

## “Hope Deferred in Christian Growth”

### John 14:8-14

Let me ask you a question:

I just want you to think about...

**How many of you can say, “I’m growing”?**

Not physically, but spiritually, in the Lord?

Yes?

No?

How many of you don’t know?

Or don’t know what I mean...?

**That’s why we have discouragement, disappointment, hope deferred in Christian growth:**

**Because: many times, we don’t know if we are growing, we are healthy.**

**We don’t know how to measure growth. Are we really growing?**

**And then we struggle, fail, fall short and then feel as if our progress is really shot!!**

How do we measure physical results?

Today, I want to talk about Hope Deferred, delayed expectations in Christian Growth.

*Spiritual growth is a process that we have to work at (Philippians 2:12-13) 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.*

Hope deferred (delayed expectation) comes because it is a slow process...

It is hard to tell that growth is happening

How do I know I’m growing?

I’m trying to live for God...how do I know I’m making progress?

I’d thought I would be farther along in my Christian walk...

Let me show you 5 things a growing Christian will realize, understand, come to grips with:

- To keep you from disappointments,
- To keep you from hope deferred.
- I believe will help you greatly this morning.
- So that your Christian walk is everything you expect it to be!



**A growing Christian will realize:**

- I. **Setbacks are not a problem (Gen.39)**
  - A. We don’t like setbacks
  - B. We lack patience
  - C. (View setbacks) As an opportunity for growth
- II. **Struggles are expected (Psalm 103:8-14)**
- III. **God’s Chastening is a blessing!** (Hebrews 12:6) – “For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He punishes every son whom He accepts.”
- IV. **Real growth is steady but slow (2 Peter 3:18)** “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”
  - A. The process
  - B. Jesus patiently taught His disciples...(John 14:8-14)
- V. **You must keep going – don’t give up!**

This is why church is so important!

- You will hear, in church, things you will hear nowhere else.
- The church tells you to conduct yourself in a manner worthy of Christ!
- The church continually encourages you to shape up, get with it! Reproof, exhortation, rebuke, and “Let me help you with that.” “I’m struggling too!”
- The church will challenge you to make things RIGHT with God!

Conclusion:

- You will have struggles in your growth with God.
- It will be tough, it can be painful, in whatever you do.
- Don’t give up, don’t quit!
- You’re on your way to heaven, your eternal reward, you’re laying up treasure in heaven!
- Take the long look of God’s work in your life, so that there will be no hope deferred in your life.