**Growing into Salvation**

Seldom if ever, have I heard the phrase, “growing into salvation” (1 Peter 2:2) today. We often think of a person as saved or not saved. When I was a non-religious teenager, I was stopped by someone in a mall. He had me pray with him and his wife the “sinners prayer”. Immediately after he pronounced me “saved”. He never followed up. He never had a Bible study with me. He did not point me to a church. I realize now he was greatly mistaken in his view of salvation, as many are today. First of all, Jesus nor his apostles ever taught today’s “sinner’s prayer” for salvation. Never!

What Jesus did teach is, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matt.28:19-20). The command is, “make disciples” by baptizing & teaching. You didn’t read ‘prayer” in this great commission.

Peter did hear Jesus preach these words. Then when others heard Peter teaching, they asked what they should do to be saved (Acts 2:37), he said, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (2:38). Three thousand people did so that very day, and they became a part of that local church. They were “being saved” (2:47). Yet being a part of that church, they were also growing into salvation (Acts 2:42, 1Peter 2:2).

Being baptized of the water and the spirit is being “born again” (John 3:1-5). Peter used the words “born again” two times in his first chapter (1 Peter 1:3, 23). But after bering born again, you still need to grow, “Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation” (1Peter 2:1-2 NRSV).

Peter carries this idea into his second book, “applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence… knowledge… self-control… perseverance… godliness… brotherly kindness.. love.” (2Peter 1:5-7). Then adds, “Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.” (2Peter 1:10-11). Are we hungry as a new born baby for God’s will/God’s word? Are we practicing these virtues of Jesus in our everyday lives? Becoming like the “divine nature” (2Pet. 1:3) glorifies Jesus. Imitating him glorifies him. He loved the church, i.e. his people, the disciples. Dan Peters