the truth taught in Psalms 103:1-5? (Compare Luke 7:47.)
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6. Another important factor in growth is found in our sharing with others, of what we have learned of God, our joy in Christ, the power we receive from the Holy Spirit. We can do this over the telephone, in a letter, over the fence, many ways. A converted life has an influence that affects everyone with whom it comes in contact. How vital is this?
- (a) Matthew 10:32,33 \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) Matthew 24:14 (28:18-20) \_\_\_\_\_
7. One of the greatest words in the Bible is found in its greatest text, John 3:16. It says that "WHOSOEVER believeth in him should not perish." WHOSOEVER. That includes you and me – as individuals. What is the clear emphasis on the individual in these passages?
- (a) Luke 15:3-7 \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) Luke 19:1-7 \_\_\_\_\_
- (c) Luke 23:42,43 \_\_\_\_\_
- (d) Revelation 3:20 \_\_\_\_\_
8. Jesus died for you, and for me. What a truth! Personalize John 3:16 and always remember it that way.

For God so loved \_\_\_\_\_, that he gave His  
only begotten Son, that \_\_\_\_\_, believing in him,  
should not perish, but \_\_\_\_\_ should have  
everlasting life.

(Your Name)