

Sustainable Christianity: How To Cultivate a Lasting Faith

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Part 3: Sustainable Christianity – God’s Part/Our Part

What is so ‘amazing’ about grace?

1 John 4:10 – NIV-84

“¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as the one who would turn aside his wrath, taking away our sins.”

Never forget, our relationship with the Father depends on His _____, not ours.

What should we do if we sin?

1 John 2:1-2 NIV-84

¹ My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ² He is the one who turns aside God’s wrath, taking away our sins, and not only ours but also the sins of the whole world.”

When we sin against the Father, we need to immediately _____.

Repentance is not so much about _____ something, as it is about _____ the Lord.

What tactics does Satan use against us to stop the progress of the church?

Romans 12:1-2: We naturally focus on our _____ and forget the context of _____.

But God has gone to great lengths to remind us, or to get us to remind ourselves:

- God’s commands are in the context of his grace (Rm. 1-11; Heb. 1-11; Eph. 1-3; Col. 1-2; Gal; etc)
- All of Apostle Paul’s letters, and most of the rest, including Revelation begin and end with “Grace, mercy, and peace...” or some variant.
- Forgetting, or not understanding God’s grace is the reason Christians stop growing 2 Peter 1:9, Rev. 2:4-5, 3:2-3:.
- This is the primary purpose for going to church – Most worship songs remind us
- This is the primary purpose for the Lord’s Supper (“Do this in remembrance of me”)

What really is God’s part, and what is our part, in living the Christian life?

Philippians 2:12-13 ESV

“¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

According to this passage, who is responsible for our growth in the Lord? _____.

What is faith? What does ‘sustainable faith’ look like?

Hebrews 11:1,6 ESV

“¹ Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen... ⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

At its core, Faith is _____.

Part 3: Sustainable Christianity – God’s Part/Our Part
(Continued)

Synonyms of Biblical ‘Faith in God’: OT: Trust in the Lord, the fear of the Lord, love the Lord your God; Jesus: “Come to me”, “believe in me”, “accept me”, “seek me”, “seek his kingdom”, “Follow me”, “remain in me” (“abide in me”); NT: Rom 12 ‘living sacrifices’, surrender, submit to God, walk by the Spirit (be filled), depend or rely on, let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, work out your salvation, stand firm in the Lord, stand firm in the faith, walk by faith, etc.

Sustainable faith is a faith that _____ .

Titus 2:11-14 NIV

“¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.”

Galatians 5:16-26 NIV

“¹⁶ So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Ephesians 2:10

“¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

What does it mean to trust God, as his little children?

It means, like little children, we are very interested in...

- spending time with him: fellowship with God 1 Jn. 1:3-4
- enjoying him and all he has for us: worshipping him Eph. 5:19-20
- what he has to say: Reading the Bible 2 Tim 3:16-17
- doing what he wants: obedience Js. 1:22-25
- talking with him, asking for things: praying to him Matt. 7:9-11
- becoming more like him: sanctification Rom. 8:29, John 17:17, Gal. 5:22-23
- being with his other kids: fellowship - Heb. 10:24-25, Eph. 4:11-16
- learning from his leaders: teachings, books Acts 2:42, Eph. 4:11-16
- helping others to find him: evangelism 1 Pet. 3:15, Matt. 28:18-20
- helping each other know him better: discipleship 2 Tim. 2:2 Matt. 28:18-20
- sharing his love: doing good Eph. 2:10, Gal. 6:9-10, James 2:14-26
- Connecting with his family: church Rom 12:3-8
- Participating in his mission: making disciples Matt. 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Col. 1:28-29

The result is a faith that is both Reproductive and Resilient – **Sustainable**.