

Divine Process

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Epic Faith

Text: **2 Peter 1:3-7**

Growing in our walk with God and in our faith is a process. Growing in faith does not happen by accident, it happens intentionally. The Bible says that we are to be diligent, or make every effort to add to our faith. All of us have watched people who have attended the same church, read their Bibles listened to sermons, some grow and others do not. Some people maintain their fire and enthusiasm for the things of God and some just fade out.

All of us have access to divine power, not every Christian has surrendered to the divine process. Because they have not submitted to the divine process they are not living in the divine nature that God has for them. **2 Peter 1:3-4** Divine Power + Divine Process = Divine Nature. We grow in faith as we combine the divine power of Christ with the divine process of growth. Peter lines out a step by step process of maturity that, if we follow, results in a life Epic Faith. **2 Peter 1:5-7**

Peter's process is a steady progression in our walk of Faith. Progression means that we are making progress in our growth process.

Growth Process:

- A desire to please God and a decision to trust God in everything. It is having a vision of where God is taking you and a willingness to follow. **Proverbs 3:5-6** FAITH- Remember this is the starting place of growth because without faith it is impossible to please God.
- A submitted heart. Faith is the substance that undergirds our hope, the Word is the substance of our faith and the foundation of our virtue or goodness is our sub-mission to His will and ways. **1 Peter 5:6** The substance of all goodness in our life is humility. VIRTUE
- A hunger for truth. **Matthew 5:6** KNOWLEDGE
- A willingness to change. **1 Thess. 4:4 (AMP), Proverbs. 16:22 (NKJV, NLT)** SELF-CONTROL
- A determination to stand. This is faithfulness, perseverance and endurance. **Ephesians 6:13** STEADFASTNESS
- A dependency on our growing devotion, reverence and obedience to God. It is a greater commitment to prayer and a life of holiness. This is simply being set aside for the things of God and living a greater sanctified life. **Hebrews 12:14 (NIV)** GODLINESS
- A passion for people. **Mark 12:30-31, 1 John 4:7-11, 20-21** BROTHERLY AFFECTION or KINDNESS
- A true desire to honestly want the best for people and to be willing to give and sacrifice everything for God. **John 15:13** LOVE

Growth starts with faith and ends with a true love for God and people. The promise of going through the process is that, as Christians, we will be fruitful and effective with our life. **2 Peter 1:8-10 (AMP)**

Process part 1- Faith and Vision

When it comes to having faith, one of the largest obstacles is **fear**, but our greatest ally is vision.

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV, NKJV) All of us have faced times in our life when we have experienced a loss of vision. You may have had to relinquish a dream, move from a place you loved, lost a loved one or even faced the end of a marriage. There are situations that leave us at a loss to see and we can become afraid because we no longer see a **way** forward. The disciples felt this way when Jesus died. When He died all their vision and dreams died with Him. All that ended when they had a fresh revelation of the **risen** Lord. **John 20:19-20**

All Faith starts with a revelation of who Jesus **is**. **Matthew 16:13-19, John 14:6** Our faith has substance because we understand that Jesus is the Living Word who gives substance to our faith so we do not have to live by our natural sight and understanding. **Ephesians 1:18-19 (NIV)** Vision does not start with our natural eyes but with our **spiritual** eyes. True faith is not some kind of esoteric spiritual knowledge, it is understanding that comes from our **knowledge** of God. **Proverbs 9:10** The greater our knowledge, understanding and revelation of God the clearer our vision and ability to see is. If we are to walk by faith and not by sight, we must be a people who know God. **Daniel 11:32b**

- Faith grows over time as we learn to **fix** our thoughts on Jesus, learn to be obedient, learn to more fully surrender to His will over our own and learn to trust Him completely. Usually growing in faith happens in life's difficult situations or in a **crisis**. It is in those moments that you will choose to serve fear or faith. This is also when we see God reveal Himself in big ways.
- Faith comes when you realize that God is **there**. When people say "God sure did show up in a big way" it is indicator of their lack of knowledge of God. God doesn't just show up, He has promised never to leave us or forsake us. The reason faith has victory over fear is that wherever Jesus is, wherever the Holy Spirit is there is **peace**. Fear brings panic and panic is the root of hastily made poor decisions. Those who walk by faith are people whose feet are shod with the "Gospel of Peace". We can walk by faith when we are clothed with peace that protects our stand and our walk. When Jesus appeared to the disciples in that room both times He said "peace be with you".

John 20:19, 26-29

Jesus was **in** the boat with the disciples during the storm and He spoke to the storm "Peace be still."

The presence of Jesus, the "Prince of Peace" drives out all fear because realizing that God is there drives out **unbelief**. Peace drives out fear. Peace is the opposite of fear. The opposite of faith is not fear but unbelief. Unbelief is the root of fear. All of us will have times that we are afraid and it is the peace and presence of God that will root out fear. Only faith can **conquer** unbelief.

- Faith comes when we **surrender** to God's plan for our life. Faith recognizes that God has a plan that is higher and better than we could imagine. **1 Corinthians 2:9, Jeremiah 29:11, Isaiah 55:8-9** Faith starts with surrendering our life and ways at the time we receive His grace for our salvation. We continue to walk by faith as we **stay** surrendered and submitted in everything. The cry of faith is the same as Jesus "Not my will but yours be done". **Luke 22:42**
- Faith comes as you have a personal **encounter** with Him. Gideon was able to step out in faith as he tested God with a fleece. As Thomas had a revelation of the risen Christ, Jesus invited Him to touch and see. Thomas did not draw back from the wounds, he reached out to touch and be touched. Knowing that Jesus is there allows us to reach out for a touch, a confirmation and reassurance when we are unsure or unsteady.

- Faith comes as you place your **trust** in Jesus. If you do not trust Jesus you are placing your trust in something. Some trust Murphy's Law which says "If anything can go wrong it will". That is not hope. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. Remember what you believe and what you trust will eventually come out of your mouth.

Psalm 91:2, Psalm 146:1-3, Psalm 9:10, Psalm 56:3, John 14:1

Trust starts with belief in who Jesus is. It then is a choice of the heart and mind to find peace in His promises. Trust then moves to **action**. It is the heart and emotions at rest as we purposefully engage our life in pursuing His will. Remember faith without works is dead.

Acronym of T.R.U.S.T

- ❖ **Turning** over every aspect and area of our life to God.
 - ❖ **Realizing** that He already has a perfect plan for our life.
 - ❖ **Understanding** that we may not always understand what He is doing or why.
 - ❖ **Seeking** His will every step of the way.
 - ❖ **Thanking** Him when things go well and when things don't turn out as planned.
- Faith comes when we have a great **vision**. Vision means you know where you are going and why. God has given you a clear purpose in your life and this enables you to not be distracted by things that do not matter. Every person, every church, every business needs to know where they are going because it helps define what you should be doing, how you should be living and how you invest your time.

There is no such thing as **blind** faith. Faith sees. A leap of faith is not stepping into the gaping abyss where there is no bottom. Remember faith is substance. A leap of faith is the first step into the solid direction of God, you may not know all the **steps** but you trust God for the first step.

Psalm 37:23-24 (AMP), Isaiah 41:10

The first step of faith is to **acknowledge** that God has a plan for our lives. **Ephesians 2:10**

Vision is about living with the **end** in mind. It believes that God will **reveal** His plan to you in fullness over time. **1 Corinthians 2:9-10** It is a revelation of who He is and of His plan for you that will **compel** you to grow. You don't just get your vision, you grow **into** the vision as you grow in Faith.

Accepting God's vision for our life helps us to grow in faith by:

Giving us **direction**. Life is not all about the entertainment, it is not just aimless wondering. It is about enjoying the **journey** of faith as you follow God's direction for your life.

Vision gives you the motivation to endure the pain and hardships so you will not **quit** on God's plans and purposes for your life. The life of faith is not easy but vision helps you keep your eye on the prize and helps you to see your way through to the promises.

Vision helps you determine the **activities** of your life. If you want to please the Lord with your life and hear, "well done good and faithful servant", you have to be faithful over the areas and activities God has for your life.

Vision helps you make wise **decisions**. It helps you to know when to say yes and when to say no. It also helps you to evaluate your progress in life.