

Spiritual Growth Sequence Passages

Much can be learned by examining and studying these passages that discuss qualities and steps that build on each other and move us toward growing in various ways.

2 Peter 1:3–15

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, **4** by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. **5** For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, **6** and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, **7** and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

8 For if **these qualities** are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. **10** Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice **these qualities** you will never fall. **11** For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

12 Therefore I intend always to remind you of **these qualities**, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. **13** I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, **14** since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. **15** And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall **these things**.

James 1:2–4

2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, **3** for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. **4** And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Romans 5:1–11

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, **5** and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— **8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. **11** More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 3:18

18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

The Qualities of Spiritual Growth

These **qualities** need to be added and growing in our lives. Each needs to be present to make the motor of growth work. Consider the attributes of these **qualities** and what is missing when they are lacking or absent.

Think about them as aspects that need to keep growing.

<i>Quality</i>	<i>What it looks like</i>	<i>When this is absent...</i>
Faith	<i>The ability to trust God for things in your life. For salvation, for today and tomorrow. To believe.</i>	<i>...we simply pretend to be good, we desire to “look good.”</i>
+		
Virtue	<i>To desire excellence. To desire to be better tomorrow than today. To look to a hero and desire to be like him.</i>	<i>...we either think we don’t need to improve (Arrogance) or we think we cannot change</i>
+		
Knowledge	<i>To gain the knowledge of Christ, to know the Word of God, the content of truth.</i>	<i>...we are ignorant / we make stuff up / we potentially have passion without truth / dangerous</i>
+		
Self-Control	<i>To tell yourself “no” to things that you need to tell yourself “no” to. Also to tell yourself “yes” to other things.</i>	<i>...when we don’t apply scripture we become like James stated = we deceive ourselves</i>
+		
Steadfastness	<i>To keep practicing what is right from above, and do so over time.</i>	<i>...living our faith takes time and effort and doing things even when we face opposition from within or from without.</i>
+		
Godliness	<i>A change in behavior happens over time, a change in character.</i>	<i>...without the steps above we will never get to the point where we change our thinking or actions because we WANT to.</i>
+		
Brotherly Affection	<i>The ability to gain more and more family affection for people. Not just tolerance – but familial affection.</i>	<i>...we can fake this. We cannot fake this for long. Our fake-ness will show through.</i>
+		
Love	<i>To move from affection to “agape” love – to care for someone in a way that you have their interests in mind, not just your own.</i>	<i>...Paul says that when we don’t have this quality (or aim for this quality) we are like a banging gong or clanging cymbal.</i>