

What is a Healthy Church Member

Mark 8 Study Guide

A Healthy Church Member is a Growing Disciple

1 Peter 2: 1-3; 11-12

2:1 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 12 Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

1. Elaborate on and explain Peter's admonition in verse 1. In verse 2, what does he ask his readers to pursue in order to grow up into salvation? What is the spiritual milk he refers to?
2. Notice that verse 1 begins with the word "so" or "therefore." What truth discussed in chapter 1 is the basis for what he says here in this text?
3. Is there a rational connection between the deep longing or craving for "spiritual milk" in verse 2 and the tasting of the kindness of the Lord in verse 3? If so, what is it?
4. Peter commands us to desire or feel longings we do not naturally feel in verse 2, to "*long for the pure spiritual milk.*" What can we do to obey a command like that? In what ways can we produce a desire for the pure milk of the word, that by it we may grow in respect to salvation?

5. Verse 11 discusses the competing passions in our hearts that wage war against our souls. Are these passions similar to sins he tells us to put away in verse 1? How does seeing ourselves as sojourners and exiles (or “foreigners and strangers”) help us to accomplish this task while we wait for the second coming of Christ?

6. In chapter 8, Thabiti discusses three key misunderstandings about spiritual growth that end up stunting that growth. What are these misunderstandings and how can we keep from making the same mistakes?

7. List the methods Thabiti details on pages 89-92 for cultivating spiritual growth. Why is each important? Are these alternatives means to growth, or is each necessary?

8. Assess your own spiritual growth over the last year or two, using the 1 Peter passage above and the ideas from this chapter. Answer the same question for other members of your small group. Let them know of the growth in grace you observe. In what areas are you not growing? Given this study, what do you need to change to cultivate further spiritual growth? What role can this small group play in helping you to grow?